

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County



4-H CAMP WABASSO

CREATING MEMORIES TO LAST A LIFETIME

4-H Camp Wabasso Family Handbook

4-H Camp Wabasso
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Dear Camp Families,

Welcome! What an exciting time this is. Your child will soon be coming to camp, and you may find yourself with all sorts of questions. This handbook is designed to answer your questions and the questions you may not have thought to ask in an effort to set you and your camper up for a successful experience at 4-H Camp Wabasso. If you find you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are always happy to communicate with you.

Example Overnight Camp Schedule:

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6:45 a.m.	Road Runners and Polar Bear
7:15 a.m.	Wake-Up
7:45 a.m.	Flag Raising
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:45 a.m.	Camp Duties
9:15 a.m.	First Class
10:15 a.m.	Second Class
11:30 a.m.	Lunch
12:15 p.m.	Cabin Time
1:15 p.m.	Third Class
2:15 p.m.	Fourth Class
3:15 p.m.	Snack
4:00 p.m.	Recreation & Free Swim
5:30 p.m.	Flag Lowering
5:45 p.m.	Dinner
6:30 p.m.	Cabin Time
7:15 p.m.	Evening Program
9:00 p.m.	Evening Songs
9:30 pm	Lights Out



Camp Environment

Who comes to Camp?

Children come to camp from many places. A majority of campers live in Jefferson County. However, we have many that come from neighboring counties and quite a few that come from out of state.

Overnight Camp Program:

All youth ages 8-16 by the start of their selected camp week may attend.

Cloverbud Camps:

All youth ages 6-8 by the start of their selected camp session may attend.

Where will my child be staying?

Campers live in rustic wood cabins among the trees. Each cabin houses between 8 and 12 youth. Campers will share their space with other campers close to their age and the same gender identity, and a counselor or two. There is no heat in the cabins, so be sure to pack warm blankets. Campers will sleep on bunk beds, be sure to let their counselors know if they prefer a bottom bunk.

Will my child be exposed to the outdoors?

Yes! Camp contains a blend of forests, fields, ponds and a lake. Campers should embrace the opportunity to disconnect from their electronics and reconnect with nature and other campers. Because we are a rustic camping program, it is not uncommon for campers to see chipmunks, rabbits, spiders, or bugs around Camp. Respect for animals, plants and all other aspects of the environment is expected.

What is the weather like at camp?

Most days are sunny with temperatures ranging from 60-80 degrees, but we do have rainy or stormy days on occasion. Nights often bring cooler temperatures of 40-60 degrees. Please keep these conditions in mind or check the local forecast when packing with your child.

Friends and Transportation . . .



It is my child's first time; can he/she bring a friend?

Campers are assigned to cabins based on their gender identity and age. We do allow campers to request to be in a cabin with a friend or "cabinmate." Being cabinmates means campers would be in the same cabin, but they may not be in the same classes because overnight campers get to choose their classes online.

How do I request a cabinmate?

When registering your child for camp either online or by mail, there is a space to list the name of someone your child would like to be in a cabin with. Please write the first and last name of your child's friend. We will try to honor cabinmate requests as long as the following guidelines are observed:

1. May request only one cabinmate.
2. Must be same gender and within 2 years of age.
3. Must request in writing through UltraCamp.
4. Request is mutual; on both applications.

Please keep in mind . . .

- Cannot request a counselor.
- We will do our best, but no guarantees.

Is there transportation?

No. We do not provide transportation to and from camp.



Homesickness . . .

Preparing for Camp

What is homesickness?

Homesickness means a camper misses home. This is a normal feeling for children to experience, but left untreated is painful, and often interferes with having fun at camp.

How will staff help my child with being homesick?

Our staff are trained to recognize, understand, and help campers work through homesickness. In fact, many staff are previous campers and have experienced homesickness themselves. We aim for campers to make new friends quickly, engage each child in activities, and help children acclimate to their new environment. Teamwork and communication among staff are key to helping us care for campers who are experiencing homesickness. We try to keep campers involved, busy, and feeling welcome; this goes a long way in preventing mild homesickness from getting worse. Our primary goal is to foster connections between campers which is the best way to overcome homesickness.

