



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**YMCA CAMP LINCOLN and
LITTLE RIVER CAMP at EXETER AREA YMCA**

PARENT HANDBOOK



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IMPACT & MISSION

Community Impact Statement

The Southern District YMCA (SDYMCA) and YMCA Camp Lincoln foster genuine connections, personal growth, and well-being for all through programs and services that focus on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of YMCA Camp Lincoln to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy mind, body and spirit for all. It is in the spirit of the mission that the YMCA opens its doors to all people regardless of religious beliefs, race, age, ability or gender.

YMCA Camp Lincoln uses a holistic approach to create programming that is caring, thoughtful and intentional. We seek to nurture each child's mind, body, and spirit in a healthy environment. Our programming includes:

- Positive relationships with other children, staff members, volunteers and community members
- Physical activity, outdoor play and swimming
- Opportunities to learn new skills such as archery, boating and mountain biking
- Leadership training
- Team building and community service
- Family events

YMCA AREAS OF FOCUS

Youth Development: nurturing the potential of every child and teen

We believe that all participants deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. That's why, through the Y, millions of youth today are cultivating the values, skills and relationships that lead to positive behaviors, better health and educational achievement.

Healthy Living: improving the nation's health and well-being

In communities across the nation, the Y is a leading voice on health and well-being. With a mission centered on balance, the Y brings families closer together, encourages good health and fosters connections through fitness, sports, fun and shared interests. As a result, millions of youth, adults and families are receiving the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve greater health and well-being for their spirit, mind and body.

Social Responsibility: giving back and providing support to our neighbors

The Y has been listening and responding to our communities' most critical social needs for 160 years. Whether developing skills or emotional well-being through education and training, welcoming and connecting diverse demographic populations through global services, or preventing chronic disease and building healthier communities through collaborations with policymakers, the Y fosters the care and respect all people need and deserve. Through the Y, 500,000 volunteers and thousands of donors, leaders and partners across the country are empowering millions of people in the U.S. and around the world to be healthy, confident, connected and secure.

HEALTHY INITIATIVES

Health Innovation

Health Innovation is the YMCA's response to our nation's growing health crisis. YMCA's are redefining how to engage community partners across the country to better support people of all ages who are struggling to achieve and maintain well-being of spirit, mind and body.

YMCA Camp Lincoln is committed to supporting all children, youth, teens, adults, and families whose successful pursuit of health and well-being requires continuous, supportive relationships and environments. YMCA Camp Lincoln is making healthier choices the easier choices by embracing these initiatives for healthy eating and physical activity standards in our programs. By stepping up to meet the needs of our community, local partners are being engaged to do the same.

YMCA STAFF

YMCA Camp Lincoln is committed to hiring the most qualified and experienced staff to care for our campers; we ensure that staff have expertise in youth development and specialized skills. Many of our staff have grown up at camp, journeying from camper to Counselor In Training (CIT) and, finally, to counselor. They know our history, understand each of our traditions and help drive and shape our culture. Each season, we host diverse international staff from a number of different countries. Staff complete First-Aid and CPR training through the American Red Cross. All staff undergo extensive training in our policies and procedures, which emphasize health and safety. Before being hired, all YMCA Camp Lincoln staff are given background and criminal history checks.

Staff to Camper Ratio

Safety is our top priority. Each age group has a minimum of two staff members, and maintains the following staff to camper ratios:

Critters (3 and 4 year olds) – 1:6 ratio

Eagles (grades K-2) – 1:8 ratio

Middlers, Voyagers, Specialty Campers (grades 3-10) – 1:10 ratio

Adventure Trip Campers (ages 11-15) - 1:6 ratio

PROGRAM POLICIES

Camper Dress Code

If clothing is inappropriate for school, then it may not be worn at camp. Campers should dress to participate in all program activities. Clothing should provide appropriate body coverage that allows all participants to feel comfortable. Clothing and footwear should allow for outside play. Only closed-toe shoes are permitted. Campers spend the day outside, rain or shine, so they should dress appropriately for the weather. If a participant is not dressed appropriately as outlined in this policy and at the discretion of program leadership, the participant will be asked to change in to clothes they brought, or in to clothes provided by the program.

