

Gate Hill Day Camp



Parent Handbook 2011

Our Partnership With You:

The successful partnership we have with each of you ensures a great summer for your children. Occasionally parents will have a concern or suggestion that they do not communicate with us during the summer. Every member of our leadership team and every person sitting in our office understands that your input is of the highest priority.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the information in this handbook or at any point need to speak with us, PLEASE feel comfortable to call us.

Thank you for letting us care for your children! We enjoy them as much as they enjoy Gate Hill!

Josh, Bob & Jen

Table of Contents

Contact Information & Hours	Page 2
Division Names & Grades	Page 2
Pre-Camp Parent & Camper Orientation	Page 3
Communication with Camp	Pages 3
Website Use During Camp	Page 4
Preparing for Camp in the Morning	Page 5
Transportation	Page 6
Lunch & Birthday's at Camp	Page 7
Swim	Page 7
Reading the Camp Calendar	Page 8
Camper Healthcare	Page 9
Parent Visiting Nights	Page 10
Out of Camp Trips	Page 11
Extending Weeks at Gate Hill	Page 11
Camper Cell Phone	Page 12

Contact Information & Hours:

Camp telephone lines are open from **7am until 6pm**. For calls of a general nature, please call camp between **10am and 3pm**. Of course, emergency or transportation calls will be handled at any time.

Telephone: (845) 947-3223
Fax: (845) 942-0958
Mailing Address: PO Box 592, Stony Point, NY 10980
Street Address: 750 Gate Hill Road, Stony Point, NY 10980
Main Email: info@gatehilldaycamp.com
Bus email: transportation@gatehilldaycamp.com
Director's Email: Josh@gatehilldaycamp.com
Bob@gatehilldaycamp.com

Division Names & Grades:

Villagers: Pre-school Program 3 & 4 years & entering Kindergarten
Jr. Pathfinders: entering 1st grade
Sr. Pathfinders: entering 2nd grade
Jr. Pioneers: entering 3rd grade
Sr. Pioneers: entering 4th grade
Jr. Mountaineers: entering 5th & 6th grade
Sr. Mountaineers: entering 7th & 8th grade
Explorers: entering 3rd – 9th grade
Trailblazers: entering 7th – 9th grade
LITs: entering 10th grade



Pre-Camp Parent & Camper Orientation:

Our younger divisions of campers - Villagers, Jr Pathfinders, Sr Pathfinders, and Jr Pioneers will have a Parent/Camper orientation in early June. At this time your camper will meet his/her Division Leader and other campers in their age group. They will also get a chance to see camp and receive their GHDC backpack! Campers will also receive a Gate Hill water bottle their first day of camp and a camp t-shirt on photo day.

If your camper is not in one of these divisions but you would like to come up and see camp prior to the first day, please call the office and we can schedule a time.

Communication with Camp:

Our office staff is available to answer any questions or relay any message you have throughout the camp day. Your camper's Division Leader returns the majority of phone calls outside of camp hours, both early in the morning and after 4:30pm. If there is an emergency where you must speak with your child's Division Leader, please communicate that urgency to our office so we can make it a high priority.

Division Leader's are also available via email. Email is meant to be a supplement to telephone communication, not a replacement. Directors will return emails in a timely fashion throughout the day as well as send out fun & informative updates about your child's division. If you do not wish to communicate via email please let your camper's Division Leader know.

Notices from camp will periodically be sent home with campers, so please check your camper's backpack daily. They will include permission slips, trip reminders, special events reminder's, and more. Each week, campers will also receive an online edition of the Gate Hill News for the entire family to enjoy.

Communication with you is very important to everyone who works at Gate Hill. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any reason, big or small!

Website Use During Camp:

One of the best ways for us to stay connected with our camp parents is through our website. Here are some ways to utilize the camp website during the summer.

1. Each Division Leader will send a weekly division update every Friday via email. This will include fun facts and information about the past week. Our office will also post a camp-wide newsletter each week in the “News from the Hill” section of our camp website.
2. Camper photos of the past week’s action will be posted weekly (usually over the course of the weekend). Parents are able to view weekly photo’s of your child’s division and print or save to your computer. This section of the website is password protected. If you are unsure of the password, please call or email the camp office.
3. All forms and printed communication from camp are also available on the website. Weekly reminders will be posted on our home page.

Please visit us at **www.gatehilldaycamp.com**



Preparing for Camp in the Morning

Here is what every camper needs to be prepared with for camp in the morning:

1. Campers should be dressed in comfortable “play” clothes.
2. Campers should bring the following items to camp daily:
 - **2 bathing suits** - We prefer campers to wear one suit to camp in the morning and pack the other in their backpack. Please bring a bathing suit to camp daily, rain or shine.
 - **Pool shoes** - Gate Hill recommends a brand of shoe called, “Crocs”. These shoes are particularly good at staying on our camper’s feet, simple to take on and off, and can be easily cleaned.
 - **Sunscreen** - please apply the first coating before your child leaves for camp in the morning. Your child’s counselors will ensure that reapplications of sunscreen are made throughout the day.
 - **Sweatshirt/rain coat** if the weather forecast calls for it. Remember we are on the side of a mountain, so sometimes it is slightly cooler here at camp.
3. Please be sure to label all clothing and items sent to camp with your campers first and last name.
4. Please remind your camper to use the plastic lined section of their GH backpack for wet bathing suits. You may also include a plastic bag if that is more convenient.

