

Camp Clover Point Camper and Parent Agreement

Internet and other Technologies

Parents:

We have always taken the safety and well-being of our campers—your children—very seriously. After all, giving your children over to the care of other people is perhaps the greatest act of trust you as a parent can engage in. We aim to do everything we humanly can to earn and keep that trust. We also know we cannot do this without your help. With more and more children using the Internet, cell phones and other technologies at younger ages, we appeal to you as parents to partner with us to ensure that your children continue to have the safest, most wholesome experience with us at camp as possible. Please read this policy carefully. It will help you understand the challenges some technologies pose to the continued health and safety of our camp community. Please also review and read to your child the enclosed policies regarding the Internet, social networking sites and exchanging contact information with their counselors. As always we invite you to call us if you have any questions or concerns about any of these issues.

Camp Clover Point has a “no-cell phone” policy at camp. Aside from the fact that cell phones are expensive and can get lost or stolen and that the physical camp environment is not kind to such items, there is a fundamental problem with campers having cell phones at camp, and that is trust. When children come to camp they—and you—are making a leap of faith, temporarily transferring their primary care from you as their parents to us and their counselors. This is one of the growth-producing, yet challenging aspects of camp. As children learn to trust other caring adults, they grow and learn, little by little, to solve some of their own challenges. We believe this emerging independence is one of the greatest benefits of camp. Contacting you by phone essentially means they have not made this transition. It prevents us from getting to problems that may arise and addressing them quickly. Sending a cell phone to camp is like saying to your child that you as the parent haven’t truly come to peace with the notion of them being away from you and in our care. We agree to tell you if your child is experiencing a challenge in their adjustment to camp. *You can help* by talking with your child *before they leave for camp* and telling them that there is always someone they can reach out to, whether it be their cabin counselor, camp staff or Extension staff. We are all here to help, but if *you* don’t trust us, your children certainly won’t! Another drawback of having cell phones at camp is many of them have built-in cameras. It has happened at some camps around the country that children have secretly taken photographs of other campers or staff during changing or showering times and later uploaded those images onto the Internet.

Cyber-bullying and harassment has happened at a few camps around the country when campers have sent rude, demeaning, intimidating or vulgar e-mails or IMs to other campers or have created false screen names to harass members of the camp community or spread false and damaging information about them. We want to be sure Internet communication is fun, positive and an important way for campers to stay in touch with their friends. Our “Policy for Campers,” which we are asking you to read over and then read with your child, covers our response to this problem. In addition, *we have outlined the steps you or your child should take should they receive an abusive, demeaning or otherwise threatening or inappropriate Internet communication.* Being familiar with these steps is part of the overall safety and healthy practice you should have in place with your child if they are online, regardless of whether they attend camp or not. Sharing them with you is one way we felt we could support your effort to protect your children whether they are at camp or not.

Campers:

We understand that email, IM and social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace can be positive avenues to express yourself and keep in touch with your friends. As a camper you have the right to exchange emails, IM, or befriend other campers in any way that you **AND YOUR PARENTS** see fit.

Camp Clover Point has a different policy when it comes to exchanging contact information with your counselor. We will provide you with your counselor’s snail mail address if requested. Any other contact

including email addresses, IM screen names, cell phone numbers, social networking profiles, blogs, or any Internet contact is not condoned by Camp Clover Point. Your counselor knows that this type of exchange is not permitted.

We also ask that you think about the emails, IMs and comments on social networking sites that you may share with other campers. Remember:

- a. Keep what you say respectful of campers and staff alike
- b. Do not use obscenities, vulgar or sexual language
- c. Do not say threatening, harassing, or intimidating things to or about other campers or staff
- d. Do not post pictures online that would embarrass or violate anyone's privacy
- e. Do not pose as another camper online or spread false information about anyone or say derogatory or threatening things to or about anyone
- f. Do not use a website, blog, or email to talk about things that are against camp policy like drugs, alcohol, bullying, or sexual things

We are happy to say that most internet communication is POSITIVE! In the rare case where we discover negative messages to other campers or staff our policy is to call the parents of the campers who sent the messages and share the contents with them.

We want you to be safe on the Internet. **If you receive a threatening email, IM or message on your personal website—one that is mocking or uses vulgar or harassing language tell your parents immediately. If you think the message might be from someone at camp, ask your parents to notify Extension staff immediately!**

Camp Clover Point has a "no cell phone" policy at camp. Any cell phones brought to camp must be turned in to Extension staff upon arrival. They will be returned when camp has ended. The use of head phones with any personal electronic device is also not allowed. We encourage children to participate fully with their peers at camp and headphones can be isolating. We do allow personal music devices to be used with speakers. As we are trying to create the safest environment possible we also do not allow campers to have any device that has wireless internet capability. If a camper has a prohibited device, it will be held in the office until the end of camp.

If you would like to take pictures at camp you may bring a camera. A disposable film camera is preferred (with an affixed return address label for i.d.). As with other electronic devices, the physical camp environment is not kind to digital cameras, and they can be easily broken, lost or stolen. The first afternoon of camp, campers (with counselors present) will be allowed to take pictures of their bunk area inside their cabin. For the remainder of camp, only outside pictures are permitted. We do not permit any type of video camera at camp.

PLEASE SIGN BELOW TO INDICATE THE FOLLOWING:

- I have read over and discussed the enclosed internet policy with my child(ren).
- My child(ren) understands the importance of internet safety and I as a parent take full responsibility for their internet use and communication with Camp Clover Point staff and campers. I understand the risks associated with children and the internet in today's world.
- I will not send my child(ren) to camp with listed prohibited items.

Child's Name _____

Date _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____

Child's Signature _____

Second Child's Signature _____

Witnesses' Signature _____