Electronics Usage

The use of electronics, including cell phones, iPods and video games are not permitted at YMCA Camp Lincoln. Campers who ride the bus may use these items on the way to and from camp. All electronics must be turned off and put away as soon as the bus reaches the camp road. Electronics being used during the camp day will be stored in the office until dismissal, and returned to campers upon boarding the bus at the end of the day. YMCA Camp Lincoln is not responsible for the loss or damage of electronic devices at camp.

Authorized Releases

YMCA Camp Lincoln will release your child to parents/guardians, as well as emergency contacts or authorized pick up persons authorized on his/her registration form. Staff members will ask for identification until they become familiar with the pick-up person.

If a person NOT on the registration form needs to pick up your child, advance notification in the form of a written note, email or phone call must be provided. Staff will require identification from this person. Staff will not release children to an unidentified adult without identification and permission from a parent/guardian.

YMCA Camp Lincoln is to be notified of any custody issues involving children who are enrolled in camp. A notarized, certified copy of the court order must be provided to program leadership to enforce pre-existing or new legal court orders.

Illness Concerns

YMCA Camp Lincoln follows school policies with regards to illness. If your child is vomiting, or has a fever over 100 degrees, they are unable to attend camp. Campers must be free of fever and other symptoms for 24 hours without medication in order to return to program.

If a child becomes ill during camp, a parent, guardian or emergency contact will be called to come and pick up the child. If a parent cannot be reached, the Camp Nurse or designee will contact emergency contacts listed on the camper's registration form.

Parents or guardians are required to notify YMCA Camp Lincoln whenever a child has been exposed to a contagious disease. In the case of communicable infections, the child must be treated with antibiotics for a minimum of 24 hours before attending the program.

Head lice can be spread whenever there is direct contact of the head or hair with an infested individual. Lice can also be spread through the sharing of personal articles like hats, towels, helmets, hair ties, etc. If we discover your camper has head lice at camp, we will call you and ask that they be picked-up and treated at home. Per recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), campers should receive treatment and prevention of further infestation. After treatment occurs, campers can then return to the regular camp program.

Emergency Medical Attention and Communication

Parents/guardians will be notified immediately to pick up their child if an injury or illness requires immediate medical treatment. Emergency situations may result in ambulance transportation with, or without, parent/guardian permission as per participant waiver signed at time of registration.

Trained staff will take the following steps if emergency contacts cannot be reached:

- A message will be left with the parent and emergency contact(s) that an ambulance has been called
- Camp Director or her/his designee, will accompany the camper to the hospital and remain with her/him until the parent/guardian arrives
- A YMCA Camp Lincoln accident report will be completed for all injuries

In addition, the Camp Nurse may call you if your child has a fever or if he/she deem it necessary. Examples of when a parent may be called are; fever, inconsistent blood sugar, lice, severe insect bite, allergic reaction, emotional distress, injury or general signs of sickness/ illness. The general camp practice is to contact parents when there is concern about a camper's health and/or when a situation is not progressing as expected.

Medication Administration

Prescribed medication will only be administered under the following guidelines:

- The parent must complete the *Medication Authorization Form* found on the website forms page (sdymca.org/forms). Medications will not be administered to participants without the original script and written authorization from the parent
- Non-prescription medication
 - At Camp Lincoln, medications will be administered as per Standing Orders issued by partnering physician. All attempts will be made to consult parents/guardians prior to administration
 - If there is a non-prescription medication you know your camper will need to take while at camp, please fill out the *Medication Authorization Form* in advance.
- Medication is to be given directly to a staff member upon the camper's arrival at camp or bus stop.
- All medication is kept secure in a locked area on-site of the programming, or in a "lock box" if program is going off-site
- All medication must be in its original container with the prescription label on it.
- All medications are administered by the program leadership, nurse, or designate
- Epi-Pens and Inhalers can be kept on the person as per state regulations.
 - The Camp Director and Nurse will work with individuals to develop the best suited plan based on age, activities and usage.