Should I pick up my child if he/she is homesick?

Usually, no. We encourage parents to allow their child(ren) to remain at camp and work through their feelings. When campers complete the experience, even though it was challenging, they often develop healthy coping skills, gain confidence, and are better able to work through their emotions in the future. In certain cases of severe homesickness, we may suggest your child return home. This is rare and is usually a decision reached after multiple conversations between the camper, their counselor, the Camp Director, Nurse, and the family.



What can I do at home to prepare for camp?

If you suspect your child is likely to experience homesickness during his or her stay, there are steps you can take to address this concern before coming to camp. Address risk factors by trying things such as:

- 1) Practice time away from home, such as spending the weekend at a friend's house.
Why: experiential learning bolsters confidence
- 2) Review orientation materials and daily camp schedules with your child.
Why: knowing how camp works reduces anxiety
- 3) Involve your child in the decision-making to attend camp, choose classes together, and have your child help pack for camp.
Why: being involved boosts feelings of control
- 4) If you feel nervous, find another adult to confide in. Don't share this with your child.
Why: increases positive attitudes about camp
- 5) Educate your child about the normalcy of missing home and teach coping strategies for in-camp homesickness.
Why: enhances child's competence and skill set
- 6) Discuss camp culture and ways staff provide warm supports and exciting opportunities
Why: knowing that staff will help out is comforting

Important! Don't say "If you don't like it, you can come home."

Why: You want them to believe they are capable of success in this new environment. When campers know that parents are willing to pull them out of camp, they are less likely to give it a fair chance.



Policies . . .

Preparing for Camp

Can my child bring electronics or a cell phone to camp?

No. Campers are not permitted to bring electronics to camp without the expressed consent of the Camp Director. Children grow in tremendous ways when they realize they are capable of working things out on their own. They learn to make conversation, navigate friendships, develop social skills, and utilize life skills in conflict resolution and problem solving. Additionally, modern technologies are expensive possessions which can easily be lost or damaged during camp.

Please keep in mind . . .

Any camper found to be in violation of this policy will have their device(s) taken by the Camp Director or Assistant Camp Director and the parents will be notified. Camp is not responsible for lost or damaged possessions.

Can my child bring snacks to Camp?

No, campers cannot bring snacks to camp. Food cannot be kept in the cabins because food attracts animals. Camp provides three meals and a snack every day. Campers will be well fed.

My child has special needs, can they attend?

Yes! 4-H Camp Wabasso is an independent camping program conducted in an outdoor environment. We strive to be an inclusive program, and will make all reasonable accommodations to ensure all children have the same opportunity to succeed at camp. If a child requires special accommodations (i.e. dietary restrictions, medication, physical adaptation, etc.), parents/guardians must notify the camp in advance and/or indicate needs on the Camp Health Forms. Please call us to discuss your concerns and help us plan for your child's success.

What is camp's refund policy?

There is a \$100 non-refundable deposit for every camp session.

If camp has to be cancelled due to COVID-19, full refunds, including the deposit will be given. If a camper cannot attend their session due to COVID-19, all reasonable accommodations will be made. These will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Full refunds minus the applicable deposits will only be considered for emergency situations. An emergency situation is defined as a specific medical condition (e.g. injury, illness or hospitalization) or a certain family situation (e.g. death in family).

Upon arrival, if it is determined a camper is too ill to attend, the camper will be sent home immediately. A refund will be issued, minus the \$100 deposit.

In the event a camper becomes ill while at camp and is sent home at the discretion of the Camp Nurse, no refund will be issued.

In the interest of the health and wellness of all campers, those campers who cannot adjust to camp (e.g. severe homesickness, disruptive or dangerous behavior, non-compliance, etc.) may be sent home at the discretion of the Camp Director. No refund will be issued.

Note: All refunds are subject to review and will take time to process.



What does the safer spaces logo mean?

One of our main priorities is to create a safe and inclusive space for learning and welcoming youth from diverse backgrounds, cultures and perspectives. Diversity includes, but is not limited to: race, color, religion, political beliefs, national or ethnic origin, immigration status, sex, gender, gender identity and expression, transgender status, sexual orientation, age, marital or family status, educational level, learning style, socio-economic status, physical appearance, body size, protected veterans and individuals with disabilities. CCE and 4-H Camp Wabasso actively supports equal educational opportunities.

