



# PARENT HANDBOOK

A HELPFUL TOOL AS YOU  
PREPARE FOR SUMMER CAMP



## PICKUP & DROP-OFF

Drop-off is on Sunday from 1:00-5:00 pm. When you arrive, you will be asked to stop at the canopy by the Nature Center where staff will hand you a number and a registration checklist. You will then take this list and proceed to the gym pavilion to continue the check-in process. We kindly ask families to arrive on time for check-in so our staff can help campers get settled in their cabins, then take them to waterfront to complete their swim tests. When campers arrive late, it causes our whole program to run behind schedule. And, we don't want campers to miss out on the experience that comes with the first day of camp.

**Pickup is the following Sunday from 9:00-11:00 am. Please arrive no later than 11:00 am to pick up your camper. While we enjoy having them here, our staff are required to clean the entire camp in preparation for the next group of campers arriving in the afternoon. When you arrive on time, it is a great help to our staff. Late Pickup Policy: A grace period of one (1) hour, until 12:00 pm, will be allowed for late pickup. After 12:00 pm, a \$15 per hour fee will be charged per camper, including \$15 for the hour between 11:00 am-12:00 pm. For parents who are picking up their camper and checking in another camper at 1:00 pm, the fee will be waived.**

Our staff greatly appreciate your timely arrival!



## CAMPER HEALTH & PARENT NOTIFICATION

Camp Alamisco provides a full-time nurse during our summer camp program who lives on site while camp is in session. The camp nurse administers all medications to campers and assesses/monitors any health concerns that arise during the camp session. Although it is highly unlikely that your camper will ever leave camp property while at summer camp, if a camper leaves camp, they are accompanied by a staff who is CPR certified. Any emergency medications prescribed to a camper will accompany the camper as well as any scheduled medications, etc. There will also be additional emergency medications and first aid supplies for use by the nurse.

On occasion, during a camp session, campers can become ill or injured during their stay at Camp Alamisco. In the occurrence of this unfortunate event, the following steps are taken to ensure the health of the camper and keep parents notified of their camper's current condition. It is our process to contact parent(s), or emergency contact(s) if parent cannot be reached, for the following reasons:

- If a camper is seen for the same complaint twice and there has not been any resolution (i.e. stomach aches, headaches, minor rashes, slight abrasions or cuts, minor dehydration, splinters, bruises and other

- minor health concerns, abrasions or cuts, minor dehydration, splinters, bruises and other minor health concerns are dealt with directly by the nurse);
- If a camper has to stay in the clinic for more than 4 hours (Fever over 100.0 will be isolated until fever free for 24 hours without medication); and/or,
- Any concern that may require further medical treatment such as an injury needing an X-ray, a possible infection, need for stitches or other medical issues that have not been resolved after two visits to the nurse.

In the event of an emergency, the closest 911 emergency response team is less than 15 miles from camp and is usually on campus within 25 minutes.

**NOTE:** Camp Alamisco does not require a physical to be completed prior to your camper's stay. We only ask for a copy of your camper's up-to-date immunization record and insurance card.



## BEFORE YOUR CAMPER ARRIVES

- If your camper has a low grade fever 100.0 or above, keep them home until they are fever free (without medication) for 24 hours, for their sake and the sake of others. We can make arrangements for them to check in on an alternate date.
- If your camper has a "productive cough," please keep them home.
- If your camper has diabetes or other chronic/long term disease requiring frequent medical care, they will need to be approved by the Camp Health Supervisor prior to coming to camp. Our camp nurse is only equipped to provide minimal routine check ups while here at camp.
- Your camper will need to be lice free to attend camp.



## HEALTH HISTORY FORMS

Your camper's Health History forms **must** be completed upon registration of camp, and must include immunization history, medications (both prescription and over the counter), allergies, diet restrictions, chronic/long term health conditions, any activity restrictions, and signed permission to treat. Your camper's Health History will be reviewed by the camp nurse at time of check-in. If something has changed since you submitted your camper's Health History form, please update us at that time. You may also log into your account at any time and update this form on your own. Please include any new medication and any health information that has come to light since you filled out your health form.