Accommodations and Special Needs

All children with varying abilities are welcome at YMCA Camp Lincoln. If a child is assigned a 1:1 aide during the school day for any reason, an aide is required to accompany the child during camp. We are unable hire or provide aides. YMCA Camp Lincoln reserves the right to dismiss a child from program if the needs of the participant cannot be met, or if the child's conduct is not in the best interest of program goals or the other participants. Call Camp Director to discuss accommodations for children requiring special considerations.

Behavior Management Policy

Camp Lincoln supports all children through the use of positive behavior guidance techniques. Camp Lincoln believes that engaging children in developmentally appropriate activities and providing positive social interactions is the best way to promote positive behavior. Staff members actively supervise children during all aspects of the program in order to model and encourage desired behaviors.

It is understood that negative behaviors do occur. Staff members are trained to handle incidents by setting clear expectations and consistent consequences.

In the event of behavior concerns, YMCA Camp Lincoln staff will follow the protocol below:

1. Counselors will bring the behavior to the attention of the appropriate Unit Leader. The Unit Leader will redirect the behavior, and contact the camper's parent or guardian to discuss behavior and expectations.
2. If the behavior continues, the Unit Leader or Camp Director will contact the parents or guardian to collaborate a behavior plan for the success of the camper. Expectations and consequences for future misbehaviors will be clearly described and agreed upon.
3. If the behavior continues the parents or guardians will need to make arrangements to meet with the Unit Leader and Camp Director before the child is to return to camp. A written contract will be created and signed by all parties that agree on the expectations moving forward for the campers success in the program.
4. If the behavior continues, the camper will then be asked to leave the program. Removal from the program can be short term (the remainder of the day, or remainder of the session) or it can be long term (the remainder of the summer). This is at the discretion of the Camp Director, and is based on the severity of the behavior.

Violent or threatening behavior, such as injuring a child or staff member or causing damage to YMCA Camp Lincoln and/or another's property can result in immediate suspension or termination from the program.

If your child is terminated from a YMCA Camp Lincoln program, we reserve the right to refuse attendance to other Southern District YMCA programs, including but not limited to vacation camps, in-service day trips, homeschool programs, summer camp and the Exeter Area YMCA.

Bullying

YMCA Camp Lincoln advocates for a "bully free" environment within all programs.

If staff members find that bullying has taken place, consequences will be tailored to appropriately address the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the bully and victims, and the participant's history of behavior and performances. All measures shall be designed to correct the behavior, prevent other occurrences, protect and provide support for the victim and take corrective action for the documented occurrences of bullying.

Weapons

For the safety of all program participants and staff, YMCA Camp Lincoln does not allow any potentially dangerous items to be brought into any Camp programs. Possession or use of firearms and other dangerous weapons on YMCA grounds or in YMCA programs is strictly prohibited, and is grounds for immediate termination from the program. YMCA Camp Lincoln reserves the right to inspect all packages, bags, backpacks, purses or suspicious clothing to assure compliance with this policy.