The NYS 4-H Safer Spaces logo is a sign of our continued commitment to nurturing this safe, inclusive environment.

Scheduling . . .

What does the daily programming schedule look like?

Campers will rotate through 4 classes daily. Class registration occurs during camp registration on UltraCamp. There are age or experience requirements for certain classes, which are listed on our website 4hcampwabasso.org and on UltraCamp.

In addition to the camp classes, campers will also have recreation times where they will be given options by their cabin counselors of activities, and will choose as a group what they want to do.

What are all camp activities?

We typically have two blocks of all camp activities per day (other than opening and closing days of camp). All camp activities could be: cabin skits, campfire, talent show, capture the flag, evening swim, and the camper favorite – Gold Rush! Each all camp activity is designed to build the sense of camp community and help to develop deeper connections with other campers.

How does the theme affect programming?

Each week of camp has a specific theme, other than Week 6 which is Just Camp! The theme doesn't heavily affect classes (although some classes could be modified based on the theme!). We plan our all-camp activities with the theme of the week in mind – so each week is a little bit different! There is also a theme specific class each week of camp – be sure to look for this in your activity selection on UltraCamp!



Conduct . . .

Preparing for Camp

What are the rules of camp?

The following ground rules are designed to make the experience at Camp safe and satisfying for everyone attending. Please discuss these rules with your child.

1. Participate . . .

Everyone is expected to participate in all activities. No camper may leave the grounds.

2. Create a Welcoming Environment for All . . .

Recognize that everyone has skills and talents to contribute. Though we may not always agree, we must be respectful.

3. Bring Your Best Self . . .

Respect and follow the rules. Conduct yourself in a manner that reflects honesty, integrity, and self-control. Fighting, obscene or discriminatory language; and insubordination are never acceptable.

4. Obey the Law . . .

Commit no illegal acts. Do not possess or use illegal drugs, tobacco products, firearms, weapons, or any harmful object with the intent to hurt others any time.

5. Honor Diversity – Yours and Others . . .

Respect the rights and dignity of everyone. Cornell Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity, affirmative action educator and employer.

6. Create a Safe Environment . . .

Do not carelessly/intentionally harm other youth or adults in any way (verbally, mentally, physically, or emotionally). Refrain from romantic displays. Be kind and compassionate. Harassment, bullying, and other exclusionary behavior are not acceptable.

7. Watch What You Wear . . .

Use your best judgment. Wear clothing suited for the activity you will participate in. Clothing promoting intoxicants or displaying inappropriate/discriminatory messages are never acceptable.

8. Recognize off-limit areas . . .

These are places where the campers are not allowed to go unless an adult is accompanying them. In addition, everyone must keep to their designated lodging areas: boys may not be in girls' units/tents/bathrooms and girls may not be in boys' units/tents/bathrooms.

9. Respect Rest Times . . .

All participants are to be in their assigned area at curfew and to comply with the quiet hours, lights out, and other rules of the camp, including rest time after lunch.

10. Say Something . . .

Help others by promptly reporting any violations or infractions of these rules to the Camp Director.

What are the consequences of violating rules?

This is dependent on the rule(s) being broken, and each situation is determined on a case-by-case basis. Campers could have to meet with the Camp Director or Assistant Camp Director, a call home might be warranted, and in serious situations the camper might be asked to go home.

Health, Wellness, and Medical Forms . . .

Preparing for Camp

Is there a Nurse at camp to care for my child?

Yes. Camp takes every precaution to provide a safe and healthy environment for all campers. Our Camp Nurse is on site to address any minor illness or injury at camp. In some cases, campers may have to remain overnight in the infirmary to provide the best care. Parents will be notified immediately if an illness or injury requires outside treatment.

If a minor injury or illness requires outside treatment, the parent/guardian will be contacted and given the option to either pick up the camper and bring him/her to get treatment, or have an ambulance called. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, an ambulance will be called.

In an emergency situation an ambulance will be called and the camper will be brought to the River Hospital in Alexandria Bay.