Please review your camper's Health History forms prior to camp check-in date to avoid any complications.

NOTE: If your camper is exempt from immunizations, you will be asked present a religious waiver upon check-in to Camp Alamisco.



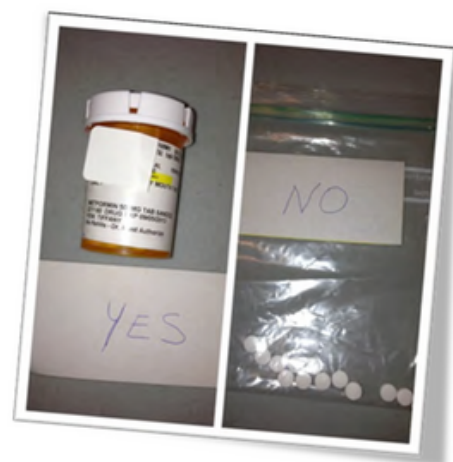
## CAMPER MEDICATIONS

All medications, including prescription medications, over the counter medications, as well as **any** vitamins or herbal supplements, **must** be turned over to the camp nurse upon arrival during registration. Campers also need to turn over inhalers and EpiPens. If your camper has a condition that requires he/she to have an inhaler/EpiPen immediately on hand, e.g., severe anaphylactic reaction or difficult-to-control asthma, we **require** parents to provide an additional inhaler/EpiPen that can be turned in to the camp nurse in case the camper loses theirs while at camp.

When turning in medications, please place all containers in a "Zip-lock" bag with the camper's first and last name clearly written on it. If there are special instructions, please include these in your camper's account in the medications portion of the Health History form. If you are concerned about sending your child's entire supply of medication, please send enough medication for their stay, plus two or three extra (in case one falls on the ground, etc.)

- All prescriptions must be in original medication container (anything less will be refused);
- All medications must be in original medication container (anything less will be refused);
- All vitamins must be in original container (anything less will be refused); and,
- All herbal supplements must be in original container (anything less will be refused).

Camp Alamisco stocks most over-the-counter medications needed at camp so it is not necessary that you include these items in your camper's packing. Please make sure camper's name is on all items. Your camper's medication will be returned to you at the end of their stay. There will be a medication table in the pickup line where you will collect your camper's medication to take home.



## BED WETTING

Our staff is trained to deal with bed wetting discreetly and to work with your child one-on-one.

- Bring Pull-Ups for nighttime which can be worn under clothing discreetly.
- Discreetly inform the counselor upon dropping your camper off in their cabin so they can be on the lookout.

Every effort will be made on our part to prevent accidents. Bedding is handled discreetly and is washed by our camp staff and returned to camper's bed quietly and clean to protect the camper's privacy. Please send extra bedding if you think it will be needed.



## CAMPER DIET

We can work effectively with most medically prescribed diets, but cannot cater to individual food preferences. Campers must be able to eat a regular and varied diet. If your camper has special dietary needs, our food service director is available for consultation in providing for your camper's needs. **We must be notified of any special diet needs 30 days prior to camp.**

All our meals are served vegetarian.

## MENU EXAMPLES

**Breakfast:** Biscuits, gravy, eggs, waffles, pancakes, hash browns, oatmeal, grits, variety of cold cereals, variety of fruit\*, jams\*, bagels or biscuits.

**Lunch:** Pizza, vegetarian chicken nuggets, baked potatoes, steamed broccoli, corn, green beans, rolls, salad bar\* with variety of toppings and dressings

**Dinner:** Spaghetti, steamed carrots, sautéed veggies, veggie meat balls, rolls, salad bar\* with variety of toppings and dressings, and ice cream sandwich for dessert, cheese quesadillas, beans, salsa, sour cream, corn, sautéed veggies, salad bar\* with variety of toppings and dressings, and brownie for dessert.