GHDC provides all sports equipment for your child, as well as daily towel service for swim.

Every bus has a bag of activities for campers to enjoy during their bus ride.

We encourage parents to keep valuable and/or breakable items at home, such as DS or iPods, etc..

Please be aware that the camp cannot be responsible for these items.

Transportation:

Buses will arrive at your designated stop within the pick-up time given to you prior to camp. If a bus is in significant traffic and running more than 15 minutes behind schedule, our camp office will call you to let you know.

If your child is going to be absent for the day, please call camp in the morning, so we can reach the bus before arriving at your stop.

Transportation change requests must be sent in writing before 2:30pm on the day of the change. Changes will gladly be accommodated if seating is available and the request is submitted early enough in the day.

Any notes to camp should be sent in GHDC bus mail envelopes. You will receive 5 bus mail envelopes prior to the beginning of camp. If you need additional envelopes, please ask your bus counselor or call the camp office.

In preparation for arrival & dismissal, the camp driveway will be closed to non-camp vehicles between 8:45am and 9:15am, as well as 2:45pm and 4:15pm. Please plan accordingly for late and/or early drop off's and afternoon parent pick ups. For safety reasons we will not be able to let any non-camp vehicles into or out of camp at these times.

If a camper who typically takes the camp bus, is to be picked up by a parent or a parent assigned driver, it is imperative that a signed and dated note be sent to camp. Please be ready to provide identification to the office staff when picking up your child.

Emails can be sent directly to the Transportation Director at **transportation@gatehilldaycamp.com** for any transportation question, concern, or request.



Lunch:

Lunch is provided everyday at camp, with hot and cold menu choices. The main menu choice of the day is indicated on the camp menu. Campers will also have a choice of plain or buttered pasta, a full salad bar, yogurt bar, fresh fruit, bagels and a variety of sandwiches.

In order to protect our children with food allergies, we ask that campers do not bring outside food into camp, unless prearranged with a Director. This includes the bus ride as well.

Birthdays at Camp:

If your child celebrates a birthday during the camp season (including weekends), we've got you covered! Gate Hill provides a birthday celebration for each camper's group and the entire camp sings a rousing rendition of the birthday song at the morning Gathering. Celebrations include a special Gate Hill snack, plus the birthday girl/boy can wear their Gate Hill Birthday Hat all day long! To keep birthday celebrations consistent, no additional food, gifts or decorations are permitted.

Swim:

We are very proud of our outstanding swim program at Gate Hill, which provides American Red Cross swim instruction. Campers will have 2 swims per day; 1 instructional swim in the morning and 1 recreational swim in the afternoon. Campers will be placed in swim groups according to their ability. In order to swim in the deep end of the pools, campers must pass the deep water evaluation. If a camper is an ARC level 4 or above swimmer, they will automatically pass the deep water evaluation. The deep water evaluation is given most afternoons during recreational swim. Campers who do not pass this evaluation initially may take it as many times as they need to.

Reading the Camp Calendar:

The Gate Hill camp calendar is a colorful and a fun resource to put on your refrigerator or household bulletin board. The calendar is one way we communicate to our families the goings on of the week. Often “special days” require a “special outfit”. Since we have something special happening everyday at camp, it’s important to read the calendar carefully.

Here are the 2011 special days to note on your camp calendar which require a unique outfit:

July 1: **Red, White, & Blue Day** (wear these colors)

July 6: **Crazy Hat Day** (wear a crazy hat)

July 8: **Buddy’s Sports Jersey Day** (wear a sports jersey)

July 12: **Photo Day** (we will provide a clean GHDC shirt on this day)

July 15: **Gate Hill Spirit Day** (wear as much green & white as possible)

July 25: **Tie Dye Week** (send in a white cotton t-shirt or any cotton item to tie dye, i.e. socks)

July 26: **Silly Socks Day** (wear silly socks)

July 27: **Backwards Day** (wear your “stuff” backwards)

July 29: **Red Carpet Day** (dress as your favorite celebrity)

August 8-10: **Olympics** (wear your team colors)

August 12: **School Spirit T-shirt Day** (wear a school t-shirt)

August 17: **Faux Hawk & Glam Hair Day** (glam your hair or come to camp with a fake Mohawk)

August 18: **Wear Your Tie Dye Day**

**Also, please note from the calendar all trip days, parent visiting late stays, and show performances.*



Camper Healthcare:

Our Camp Nurse is available for calls between 9am and 4pm M-F. If you need to speak with the nurse, please call the main office and the office staff will transfer you to our Health Office.