What if my child takes medication?

All medication must:

- have an order written by a doctor
- be in its original container
- be given to & administered by our Nurse

Please consider sending only enough for while your child is at camp.

What if my child forgets to come for their meds?

All children with medication will see the nurse on a regularly scheduled basis established on the first day of camp. If a camper is due for medication, and does not report, camp staff will be notified and the child will be sent to the Infirmary to be sure medication is administered.

Can my child attend if they have nits?

No. Upon arrival, all staff and campers will have their heads checked. 4-H Camp Wabasso has a NO NITS policy. In the event a child must be sent home due to nits or live lice, families may choose to:

- a) Treat camper's hair/belongings and come the next morning for a re-check.
- b) Shave the camper's hair, treat the child's belongings, and bring him/her back the next morning for re-check.
- c) Ask about availability in another week while the child is treated at home.

Upon re-check,

- 1) If nits or live lice are discovered, the camper will be sent home immediately.
- 2) If no trace of nits or lice are discovered, the camper may continue check-in.

We are human. In the event nits are discovered during the camp week, all campers and staff who are in the cabin with the individual in question will be re-checked.

Do I need to complete the health forms?

Yes. Campers will not be permitted to attend camp without completed health forms. This is required by the New York State Department of Health.

Do I need new health forms every year?

Yes. Returning campers must complete a new form each year. We will not pull old records.

My child is going two weeks, do I need 2 forms?

No. Campers returning for multiple weeks during the same year do NOT need to complete separate forms for each week.

Does camp need a copy of my camper's shot record?

Yes. We are required to have a copy of each child's immunization history on file. If you wish to request a **medical exemption**, please obtain and submit a **letter from a New York State licensed physician** certifying that one or more of the required immunizations are detrimental to your child's health. This will be forwarded to the NYS Department of Health for review. *This process will take some time to complete.*

When are the Health forms due?

Completed health forms are due **two weeks prior to your campers first day at camp**. Please do not turn paperwork in on registration day. There could be errors that need to be fixed, and we may not be able to allow your child to stay at camp until they are fixed.

Do I need to bring copies to registration?

We encourage everyone to make a copy of their health forms and bring them to registration, however, this is not required.



Packing List . . .

Preparing for Camp

- Please use discretion when choosing camp clothes. Modest clothing should be worn at all times. Inappropriate language or graphics on clothing is not acceptable.
- Camp can often be very hard on clothes. We suggest you do not bring brand new clothing or high-priced items because they can easily be damaged during a week at camp.
- Keep in mind that two campers may own the same article of clothing, book, comb, or teddy bear. Please label all of your camper's possessions.
- Please pack with your camper. This way you can ensure not only that he or she has everything, but also that he/she knows where everything is in their suitcase.
- We reserve the right to inspect any belongings on camp property.

Campers Please Bring:

Pack in an easy-to-carry duffel bag or suitcase.

- Sheet for a twin sized mattress
- Pillow and pillowcase
- Sleeping bag and/or blankets
- Towel (for showering) and washcloth
- Soap and shampoo
- Flip-flops (if wanted for shower)
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Brush/comb/pick
- Towel (for swimming)
- Bathing suit
- Shirts (short-sleeved and long-sleeved)
- Sweatshirt and/or jacket
- Shorts and long pants
- Pajamas
- Raincoat/poncho
- Closed-toed shoes/sneakers and/or hiking shoes (no crocks!)
- Reusable water bottle
- Sunscreen and bug spray
- Flashlight

Optional:

- Writing supplies (paper, envelope, stamp)
- Inexpensive camera
- Book to read
- Stuffed animal
- Themed week items – costumes, clothing, etc.



DO NOT BRING:

Electronics (other than a cheap camera)- phones, music players, kindles, games, etc.
Weapons of any kind- knives, hatchets, etc.
Flammable items- candles, lanterns, matches, etc.
Expensive items- clothing, jewelry, etc.
Illegal items of any kind- drugs, alcohol, etc.
Tobacco products of any kind- this includes vaping products
Pets
Personal sports equipment – archery equipment, sports equipment, fishing equipment, climbing gear, etc.
Snacks/Food items (unless they are pre-packaged foods for a dietary restriction – these must be given to the camp director at check-in)

A Note to Families:

Campers who bring prohibited items to camp will be asked to surrender them to the camp staff and may face further disciplinary action.