Tax Information

Our tax identification number is **04-3383996**. YMCA Camp Lincoln provides billing statements in accordance with the programs billing policies later defined. Families are responsible to maintain necessary financial records for their child care expenses, and can log into their accounts online to print statements for tax purposes. **End of year statements are not provided.**

Leadership Team

Camp Director – Reid Van Keulen – (reid@ymcacamplincoln.org)
Assistant Camp Director - Emily Hewes – (emily@ymcacamplincoln.org)
Program Director – Geof Harris – (geof@ymcacamplincoln.org)
Office Manager- Kristina Wagnitz – (kristina@ymcacamplincoln.org)

Contact Information

YMCA Camp Lincoln
PO Box 729 / 67 Ball Road
Kingston, NH 03848

Phone - 603-642-3361
Fax - 603-642-4340

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00 – 8:15	Pre-Camp
8:15 – 8:30	Drop-offs at Camp
8:30 – 8:45	Morning Amphitheatre
8:55 – 9:15	Cabin Time
9:15 – 9:25	Unit Flag
9:35 – 10:35	Period 1
10:45 – 11:45	Period 2
11:55 – 12:25	Lunch
12:25 – 1:25	Free Period
1:35 – 2:35	Period 3
2:45 – 3:45	Period 4
3:45 – 4:00	Unit Time
4:00 – 4:15	Afternoon Amphitheatre
4:30	Pick up at camp, buses depart
4:30 – 6:00	Post-Camp

TRANSPORTATION & ATTENDANCE

Absences

During the summer, if your camper will be absent, notify the Camp Office as soon as possible. Absentee emails will be sent mid-morning to confirm with families if no notification has been received. Notifications can be sent in advance to the Camp Office.

Off-Site Drop off or Pick up

Due to liability, YMCA Camp Lincoln does not permit any off-site drop-offs or pick-ups. Campers participating in off-site field trips must be dropped off and picked up from Camp Lincoln or ride the bus home.

Drop-Off @ Camp

Beginning at 8:15 AM, parents/guardians drive to the top of the hill and wait in their car. A staff member will greet each vehicle, escort the camper out of the car, and check the camper in to camp. In effort to minimize congestion during drop-off, parents/guardians should leave after their camper has been checked in to camp.

Medications should be handed to staff at this time on the first day of camp.

If a camper is having a difficult time leaving their parent/guardian &/or vehicle in the morning, staff members will work with the parent/guardian to transition the camper in to camp. Additional camp leadership may be called on to help the family and other staff members. If necessary, camp leadership will develop strategies with the family to help the camper with the daily transition to camp.

Pick-Up @ Camp

Beginning around 4:30 PM – after final attendance for the day has cleared and all campers' final transportation is confirmed – parents/guardians drive to the top of the hill and wait in their car. A staff member will bring each camper to their car when dismissals have begun. Every vehicle will be given a "name card" on the first day at pick-up. Please write your camper's name on the card so counselors can easily spot which car each camper goes in to. Please be patient with the staff through this process. Every camper must get home safely and this process takes more time on some days. Personal identification of drivers will be checked until staff members are familiar with each camper's pick-up driver.

Drop-Off @ Bus Stop

When dropping campers off at a bus stop, parents/guardians will need to walk their camper(s) to the bus and check-in with the bus counselor. Campers may not be left unattended at the bus stop at any time.

Medications should be turned in to bus counselors at this time on the first day of camp.

Pick-Up @ Bus Stop

Parents/guardians need to approach the bus and show their photo ID and sign their camper out with bus counselors. Camper's safety is very important to us, so please allow time to show identification until staff members are able to identify camper's regular pick-up rides. It is a good idea to arrive 5 minutes before your assigned stop time. Because of actual dismissal times from camp and traffic between stops, bus times may fluctuate. If regular occurrences of missed times become regular, contact the Camp Director. Campers will not be left unattended at the bus stop at any time.

Late Arrival

If a camper is coming late to camp, parents/guardians need to escort the camper to the Camp Office and check them in at the front counter. A staff member will walk with the camper to the place they are supposed to be.

Early Release

If a camper needs to leave camp early, the parent/guardian should notify camp in the morning via phone or email. Camp requires adequate notice so the camper can be at the

office ready for dismissal. Early pick-ups are permitted until 3:45pm. If dismissal is requested after 3:45 pm, the camper(s) will be placed in regular pick-up and the parent/guardian will need to wait until final dismissal has begun.