*\*Salad bar, peanut butter & jelly sandwiches, and fruit are always available.*



## WHAT TO EXPECT

Attending summer camp is a very exciting experience for campers and parents. It's very natural for both to be a bit anxious about your camper leaving the comforts of home, adopting new routines of daily activities, and meeting new friends. We want to familiarize you and your camper with our procedures to minimize "first-day anxiety." We want to take time to explain things and to share information with campers and parents. Also, take comfort that Camp Alamisco has a well-trained staff who will do their best to make campers feel welcome and at home.

Suggestions from "experienced" parents:

- Utilize the "One-Way Camper Email" in your camper's account and send emails to your camper for them to enjoy and read. Learn how to send One-Way Emails in the "Mail & One-Way Email" section on the next page in this packet, or on our online FAQ page at [www.campalamisco.org/faq](http://www.campalamisco.org/faq).
- Send old clothes they recognize as their own, not lots of new ones they don't remember as theirs. Don't send any valuable clothing or other valuable items.
- Label everything
- Pack light — check out our suggested packing list [here](#).
- Make sure your account information, medical forms, and authorized pickup list in your online account are up to date to help expedite the check-in/check-out process.
- There are dozens of activities and games at camp. Encourage your camper to participate in these activities at their comfort level and perhaps even try something new.
- Schedules and activities vary each day and campers may be unsure of what they are going to get to experience. Counselors will review the list of their plans that day, and encourage your campers to ask their counselors if they are unsure of the day's plans and activities. Counselors will help campers prepare for the day, but never be afraid to ask.
- Your camper will probably come home tired, and may need additional rest after a week or two of high-energy activity.



## LOST & FOUND

We will make every effort to return lost and found items while your camper is at camp, but your camper can do more than anyone to insure that nothing is lost. **Please mark all items with a permanent marker or laundry label for easy identification.** Remind your camper to check the lost and found area at the office for

any of their missing items. Items found after your child's camp session may be claimed at the check-out location, so please be sure to check this area and identify your camper's items before you go. If you discover something is missing upon your return home, please contact us immediately. The more time that passes, the less likely it can be found. After September 1, all remaining items will be donated. Camp Alamisco is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged clothing or other belongings.



## MAIL & ONE-WAY EMAILS

**MAIL:** Campers love to receive mail! No, really, they LOVE, LOVE, LOVE to receive mail – even cool teenagers. Please write to your child at least once before camp begins (Allow four (4) business days for “snail mail” to arrive at camp). This will guarantee that your camper will receive at least one letter from home while he/she is at camp. They love opening them and seeing your handwriting on a special card or stationary. Receiving posted mail usually garners a bigger smile. At a rustic camp, receiving a penned letter has a special and fitting charm.

**Please address mail this way:**

Camper's Name

Cabin Name

Camp Alamisco

1771 Camp Alamisco Rd.

Dadeville, AL 36853

You may want to send some blank note cards, envelopes, and stamps with your campers so they can write letters to home. However, please consider the following -- campers are very busy at camp. When they do have a little time during rest hour, they are encouraged to rest, write letters to home, read, or do some other quiet activity.

**EMAIL:** One-Way Email is another way for you to write to your camper. Campers cannot reply to emails, but LOVE to read notes from home! Email can only be sent to your camper through their online account during the time they are at summer camp. Simply log in to the account you used to register for camp, and click on “Additional Options” from the top menu, then select “E-mail a Camper” from the drop down list. Emails are printed out daily in our office and delivered to your campers during lunch.

### DO'S & DON'TS OF MAIL & EMAIL

#### **DO:**

- Send frequent letters/emails; they don't have to be long. Postcards are good too.
- Keep frequent letters/emails cheery and newsy in such a way that they will not make your camper homesick.
- Send photos of family and/or pets.

