

Camp Birch Trails Parent Packet

Thank you for registering your daughter for Camp Birch Trails. We plan to have a summer full of great fun, great memories, and great friends. Please read the following information carefully. It contains all the important details you'll need to know before your daughter heads to camp.

Contact Information

Questions about camp: Danielle Polzin 888.747.6945 ext. 3371 or dpolzin@gsnwgl.org

Questions about registration: Yvonne Duwe ext. 4510 or yduwe@gsnwgl.org
Christin Stapelmann 888.747.6945 ext. 5511 or cstapelmann@gsnwgl.org

After May 15 you can reach Danielle at camp: 715.536.6888 or dpolzin@gsnwgl.org

VISIT CAMP

There will be an open house on Saturday, June 12th. Check out Ethel's Yurt Village and the Graebel Lodge. Counselors will be available to answer questions, play games and give tours. The waterfront will be open...so bring your swimsuit. Parents are encouraged to invite friends and non-Girl Scouts. Families are welcome anytime from 1 – 4 p.m.

Forms We Need from You:

Health History and Physical Exam Form

The Health History section of the form needs to be completed within six (6) months prior to your child attending camp. All campers need to have a current form. **THIS FORM MUST BE BROUGHT TO CAMP WITH GIRLS.** Do not mail ahead of time to camp or the council. **If your child has special health needs of which the camp staff should be aware, please contact the camp director at least two (2) weeks prior to her coming to camp.**

A licensed medical professional MUST sign the Health Exam section of the form within 24 months of your child's stay at camp. Please make a copy of the form for your records once it is completed. A copy of the form dated within 24 months of the date of attendance is acceptable.

**PARTICIPANTS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND WITHOUT
THIS COMPLETED FORM**

Balance Due

All final payments are due four (4) weeks prior to the camp session start date. Mail to: GSNWGL, 3511 Camp Phillips Road, Schofield, WI 54476.

Camper Confidentiality and Parent Release Form

The first page will help us know and serve girls better. The second page is a security measure to ensure girls are picked up by the appropriate person(s). Please mail four weeks prior to camp session start date to: GSNWGL, 4693 Lynndale Drive, Appleton, WI 54913.

**GIRLS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO BOARD THE BUS OR GET DROPPED OFF AT CAMP
WITHOUT A COMPLETED HEALTH HISTORY AND EXAM FORM IN HAND.**

Medication

All medication sent with your camper to camp **MUST** be in original containers with the doctor's name and dosage directions. The camp health center has a supply of commonly used over-the-counter medications. It is not necessary to send these to camp. The health supervisor will keep all of your child's medications, vitamins, ointments, etc. in the health center during her stay at camp. If she is on a trip, we will send her medications, etc. with her. The counselor will hold them for safekeeping. Inhalers, bee sting kits, and other necessary items will be kept with campers at all times as determined by the health supervisor and information you note on the Health History form.

If your child has specific health needs (i.e. injections, specialized equipment, dietary concerns) contact the resident camp director well ahead of your child's attendance. Staff can then be prepared to meet these needs.

Illness, Communicable Disease, Lice

Do not send your child to camp if she has been exposed to a communicable disease or if she is ill. We encourage all parents to check their children for lice before they come to camp. **Camp Birch Trails has a no nit policy.** This means that we will not allow any child with lice or nits to remain at camp. All girls are screened upon arrival at camp. Any child with lice or a communicable disease will need to leave camp. We will expect the parent/guardian to pick up the camper as soon as possible.

Transportation

The camp fee includes transportation to and from camp. **We make no refunds or adjustments for alternate methods of transportation.** Generally, pick-up times are Sunday morning, with girls arriving at camp at 2 p.m. The buses depart camp at 2 p.m. on Friday, with bus stop times later in the afternoon. If you will be driving your camper to camp, plan to arrive between 1:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. **Staff will not assume responsibility for your camper until this time.** Please give your daughter lunch before she gets on the bus or send a bag lunch to be eaten during the ride to camp. If you are picking your daughter up from camp, plan to arrive at 1:30 p.m. on the last day of the session.