There will be no dismissals between 3:45 and 4:30.

For the safety of our campers and staff, campers will not be dismissed during inclement weather.

Transportation Changes

Notify the camp office, in writing, of any changes in your child's pick-up or drop-off procedure. When picking your camper up at the office, be prepared to show your identification before signing your camper out. If you send an individual who is not a parent or guardian to pick-up your camper, contact the office in advance via phone or email. If you need to schedule an early dismissal, please inform the office ahead of time so we can have your child ready for your arrival.

Please note: Due to the popularity of our bus routes, we are not able to allow campers to change buses during a session.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

If you need to contact camp during the camp day, call 603-642-3361. Campers will not have access to a telephone during the day. Leadership staff is happy to relay messages as necessary.

YMCA Camp Lincoln has Emergency Procedures that are reviewed on an annual basis. In the event of an emergency or delay in programming, communication will occur through phone calls and emails to parents/guardians of participants immediately impacted by the event. A letter will be sent home if deemed appropriate by the Director of Camping. In the event of an emergency, please be conscious of our limited phone space and trust that we will contact you if your child is being immediately impacted by the event.

YMCA Camp Lincoln has evacuation plans in place in the event of an emergency at Seabrook Power Station. If this type of event occurs all of our campers and staff will be transported to either West High School or Beech Street High School in Manchester. Please do not attempt to come to camp to pick your child up. Someone from camp will be in contact with you notify you of your camper's location.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO CAMP?

- Backpack
- Closed-toe shoes (sneakers)
- Swimsuit and towel
- Sunscreen
- Lunch and Snacks (no refrigeration required)
- Refillable water bottle
- Bug spray (optional)

Other items may be necessary due to the nature of the campers Specialty Camp, Activity Periods, Adventure Trips, or Special Events. "Equipment" lists will be sent home as necessary.

All of these items are important to keep campers safe and comfortable throughout the day. Please label everything with the camper's name! Counselors will make effort to return items to their owners if names are on the items.

ITEMS TO LEAVE AT HOME

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco – Illegal drugs, alcohol, medical marijuana or tobacco use are not permitted on camp property. Campers found to be under the influence of or in possession of any drugs or alcohol at Camp Lincoln will be dismissed from the program.

Weapons – No personal weapons of any kind (including, but not limited to, guns, knives or explosives) are permitted on camp property.

Pets – Please do not bring your pets to camp during the camp program, or any family events throughout the summer.

Personal sports equipment – Camp Lincoln will provide all necessary equipment for the activities offered during camp programs. If campers prefer to bring their own equipment, (including, but not limited to mountain bikes, helmets and baseball mitts, it is permitted with permission from the camp office. YMCA Camp Lincoln bears no responsibility or liability for the personal property of campers. Owners of personal sports equipment are required to follow all camp policies related to the program area involved. The Director of Camping and Program Director have final say over what equipment can and cannot be used based on safety protocol.

LOST & FOUND

Lost and found items are collected at the “Lost and Found Canoe” next to the amphitheater and will be available to pick up at any time. During Family Night, lost and found items will be on display and parents are encouraged to check for missing items.

At the end of each camp session (every two-weeks), lost and found items are cleaned and donated to local charities. Due to the amount of lost and found accumulated each week, staff members are unable to search for items. Parents and campers are welcome to look for lost belongings before donation. Items of significant financial value are held at the Camp Office through September.

FAMILY NIGHTS

Camp Lincoln Family Nights are held the second Thursday of each two-week Traditional Day session from 6pm to 8pm. Our free Family Nights are a great chance for parents to meet staff and participate in the fun of camp through daily activities. Dinner is provided. The evening ends with songs and skits around the campfire.