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- Send photos of family and/or pets.
- Have a grandparent write a letter.
- Have pets send messages (paw prints).
- Send favorite comic strips, stickers, jokes, etc.
- Ask a few questions and allow your camper the opportunity for "self evaluation" through your letter.
- Send a letter before your camper leaves for camp to make sure it arrives for the first day. Allow 4 to 5 days for mail (we'll save it for them if it gets here before their session starts). Provide your child with self-addressed, pre-stamped envelopes for sending letters home.

### **DON'T:**

- Don't encourage homesickness by emphasizing how much you miss your child.
- Don't write how much fun you are having on vacation while your child is at camp.
- Don't dwell on negative happenings. You can discuss real problems with your camper when he/she returns home.
- Don't send any references to outside media (magazines, electronics, sports, etc.). Allow them the opportunity to disengage from media for this short period of time.



## **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Because cell phones offer a distraction for campers, it is our policy that summer camp is a cell phone free zone; not only for campers but for many of our staff as well. We know that technology is very important to society and communication with your child is important. At the same time we want your child to enjoy their week at camp and experience God's great outdoors by not receiving texts from their boyfriend/girlfriends or texting other campers in the middle of the night. Your camper can come to the summer camp office at any time and call home. Our administrative staff and activity directors carry cell phones only in case of emergency situations.

Camp Alamisco is not responsible for cell phones that are left or lost at camp.





## CONTACTING YOUR CAMPER AT CAMP -- PHONE CALLS & VISITORS

At Camp Alamisco, we strive for campers to develop independence. An integral part of the growing process is the extended experiences away from home. Although cell phones are not permitted at camp, we welcome you to call. But please be aware that for some campers, this can cause homesickness. If you need to contact your camper during their stay, you can always call the camp office between the business hours of 9 am-12:30 pm and 2:00 pm-5:30 pm. The summer camp office number is (817-240-2483)

Please be aware of our other policies regarding visitors and phone calls to parents/campers:

- Parents will be contacted immediately by staff in case of an emergency.
- Please understand that campers may only receive phone calls and make calls to the numbers listed on their online camp account. This prevents your camper from contacting/being contacted by unauthorized parties outside of the account holder. If you wish to add additional people to your account so that access is granted to your camper, you may do so by calling our office and verifying the changes.
- Your child is welcome to call home. But please understand that your camper may not desire to call home because they are having so much fun and simply forget to call you; it's NOT uncommon. When this happens, feel free to call our summer camp office and remind your camper you wish to hear from them.
- Visitors on camp are limited to those listed on the camper's online account and no child will be released to any individuals not listed on the authorized pickup list. **Visitors must call ahead to the camp office (817-240-2483) to make arrangements for visitation, and must check in at the summer camp office upon arrival.** Visitors are only permitted in the main areas of camp (cafeteria, office, and baptisms at the boat dock).



## CABIN LODGING ASSIGNMENT

Campers are assigned to cabins during the check-in process. To ensure being in the same cabin with their friends, checking in together and arriving early is suggested. To ensure the best selection for cabin assignments, early check-in is suggested.



## CAMPER TO STAFF RATIOS

Inside of the cabin our camper to staff ratio is 1:6 for Adventure campers, and 1:8 for Junior and Teen Campers. Individual class sizes may vary.



## HOMESICKNESS

The vast majority of campers experience homesickness on at least one day of camp. Our staff makes a concerted effort to help campers overcome homesickness by helping them learn to accept the natural feeling of missing family and friends. We welcome this opportunity to help youngsters grow in this area and we train our staff to handle homesickness in constructive and loving ways. With proper handling by the staff, campers, and parents, it can be overcome and the camper can make a big stride in growing up.