Check In . . .

Every camper must be accompanied by a parent/guardian during check-in. If your camper is being dropped off by someone other than a parent/guardian, please contact the Camp Director to discuss prior to drop off.

When do we drop off?

For each session of camp this summer, there will be time blocks assigned to each family for check in. Check in will be between 1:00 – 3:00 PM on their first day of camp. Prior to check-in day, each family will be notified via email of their time block. It is very important for you to get there during your assigned time block! *If you need to have a late check-in, please contact the Camp Director.*

What do we do when we arrive?

When you arrive on site, our staff will be there to greet and direct you to park.

Once you have parked you can exit your car and wait for camp staff to come to you.

1. Camp staff will then do a nit check.
2. The Camp Nurse will come to you to take all medications. If there are any medical concerns regarding your child, you may discuss them quickly or call our camp nurse after registration ends.
3. Camp staff will let your camper know which cabin they are in, you will be able to meet their counselor(s), and then your camper will be escorted to their cabin by our camp staff.
Family members will not be able to go to the cabins with their child.
4. If you would like to put money on your camper's store account, you will be able to do so using cash or check, **however we do prefer for you to put money on their store account using UltraCamp.** You will not be able to physically look at the store items, however you can see a list of the items and their prices on your UltraCamp account. Any money left over at the end of the session will be considered a donation to our camp scholarship fund.

Please note: all camper fees will need to be paid prior to check-in. These fees can be paid through UltraCamp with a credit or debit card or using an ACH payment. Payment can also be made by dropping cash or a check off to the CCE office in Watertown prior to your check-in day.

A note about paperwork...

All paperwork must be turned in 2-weeks prior to check in to give us adequate time to check everything. You will not be able to fill out paperwork at check-in.

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Pick Up . . .

How does pick-up work?

Pick-up will be between 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. on the final day of each camp session. Campers will be assigned a pick-up time based on their cabin and their family members attending camp at the same time. Your family will be notified of that time block prior to the start of the camp week. Please arrive to camp at the beginning of your time block. Campers will have all of their belongings together and their cabin counselors will bring them to their parents' cars. **Campers need to be physically signed out.**

Please note: the only people allowed to pick up your camper are those listed on the transportation authorization, and they **must have identification to show.**

The Camp Director will try contacting the families by telephone of any child not picked up by 5:30 p.m. If the Camp Director is not able to reach the Parent/Guardian, he/she will try the additional contacts listed on the health form. In the event no one can be reached, the CCE Deputy Director will be notified and Child Protective Services/911 will be notified. Please understand this security is intended to protect the safety of all children at camp.

What about medications?

The camp Nurse will have all left-over medications bagged up and these will be delivered to your cars as part of the check-out procedure.

What if I need to pick my child up early or borrow them temporarily?

Occasionally, parents need to pick their child up early or temporarily remove from camp for outside commitments (family emergency, sports, music, etc.). If you need to pick your camper up early, we ask that parents please contact the Camp Director to make arrangements. With adequate notice, our staff will have the child ready for dismissal upon your request.



Supervision . . .

How are children supervised?

Campers are supervised at all times. No one on the grounds is exempt from supervision responsibilities. Staff are provided with attendance lists for all cabins, classes, and other activity groups at camp. Attendance is taken during meals, classes, activities, periodically throughout the day when cabin groups reconvene, and through visual scans at group events such as flag or vespers.

The New York State Department of Health sets supervision requirements for children's camps based on program area, age, and activity level. We meet or exceed the standard ratios described below:

Swimming:

- 1:25 – lifeguard: swimmers **and:**
 - 1:10 – spotter: swimmers ages 8+
 - 1:8 – spotter: swimmers ages 6-7
 - 1:5 – spotter: swimmers with developmental disabilities
 - 1:2 – spotter: swimmers who use adaptive equipment such as a wheelchair
 - 1:1 – spotter: non-ambulatory swimmer or high-risk disability (i.e. uncontrolled epilepsy)

General Supervision:

- 1:10 – counselor: campers ages 8+
- 1:8 – counselor: campers ages 6-7
- 1:25 – passive activities

Recreation times: supervision will be more general. Staff are assigned to various points of interest around camp. Campers must always be within viewing distance and/or verbal earshot. Counselors do patrol camp, cabins, and other buildings between structured activity periods.