Emergency Contacts

Make sure that you or your emergency contacts will be available while your child is at camp. Reasons camp staff would contact you include, but are not limited to the following:

- Homesickness of your child that is getting worse not better
- Conduct by your child that is inappropriate at Girl Scout Camp
- Illness or injury to your child that requires her stay in the Health Center for an extended period of time, requires medical attention outside of the camp health services or requires your child to be picked up by parents
- Changes in transportation times or locations

Behavior

All girls are expected to follow the Girl Scout Promise and Law while at camp. Council policy states that girls and adults may not use weapons, alcoholic beverages, unprescribed drugs, or tobacco products at Girl Scout functions or on camp property. If, *for any reason*, a child's behavior is not within our expectation of a camper at Camp Birch Trails, we will expect the parent/guardian to pick up the camper as soon as possible. This is at the expense of the parent/guardian. We will not grant a refund of session fees.

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Homesickness

Many campers, no matter the age, experience homesickness to some degree. Here are some suggestions of things that can be done to help a camper deal with her feelings and enable her to enjoy her time at camp.

- Avoid statements such as, "I'm going to miss you terribly." Camp will be a terrific experience. Be careful not to make your child feel bad about going away.
- Avoid statements such as, "If you don't like camp, you can come home," or, "You can call me whenever you want." This tends to compound the problem because it's not giving camp a fair chance. Often girls experiencing adjustment issues will close their minds to adapting to camp and focus immediately on going or calling home.
- Make sure she knows that homesickness is a normal feeling in a new environment.
- Prepare your child to care for herself. Have her spend a weekend with a friend or relative if she has not spent much time away from home alone. Teach her to make her bed. Let her set the table, help with packing, etc.
- Remember -- campers cannot use the phone at camp. ***Please do not tell your child that this is an option.***
- Remember--the camp staff wants your child to have a positive experience at camp. Make good use of the health form and the confidential sheet; tell us all you can about your child: past homesickness, what helped, etc. Call the camp anytime you have concerns or want to relay information about your child.
- Also, know that if your child is quite homesick at camp and what we are doing is not working, we will call you to get your ideas or suggestions on how to help her have fun and enjoy her stay away from home!

Mail

Everyone loves to get mail at camp. Cheerful mail, not worrisome news or news what she is missing, is the best type of mail to send. If you send a lot of mail at once and do not want your camper to get it all at the same time, just note the day you want it delivered on the envelope. Make sure to include a return address in case we get mail after the camper leaves camp. As mail delivery is slow, mail letters 2-3 days ahead of time so your camper will have mail waiting for her. **Do not send food to your camper.** It attracts bugs and other critters. Mail should be addressed as follows:

E-mail

Don't have time to write a letter? We are excited to tell you about our partnership with Bunk1.com! Bunk1's secure, easy-to-use, summer website services let you stay in touch with your camper all summer. Please read the attached document from Bunk1 to find out how to send daily emails to your camper. The messages will be printed and delivered to the girls each day at noon. *Please note that if your camper is in one of the trip programs, she will get the messages when she returns to camp.

Telephone

Camp Birch Trails has only one phone line, and it is used for business purposes only. **Campers are not allowed to make or receive phone calls while at camp.**

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Trading Post

Girls will have the opportunity to visit the Trading Post daily while they are in camp. Items for sale include notepaper, envelopes, postcards, pens, stamps, and snacks. Money for your camper to use at the Trading Post may be sent to the Appleton Service Center in advance. Cookie Coupons may also be used at the Trading Post. Prices are approximately \$1 to \$10 for souvenir type items; \$10 to \$45 for clothing items. Typically, girls bring \$10 - \$50 with them. **DO NOT HAND MONEY TO THE BUS DRIVER OR BUS CHAPERONE.**