LAYOVER

Before Family Night, campers can choose to head home at the end of the camp day as usual and return at 6:00, or stay for Layover. During Layover, campers can stay at camp at the end of the day, and meet their parents when they arrive for family night at 6:00. All campers must be signed out by 6:00 at the start of family night. Campers must have a parent, guardian or their designee present during family night. There can be no exceptions. Advance registration is required to participate in Layover.

OVERNIGHTS

At the end of each Family Night, campers entering grades 6 and up can choose to spend the night at camp. Sign up in advance is required, and is now part of our online registration. Camp Lincoln will provide breakfast and lunch for campers the following day. The Overnight experience is staffed by Camp Lincoln counselors and senior staff. The cost of the overnight is \$10, in order to cover the cost of the counselors and ensure a safe program.

COMMUNITY NIGHTS

Camp Lincoln Community Nights are held monthly in June, July and August. They are free and open to the public. Community Nights run from 6pm to 8pm, and include dinner and many camp activities for the entire family.

ADVENTURE TRIPS

Adventure Camps begin on Sunday nights at 5:00PM. Dinner WILL NOT be provided, so please eat before arriving at camp. Campers will receive a welcome packet including a packing list and itinerary before camp begins. Adventure campers must be picked up between 5:30 and 6:00 on Friday night at Camp Lincoln.

PAYMENT POLICY

At the time of registration (prior to May 15), the following fees must be paid:

- Registration fee of \$35 per camper
- 50% of your total tuition deposit
- Remaining balances are due May 15

These fees are non-transferable and non-refundable

Any changes to your enrollment must be made in writing, are subject to availability and will incur a \$15 change fee.

Registrations submitted after May 15 must be paid in full at time of registration.

Remaining balances after June 1 will result in a \$25 late fee and will jeopardize the camper's ability to attend the program.

Returned checks will incur a \$25 charge payable by cashier's check or money order. All future payments must be made with a credit card, money order, or cashier's check.

Refunds & Cancellations

Registration fee and deposits are not refundable.

Cancellations must be made in writing thirty days in advance of canceled session or full tuition payment will be due. Registration fees and deposits are non-refundable.

Cancellations for medical reasons must be submitted with a doctor's note. Partial refunds for medical cancellations may be awarded at the discretion of the Camp Director.

Payment Plans

Families are able to establish payment plans with Camp Lincoln to manage account balances. To learn more about establishing a Payment Plan, contact the Camp Office Manager.

Financial Assistance

YMCA Camp Lincoln serves all regardless of ability to pay. Through generous support of community members, foundations and grants, Camp Lincoln is able to provide financial assistance so families can participate in summer camp. Assistance is provided based on established need and program enrollment.

It is important to completely fill out the Financial Assistance form. The following documentation is necessary to submit with the form:

- A registration form for YMCA Camp Lincoln(online submission)
- At least 2 copies of your most recent paystub
- A copy of your most recent tax information
- Any state subsidy that you may be receiving
- A letter stating the family's benefit of program participation

Financial Assistance applications are reviewed during the first week of each month (January through June). All information is kept confidential. Once the Financial Assistance Committee has made a decision, families are notified by e-mail. Financial assistance forms must be submitted annually to YMCA Camp Lincoln.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How are food allergies handled at camp?

Camp Lincoln is not a nut free environment. Campers bring their own food from home, and sharing is discouraged. A nut free area is provided at lunch time, and campers can choose to sit there if they desire.

Should I send sunscreen and bug spray to camp?

Please apply sun screen and bug spray to your camper before arriving at camp each morning. Our staff will remind campers to reapply throughout the day, and assist younger campers if needed. Please send your own bug spray and sun screen with your camper's full name clearly written on it. Campers are responsible for their own bug spray and sun screen, but Camp does keep some on hand if it is lost or forgotten.

Does YMCA Camp Lincoln offer swimming lessons?

We believe that swimming is a valuable life skill. With that in mind, all campers up through fifth grade will be assigned a swim period in their schedule each day. On the first day of the session, all campers will take a swim test so our waterfront staff can place them in an appropriate swim class level. Each day, campers will have a swim lesson for part of the swim period, and also some free swim time. It is our hope that campers will be confident in the water by sixth grade, so our older campers can choose to sign up for swim each day, but it is not required.