Passive activities: A passive activity is an activity which takes place in a defined area, where participants are spectators or have limited mobility and use no tools or equipment. Examples of passive activities at camp are evening stories and songs, cabin skits, mealtimes, and cabin time.

Transitions: Staff visually monitor campers as they transition from one activity to the next.

Resting: Counselors sleep inside the cabins with campers or in a nearby tent during the overnight camping trip (part of the camping class).

Meals . . .

During Camp

What will my camper be eating?

Camp provides a menu which contains diverse options for meeting the nutritional needs of campers. A sample menu is available on our website, www.4hcampwabasso.org.

What if my camper has dietary restrictions?

We do our best to accommodate dietary restrictions as long as we know in advance. We provide vegetarian options with every meal. If your child has other dietary restrictions (i.e. lactose intolerance, gluten sensitivity, peanut allergy, etc.) please make sure to put this on your camper's medical forms. If you have any concerns about these dietary restrictions, please contact us and we will discuss your camper's individual needs.

What if my camper is a picky eater?

There are many options available to campers when it comes to meals. If they are having trouble finding something to eat, we encourage them to let our staff know. We will work with campers to accommodate requests for alternatives within reason (PB & J, fresh fruit, etc.) but we will not serve or store alternative meals for picky eaters.

NOTE: *You must notify camp of any dietary restrictions prior to attendance on our health forms. Accommodations will be made to the best of our ability, but we are not able to prepare individual meals specifically for picky eaters.*



Services . . .

Is there a Camp Store?

Yes. We offer apparel, hats, journals, water bottles, and more. During registration you may choose to put money on your child's store account using cash or check, or you can add money to his/her store account with a credit card using UltraCamp. The store is open daily during snack and dinner time.

All store purchases are non-refundable. Any remaining funds at the end of the camp season will be considered a donation to the camp scholarship fund.

Will store money roll over to another week?

Yes. If your child is coming another week, unspent funds can be rolled over, please just let us know.

Can my child have money at camp?

No. Campers should not have money in their possession at camp. Please put money on their account during registration or using UltraCamp. Camp is not responsible for cash lost at camp.

Can I see photos of my child during the week?

Photos are taken throughout each camp week and shared on our Facebook page. The page name is "4-H Jefferson County, NY and 4-H Camp Wabasso." Photos are also shared on UltraCamp. *Please note that while we take photos daily, it does take time for us to upload them, and they may not be available until after your child returns home.*

Is there a laundry service at camp?

No. Campers should pack enough clothing for the entire week. In certain situations, we may offer to wash and/or dry a campers clothing or bedding, but this is not a service that is openly available to campers. Some examples may include bedwetting, contaminated items, wet sleeping bags after a storm, etc.

Contact . . .

During Camp

Can I send mail to my child at camp?

Absolutely. Campers are always eager to get a friendly note from home. All letters, care packages and other mail should be addressed as shown below, and will be delivered daily right after dinner. It is a good idea to send mail a day or two in advance or leave a letter at registration so that it arrives on your child's first day.

Send camper mail to:

4-H Camp Wabasso
CAMPER NAME
43101 Co. Rd. 21
Redwood, NY 13679

Can my child write to me from camp?

Yes. We encourage campers to write home about their experience, whether it is good or challenging. Mail is picked up from camp each afternoon. You can increase your chances of receiving a letter by providing your child with a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

What are the One-Way Emails?

UltraCamp offers a one-way email service for camp families. For a small fee you can send an email to your camper that will be printed out and given to him/her at mealtimes. You can purchase these in the message center on UltraCamp.

Can I speak to my child on the phone?

No. We have a no call policy at camp. We believe camp is a place to foster independence. If there is an emergency or a message needs to be conveyed, the Camp Director will work with the child or parent to share information/updates.