Daily Schedule at Camp

Campers begin their day at 7:15 a.m. when the wake-up bell is rung. Breakfast is at 8 a.m.,

lunch is at 12:30 p.m., and dinner at 6 p.m. Girls will spend the morning or afternoon doing an activity with their patrol. The other half of one day will be spent in **Me-Time**, a period during which girls can individually choose activities that are offered by staff, where they'll get the opportunity to meet and play with girls who are not in their patrol. On Wednesday nights all patrols do a cookout that is planned by the girls. Opening and closing night, we have a campfire that all patrols attend. Girls or patrols may do skits, songs or games. Other evenings may be spent camping out overnight, cooking out a meal or other activity. Lights-out is 9:30 or 10 p.m. Campers have the opportunity each day to swim, boat and visit the Trading Post. Other activities include archery, low ropes course, arts and crafts, nature activities, cook outs, camp outs, fishing, and more. There is one shower house at camp. Girls are scheduled to shower every other day.

June 20-25

Fiesta Week – Grab your blindfolds and dancing shoes for this week of festivities.

June 27-July 2

County Fair Week – Join the animals at camp for hayrides, food and fun.

July 11-16

Pirate Week – Argh maties! Don't forget your eye patches and wooden legs.

July 18-23

Around the World in 6 Days – Let the international staff share stories, food and fun from their home countries.

July 25-30

Hawaiian Week – Put on your grass skirts and enjoy a luau!

August 1-6

Wild West Week – Grab your cowgirl hats and chaps and live in the wild wild west.

To make every week of the summer special we have added a theme to each week! All-Camp games, crazy meals, and campfires will focus on the theme of the week. If your daughter would like to participate in the fun, send along clothing items, accessories, decorations, music, or anything else that may fit in during the week she will be at camp!

Laundry Facilities

We do not have laundry facilities available for camper use. On the health form and confidential sheet, indicate if the camper is a bed wetter (which is not unusual and nothing to be worried about). Your camper should talk with her counselor, or another staff person with whom she feels comfortable, if she has an accident during the night. Staff will discreetly take care of laundering the bedding and clothes.

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Lost or Damaged Items

Neither Camp Birch Trails, nor Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes, Inc. can be responsible for the loss or damage to a camper's personal belongings. The camp director must check all specialty equipment before use in any programs. Campers should not bring personal sports equipment to camp without prior approval of the camp director. Campers are not allowed to bring curling irons, hair dryers, radios, portable stereos, VCRs, portable DVD players, ipods, videogames, animals, pets, weapons, vehicles, or cell phones. Electricity is not available in most camper cabins or tents. *Label all items brought to camp with the girl's first and last name.* All lost and found items will be taken to the Girl Scout Program Center (Appleton). Any items left after **September 30** will be donated to charity.

Refunds

A full refund, including deposit, will be made only if a participant cannot be placed in a session of her choice. Deposits are non-refundable in all other situations. All refund requests must be submitted in writing by August 31, and will be considered in cases of medical emergencies. Refunds will not be made if a participant is sent home due to homesickness, misconduct or by parent request. If a participant is sent home, transportation is to be arranged and paid for by a parent or guardian.

Information for Wilderness Trip Participants and Their Parents

- All participants and staff on trips are trained in emergency signaling procedures, where the nearest help is for each day of travel, and how to obtain help if necessary. In addition, all trips carry a cell phone with them for emergency use. Since trips are in backcountry areas, we cannot guarantee that the cell phones will work in all areas. Even with the cell phones, additional emergency assistance on trips may take hours or longer to reach a group.
- All trip staff are trained and certified in Wilderness First Aid and CPR and participate in an intensive training prior to camp.
- All trips carry certain risks to persons and equipment. These risks include but are not limited to the following: falling, animal encounters, encounters with the public, injury from equipment, natural disasters, drowning, weather, etc. Camp Birch Trails does all it can to reduce risks inherent in trips by following American Camping Association standards and GSUSA standards.
- All campers are expected to be in good physical condition to go on any trips. Girls are strongly encouraged to do conditioning exercises before coming to camp. If new boots are purchased, make sure she wears them many times to break them in before camp. If a camper has any special medical conditions, the camper's physician should be made aware of the type of trip the camper is going on and the accessibility of professional help in case of emergencies. This is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.
- Campers and parents with further questions, or needing specific information for a certain trip should contact the resident camp director.