How are campers divided up at Camp?

Traditional camp at Camp Lincoln is made up of three units: Eagles unit includes our Critters (3 and 4 year olds) up through those campers entering second grade. The Middlers unit contains our third through fifth graders, and our Voyagers unit is for those entering grades six through nine.

Campers entering grades four through nine can choose to join the Specialty camp (Spec Ops unit) instead of Traditional camp. Some specialty camps stay on-site at Camp Lincoln, and some leave camp every day to visit other locations.

Campers aged eleven to fifteen can participate in Adventure trips, and fourteen year olds may choose to be Jr CIT's.

How are cabin assignments made?

Campers are assigned to cabin groups each session by their Unit Leader based on many factors, including camper age and grade, staffing, and behavior. Campers may request to be placed in a cabin with a friend. Unit Leaders will take into account one cabin placement request per session. Requests must be mutual and made in advance. Cabin placement changes will not be made once the session has begun. Requests can be made at the time of registration, or emailed to the Camp Office at least one week before the start of camp. Unit leaders will do their best to accommodate, but cabin requests are not guaranteed.

What is different about the Critters program?

Our Critters (ages 3 and 4) follow a modified schedule to allow adequate time for bathroom breaks, snacks and travel time around camp. They have a "rest time" after lunch where many of them sleep. Critters who choose not to sleep will be provided with quiet activities such as books or coloring. All Critters must be able to use the bathroom independently, and change into and out of a swim suit without assistance.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR CAMP

Thank you for trusting YMCA Camp Lincoln to care for your child this summer. Camp Lincoln is a great place to learn, grow, make new friends and try new things. For some of our campers, we know this might be the first time away from home without family. Here are a few tips to help your child (and you!) feel more prepared for that big first step.

REMEMBER, CAMP IS FUN!

Children are naturally excited about camp. As parents, we might feel worried for our children, but we don't need to let them know. If you seem stressed about camp, they will feel stressed. If you are excited, they will be excited. If you are worried about camp, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are happy to answer your questions. But when talking with your child, talk to them about what a great time they are going to have. Keep them excited, and they will feel confident and ready for their first day.

RESPONSIBILITY AT CAMP

If your camper will be away from home for the first time, here are a few things to talk about with them before the first day of camp:

Make sure your camper can identify all of the items they are bringing to camp. If you buy a new swim suit they've never seen and put it in their bag, they won't recognize it among the other swim suits at camp. Have your camper pack his or her own bag each day so they remember what they need to bring home again each night. Expect that these items make it home. If they don't, remind your camper to check the lost and found at camp. Label everything with your camper's full name. We have over 600 campers here each day, so initials aren't enough.

Sun Screen and bug spray are essential items for comfort and safety at camp. Both should be applied at home before coming to camp, and reapplied during the day. While our counselors are happy to help apply these items, it's great if your child can do some of it independently. The more time counselors spend applying sun screen, the less time there is for adventure. Have your child practice applying both at home. Be sure to remind them to keep away from eyes and mouth. Sun screen sticks and sprays make application faster and easier.

Campers who attend Camp Lincoln must be able to use the bathroom independently, including wiping, flushing, washing hands and changing into and out of swim suits each day. A wet swim suit can be tricky to remove if a camper hasn't done it without help. Practice putting on and taking off swim suits, and placing all clothing back in their backpack when done. This will help them feel confident and eliminate lost items.

Choose footwear wisely. Camp is located in the woods. Campers enjoy running, hiking, climbing and walking on uneven ground, with roots, rocks and sticks. Make sure their footwear keeps them safe and comfortable. Toes must be covered, so please do not send flip flops or other open toe sandals. If your camper does not know how to tie shoes, please send them with shoes that don't need to be tied. They are too likely to walk around with untied shoes and trip. There are plenty of great sandal options with covered toes which are sturdy enough for camp.