Can I visit my child while they are at Camp?

No. We believe camp provides an opportunity for youth to gain self-reliance, and confidence through achievement in a new environment. We ask that parents/guardians refrain from visiting campers during their stay, unless there is an emergency. For safety, our staff is trained to address any unknown person as an intruder and escort them to the Camp Office.



Supporting Your Camper from Home . . .

During Camp

Your child is away at camp. You hope he/she is having a wonderful time, but we understand that **you** may be feeling nervous or worried. Homesickness is a concern for both campers and parents alike, and it's something we deal with on a regular basis at 4-H Camp. For many campers, it may be their first time away from home. For parents, it may be the first time they've been away from their children for more than a day or two. A sense of separation anxiety is common for many families with a child at camp. Please know that if you are feeling tension, you are not alone!

- Recognize that our staff is trained and highly skilled in identifying and addressing homesickness concerns. On average, almost 95% of campers experience some level of missing home, but less than 1% of campers need to return home due to severe homesickness.
- No news is good news. If you haven't heard from our Camp Director, you can safely assume that all is well at camp. Cabin counselors are trained to work with early signs of homesickness directly. When homesickness becomes more significant, counselors know how to reach out for help. Our Camp Director will work directly with certain campers to help them through their difficult times. On occasion, if our staff finds it necessary, we will contact the parents to ask for your support in addressing the issue. In such cases, you will receive a phone call from our staff, without the camper present, advising you of the situation and letting you know what we are doing to help your child. We try to reach out before homesickness elevates to a critical level, and this phone call is simply for your information. If the situation continues, we may call again, to ask for some insider tips because we realize that no one knows your child as well as you.
- Write letters to your camper. Getting mail makes campers feel loved and remembered. Personal letters or postcards from home renew the connection with home. You can even send the first letter a day or two before camp, so that it arrives on their first day. You may also write the letter at home and deliver it to your child's cabin counselor during registration. In your letters, ask your child about camp and encourage him/her to write back. Focus on asking questions about all the fun activities he/she is enjoying, friends being made, and so on. **Avoid telling him/her anything going on at home, which may make him/her feel as though he/she is missing out.**
- If you receive a homesick letter during the first few days of camp, please understand that our staff often encourage children to write letters when they are homesick as a way to establish that connection with home. More often than not, by the time you receive the letter, your child has already overcome their homesickness, and is truly loving camp. Resist the urge to immediately call the camp and pick up your child. Rather, take a moment to write a letter in reply. Let your child know you are proud of him/her. Validate his/her feelings, and consider sharing a story of a time that you might have felt the same way. Let your child know how you survived your experiences.



Lost & Found . . .

What happens if my child loses something?

If you find your child is missing an item he/she brought to camp, please contact the camp office as soon as possible. All lost and found items are washed and bagged up at the end of the week. At the end of the summer all unclaimed items are brought to the CCE office in Watertown to be stored until September 15th. Any belongings not claimed may be added to camp's supply or donated to local charities.

Clothing, bedding, shoes, flashlights, projects, and other items "found" during the week will be considered lost. These items will be handled in the following manner:

- Hung up on our "lost and found" clothesline outside of the infirmary.
- Distributed at lunch time by counselors IF items are labeled.
- Displayed on Friday by counselors at lunch time and during check-out as a last attempt to be "found."
- Washed by the Camp Nurse for storage
- Stored in bags by Week # for inquiries.
- Stored at the CCE office in Watertown until September 15th.
- Unclaimed items will be donated, disposed of, or used to stock Camp if needed.

Please keep in mind . . .

- Campers may have the same items or articles of clothing. Please label everything.
- Labeling items with a camper's first name and last initial helps staff return them.
- Items not "found" during the week at camp are often never claimed.

Medications Left at Camp:

If you forgot to pick up your medications, please contact our office as soon as possible. We will dispose of medications not picked up by September 15th.

Camp Mission and Goals

4-H Camp Wabasso's mission is to provide educational opportunities and hands-on activities in a safe and fun camp setting in the natural environment.

Goals:

A majority of campers will improve their knowledge in at least on activity or skill.

A majority of campers will become more confident in doing things on their own.