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Camp Birch Trails

Resident Camp Packing List

****label all items with camper's name****

Clothing

- Rain gear
- Swim suit (2 if you're in a water program)
- Pajamas
- Jacket / sweatshirt
- Tennis shoes (2 pair)
- T-shirts (1/day)
- Shorts (1/day)
- Underwear (1/day)
- Socks (1/day)
- Long-sleeved shirts (2/wk)
- Jeans or other long pants (2/wk)

Personal Items

****Unscented is best****

- Towel and washcloth
- Soap in container
- Toothbrush and paste
- Deodorant
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent-NO aerosol sprays
- Shampoo
- Comb / brush
- Tissues
- Hair fasteners, barrettes
- Lip balm
- Personal toiletries

Equipment

- Warm sleeping bag or blankets (3)
- Pillow and case
- Flashlight with new batteries
- Mess kit (plate, cup, fork, spoon, knife)
- Water bottle / canteen
- Laundry bag
- Extra batteries

Optional Items

- White shirt for tie-dying/painting
- Notebook / journal and pencil
- Stationery / postcards and stamps
- Quiet games or books
- Address book
- Disposable camera
- Hat or bandana
- Sunglasses
- Shower shoes

Please Leave at Home

****these items are not allowed at camp****

Food/Snacks/Drinks

Cell Phones

Radios, MP3 Players

Electronic games and appliances

Aerosol spray cans

Makeup

Dangle/hoop earrings

Items to have ready at Check-In:

- Any medications in their original container
- Completed Health History and Health Exam form
- Completed Camp Confidential and Parent Release Form
- Money for Camp Store, if not mailed ahead of time (optional). Please place in an envelope with your child's name on it.

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SPECIALIZED GEAR FOR WILDERNESS TRIPS

Necessary for all trips

- Rain gear... jacket and pants. **Please get something that is durable... No ponchos!**
- Hat or bandana to cover ears
- Small (but warm) stuffable sleeping bag with stuff sack. Synthetic materials are best.
- Synthetic top and bottom long underwear (NO COTTON)
- Three pairs of Wool or synthetic socks (NO COTTON)
- Layers that dry fast if wet (NO COTTON)
In the past, wool was the best option for clothing. However, with all the synthetic materials on the market today, this is no longer the case. Cotton does not insulate when wet. Polypropylene, Polar Fleece, Polar Tech, etc. are all better than wool. Ideally, two or three layers that can be worn on the top and bottom are preferred. Fleece jackets are GREAT!
- Dry lightweight shoes or sandals for camp nights.
- Sierra or other trail cup (small Rubbermaid/Tupperware containers work great!)
- 10 or more plastic bags – gallon and half-gallon sizes for packing clothes
- One or two full size plastic trash bags
- Closed cell foam or thermal rest style sleeping pad
- Stocking cap or beanie (NO COTTON)
- Lightweight gloves (NO COTTON)
- One or two 32-ounce water bottles

CANOE TRIPPERS

- Boots or sturdy shoes with hard soles (essential for portaging in the Boundary Waters). Army jungle boots work great and can be purchased at surplus stores **OR** leather work boots **OR** hiking boots (good, but may not have a long life because they get wet). Be sure to break them in before camp to prevent blisters or sores.

BACKPACKERS

- Hiking boots (sturdy to support ankles). Tennis shoes are not appropriate.
- Extra wool or synthetic socks

OPTIONAL

- Backpack (if you have access to one that fits comfortably; we will provide if you don't have one)
- Bungees (2, small – about 24" works best)

BIKERS

- Biking shorts

OPTIONAL

- Helmet, if you have your own (we will provide if you don't have one)
- Bungees (2, small – about 24" works best)
- Cycling gloves

SEA KAYAKERS

- Water sandals

OPTIONAL

- Nose plug
- Neoprene Booties

If you have questions about anything on this packing list, contact the camp director. We do not want girls to purchase unnecessary items in order to attend camp.

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