HOMESICKNESS ISN'T JUST FOR OVERNIGHT

Although campers are only with us during the day, some of our younger campers haven't been away from home before. This can cause them to be nervous before the first day of camp. Here are some tips to help them feel confident and prepared.

Practice

Have your camper spend a day with someone familiar. Go out with grandparents, or spend the day at a friend's house without Mom and Dad. Help them learn that it's fun to leave home, and that you will be back to pick them up at the appropriate time.

Visit camp

We offer a summer kick-off party and open house with tours of camp. Meeting staff, seeing our facility and asking questions in person can alleviate a lot of anxiety. Your camper will feel more comfortable arriving at camp for the first day because they are familiar with the facility.

When dropping your camper off, allow them to experience camp in their own way.

Remember, camp builds confidence! So when your camper gets out of the car, and heads to camp for the day, they will feel proud and excited. If you linger and watch them, they may wonder why. They may assume they can't make it on their own, and start to question themselves. If your camper has a difficult time adjusting, we will call you. If you are worried, you are welcome to call or email our office. We would be happy to check on your camper and give you a call back.

If your camper is nervous, please don't promise to pick them up early.

Remind them that camp is a lot of fun, and you can't wait to hear about their day. If you offer to pick them up early, they may feel like you don't believe they can be successful.

Little River Camp at Exeter Area YMCA

Camping Director – Reid Van Keulen – (reid@ymcacamplincoln.org)

Assistant Director – Emily Hewes – (emily@ymcacamplincoln.org)

Contact Information

Little River Camp
56 Linden St
Exeter, NH 03833

Phone - 603-642-3361

Fax - 603-642-4340

Daily Schedule at Little River Camp

7:00 – 8:15	Pre Camp (Optional)
8:00 – 8:15	Drop off at Exeter Area YMCA
8:15 – 8:45	Camp Opening
9:00 – 10:15	Activity 1
10:30 – 11:45	Activity 2
11:45 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 1:15	Free Time
1:30 – 3:30	All Camp Activity/Special Program
3:30 – 4:00	Camp Closing
4:00 – 6:00	Post Camp (Optional)

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

Transportation is not provided for this program. Pick up and drop off is at the Exeter Area YMCA at 56 Linden Street, Exeter, NH.

Arrive at camp between 8:00 and 8:15 am. Check in is outside, in front of the Exeter Area YMCA. Sign your camper in with our staff, and drop off any medications your camper may need to take during the day.

Pick up at the end of the day is at 4:00 pm. Campers need to be signed out with a staff member, and photo ID is required. If someone other than a parent will be picking up your camper, please inform the office, or the camp staff at drop off in the morning.

If your camper will be absent, or if you need to pick your camper up early, please contact the camp office at 603-642-3361, or email kristina@ymcacamplincoln.org.

Items to bring to camp each day

- Backpack
- Closed-toe shoes (sneakers)
- Swimsuit and towel (Tues/Wed/Thurs)
- Sunscreen
- Lunch and Snacks (no refrigeration required)
- Refillable water bottle
- Bug spray (optional)

Special Activities

Each day at Little River Camp, after lunch, campers will participate in all camp activities.

Mondays and Fridays – Group games, scavenger hunts, water activities, hikes, and more. A new adventure every day.

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays – Take a bus to Camp Lincoln for swimming, archery and climbing.

Wednesdays – Dress up and be prepared for fun, theme day activities! Theme information will be emailed the week before the session.

Medications

Medications will be stored in a locked location by our camp staff. Medications must be provided in their original containers, with the camper's name and dosage clearly labelled on the container.

Medications will be administered by a YMCA staff member trained in the administration of medication.

Epi-pens and inhalers may be carried by campers so they can be retrieved quickly in an emergency.