A majority of campers will gain on increased sense of responsibility.

A majority of campers will make at least one new friend.

When they come home . . .

What will my child be like after camp?

For many parents the send-off requires enough emotional and logistical effort that there is no time to think about where all this work might lead.

Expect your child to be tired. Not just physically tired, but emotionally tired. You see, camp in its best form engages children not just in activities, but as active members of a community. What does this mean? Your child is about to meet many new people. He/she will then have to share space, the counselor's attention, time, fun, laughter, decision-making, clean-up (yes, chores!), some of his/her own personal possessions, and each other's friends. This requires a level of negotiating and give-and-take that most children do not experience in any place but camp!

This experience alone pays dividends. Many parents say that their children are more cooperative at home after camp, they get along better with their siblings after camp, or even that they now eat a broader range of foods or keep their room clean.

Your child may also be a bit sad after camp. If camp is anything, it is intense. Many children make some of their best friends at camp. Leaving that rich social environment where you learn you can do things of which you never thought you were capable imparts a temporary emptiness. After a good sleep and a nice dinner, they'll perk up. Our advice to you as a parent is, keep that first day or two after camp a bit low key. The stories, songs and memories will gradually come out, and as they do, your child will realize everything he/she brought home from camp.

And as your child reminisces, you may find yourself surprised at the mature young person you are listening to, asking yourself: "When did he/she get so grown up?!" At camp of course!



Frequently Asked Questions . . .

Are there any scholarships to help pay for camp?

Yes! We have limited full and partial scholarships available to low income families, military families, and 4-H youth. We also partner with local community organizations that give out camp scholarships.

How do I apply for a scholarship?

The CCE scholarship deadline was March 15th. However, there are community organizations that are still able to give out camp scholarships, and we do work with families with extenuating circumstances to give out scholarships after the deadline. Please contact campwabasso@cornell.edu for more information.

Does my child need to be in 4-H to come?

No. Children do not need to be in 4-H to attend Camp. However, youth that are in 4-H do receive a \$25 discount when coming to camp.

Who runs 4-H Camp Wabasso?

4-H Camp Wabasso is owned and operated by Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Jefferson County.

I work for CCE Jefferson, do my children receive discount?

Yes! Your children receive a \$25 discount when coming to camp.

Will my camper need to make the bed?

Yes. Each morning, campers return to their cabins to clean their personal spaces. The cabins are then rated by the Camp Nurse on a scale of 1 to 10 according to their neatness. The neatest cabin earns the "Golden Dustpan" award and get to hang the "Golden Dustpan" in their cabin for one day. It is a highly coveted award and the competition is tough!

I've heard about clan groups. What are they?

Campers are assigned to teams when they arrive at camp. The teams are Cougars, Wolves, Bears and Hawks. Teams may not be switched. These are essentially groups where campers have yet another opportunity to make new friends. The main activities campers do in these teams are competitions and evening activities.

Can I rent out Camp?

Yes! 4-H Camp Wabasso is available for rental too! Whether it's for a school field trip on the ropes course, or for a family reunion that's interested in renting all of camp, we can handle it all!

With residential accommodations for up to 140 people, we can handle just about any group. Cabins range from 8-16 persons, and you can customize the rental to suit your needs! The Kitchen, Bathhouses, Dining Hall, Cabins, Craft Building, Jordan Hall and Infirmary are all available to meet your needs. Our rental season is year round, with very limited availability while camp is in session and limited capacity during the winter months. Please contact CCE for availability, to arrange a rental, or for more information on renting camp.

How can I get the latest news from Camp?

Whether you are new to camp, or a seasoned camper, we've got ways for you to get all the latest news:

- 1) Visit our **website**, 4hcampwabasso.org throughout the year to browse photos, download applications, register for camp, and more.
- 2) We're on **Facebook**. Follow **4-H Jefferson County, NY and 4-H Camp Wabasso** for weekly pictures during the summer, important camp announcements and exciting news.
- 3) Log in to your account on **UltraCamp** to see weekly camp photos.
- 4) We'd love to keep you up to date **electronically**. Give us a call or email lgv6@cornell.edu and we can add you to our constant contact list. You will get monthly updates on camp!