The Rockland County Board of Health mandates that all campers are required to have a completed Camper Medical on file in the Health Office prior to the beginning of camp. Campers without medical forms on file are not permitted in camp, as mandated by the board of health. Please be sure to have all Medical forms completed and sent to camp prior to the start of camp.

If a camper is ill or injured during the camp day, they will be taken to the health office. The nurse will contact you any time your child has a fever, injury which needs medical care, or requires medicine of any kind, i.e. Tylenol. For normal bumps and bruises, i.e. a small scratch, our camp nurse will likely not call home. However, every visit to the nurse is recorded and communicated to the Camp Director and your camper's Division Leader.

If a camper is to go home, they will remain in the Health Office until a parent/parent appointed driver arrives. They should go to the main office to sign the camper out. Your child will then be escorted to the office by one of our staff.

In an emergency when hospital care is needed, a Camp Director will personally accompany the camper to the hospital and remain with your child until you or an approved guardian arrives.

All prescription medication your child takes needs to be sent in the original prescription bottles, along with the Doctor's standing orders.

Parent Visiting Nights - “Late Stays”

Jr Pathfinders, Sr Pathfinders, Jr Pioneers, Sr Pioneers, Jr Moutaineers, and Explorers all have Parent Visiting nights during the summer. This is a time for you to experience and share camp first hand with your camper.

A permission slip will be sent home with your camper a few days prior to the scheduled Parent Visiting Night. This needs to be signed and returned in order for us to keep your child at camp for this event.

All Parent Visiting Nights will begin at 5:30pm. Activities will include swim, art activities and sports activities. Parents are encouraged to participate in all activities, including swim. Dinner and a snack will be served after activities.

In the event of inclement weather, the camp office will call parents if the event is unable to occur on the scheduled date. This information will also be posted on the home page of our website. If you are ever unsure, please simply call our camp office.

Our goal is to make this a very special evening for you and your child. Our campers are so excited to have your undivided attention for the evening and can't wait to show you how well they're doing at camp. That's why the camp policy is to have no siblings attend Parent Visiting Night. This makes the evening a success for our campers, and allows our parents to participate fully.

Villagers will have the “Villagers on Stage” show at the end of the 7th week in lieu of a visiting night. We have found it best for campers to pair these two events together, rather than have parents visiting during a typical camp day...

Parents are welcome to schedule a visit to camp on another day if so desired. Incidental visits to camp have proved disruptive to many of our campers, so we ask that all



Out of Camp Trips:

Once campers reach our Jr. Pathfinders Division, they begin to take occasional trips out of camp. Our 1st and 2nd graders take one trip per summer. These trips increase as their year's at Gate Hill progress. (see the camp calendar for exact dates of this summer's trips)

Prior to camp, a permission slip is sent home for all camp trips. Please be sure to return this letter to camp prior to the beginning of camp. We must have this letter on file for the Rockland County Department of Health. An additional permission slip will be required for our Sr. Mountaineer campers for their scheduled overnight trip.

During the summer, a reminder letter will be sent home with campers a few days prior to the trip. Camp provides lunch for every trip. The majority of our trips require no pocket money for our campers. Although your child will have everything necessary to have a great time, some campers like to buy a souvenir when appropriate. In those few instances we suggest not exceeding \$10 per day trip.

Due to inclement weather, the location or date of trips may be changed at Gate Hill's discretion.

Extending Weeks at Gate Hill:

Additional weeks can be added to your campers stay during the summer, provided that there is a seat on the bus and space in the group. Please call the camp office to make these arrangements.

Camper Cell Phone Policy:

We realize that in this day and age some of our campers have their own cell phones. Often this is for after camp activities to stay in touch with parents and/or guardians. Staying connected with children when they are not in the direct care of adult supervision has become something important in today's society. We are very aware and empathetic to this reality.

While at camp, however, campers are very closely supervised and are never more than a few feet from an adult. Therefore we strongly urge parents not to allow campers to bring their cell phones to camp. The most reliable way for parents to reach their children while at Gate Hill is to simply call camp directly. If you want your child carrying a cell phone to be used after the camp day, please speak with your child about the cell phone policy below. Thank you for your partnership on this issue.

On Grounds Camper Cell Phone & Electronics Policy:

All camper cell phones must remain turned off during the camp day and stored in the camper's backpack. A "camp day" includes the bus ride to and from camp, while on the Gate Hill camp grounds, and during a day trip off grounds.

During an off-grounds overnight trip campers are allowed to have their cell phone with them, however they must follow the cell phone usage policy described by the trip leader.

If a cell phone is turned on and used during the camp day the cell phone will be temporarily taken from the camper until the camper's parents are notified.

As a reminder, Gate Hill is mostly "unplugged" for the summer. This includes iPods, DS, and other personal electronic devices. If campers choose to have these items with them for their bus ride, they must be stored in their backpacks and turned off when in camp.

**If you do not find the information you are
looking for in this Parent Handbook,
please call the office or send us an email.**



**BY PHONE
845.947.3223**

**VIA EMAIL
info@gatehilldaycamp.com**

**ON THE WEB
www.gatehilldaycamp.com**