Here are some things you can do to lessen homesickness:

- Keep frequent letters/emails cheery and newsy in such a way that they will not make your camper homesick. Don't say you can't get along without them, or ask about homesickness.
- Try having your child do overnights at a friend's house before coming to camp to practice. Do they have a friend who is interested in coming to camp?
- Pack a personal item from home.
- Don't tell your child that you will come and pick him/her up or you will talk to them on the phone if he/she doesn't like camp. This often sets nervous children up for failure, as they'll focus on any reason not to like camp in order to go home, as per the deal.
- Don't bribe your child by promising something valuable if he/she makes it through camp. It sends the wrong message. The benefit is your child's new confidence and independence. Going to camp can be an important developmental milestone.
- Have a conversation about the many activities there are at camp, and that she/he probably won't like all of them, or be as good at some activities as some of the other children, but that is okay.
- Help your child think of things they can do to cope with feelings of missing home.
- Tell your child that their counselor is there to help them. If the child doesn't feel comfortable telling their counselor something specific for some reason, tell your child that she/he can go to the Boy's/Girl's Director.

In the event of severe homesickness, parents will be notified. This is not a medical concern, but it can have a large impact on the camper's experience.



## BUG REPELLENT & SUNSCREEN

Remember to pack bug repellent for your camper. Mosquitoes are sometimes a problem in the evenings this time of year. If DEET is chosen, please let your campers know how to safely apply it (e.g. don't spray on face, do not apply to hands, do not apply under clothes, do not apply while in the cabin, or around any other person). We do keep a supply of bug repellent readily available for campers' free use as well.

**Sunscreen is MUST.** Your camper will be spending a lot of time outside and in the sun. Staff will be making sure your camper is applying and reapplying sunscreen throughout the day. Please remember to pack sunscreen for your camper. We suggest a 50 SPF or above. We also keep a supply of sunscreen readily available for campers' use if needed.



## CAMP STORE MONEY

The Camp Alamisco Trading Post offers many staple items should campers need them: toothbrush, toothpaste, combs, soap, shampoo, sunscreen, and similar items at our cost. Those items are available at any time. Prices listed below are estimates based on previous years. Exact costs will be determined once we know how much we will be charged this year. It is suggested to bring a water bottle.

### STORE PRICE EXAMPLES

T-Shirts: \$10-\$20

Hoodies: \$15-\$30

Water Bottles: \$5-\$15

Various toys: \$5-\$20

Non-Caffeinated Beverages: \$1.50-\$3

Candy/Snacks: \$1-\$2.00

Parents may establish credit for their campers by logging on to their summer camp account (where camper's online registration was completed), and making a payment. We suggest \$10-\$30 per week of camp. Of course, the Camp Alamisco Trading Post is a great shopping option for you as a parent. So stop by and grab a little something for yourself after dropping off your camper!

Unspent money will be refunded to parents upon check-out of camper.



## **CAMPERS STAYING MULTIPLE WEEKS**

Many of our campers stay multiple weeks at camp and, in these instances, we provide supervision and meals during Sunday's check-out and check-in process so that parents do not have to travel back to camp again. We ask that parents send enough medicine and camp store funds for the duration of your camper's stay.

Laundry service is generously provided by the camp - free of charge - to ensure clean clothes for the following week(s).



## **CAMPER APPROPRIATE -- WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?**

Children in America have a lot of ideas put into their head about how they need to look to be cool, be liked, be accepted, etc. They tend to have a very strong focus on their body image as a major determinant of their worth as a human being, and they often wear ideas/philosophies for which they have little true appreciation. Campers get these ideas from friends, from older children, magazines, television, and movies. Television shows are often focused on relationships (especially ones filled with drama), sex or sexualized images. We would rather children spend a week or two simply being kids and reclaiming some of the joy and innocence of childhood than focusing on these things. To consider as well, while your 15-year-old child may be able to critically think about these issues, the 10-year-old camper that looks up to your child may not be.

When sending your camper to camp, please consider the intention of camp to give campers a chance to be away from media influence, and encourage them to bring clothes with NO brand labeling and that are fairly sturdy and provide adequate support and skin coverage. Camp is a very active environment and running around in low cut, minimal tops or short shorts can be a cause for embarrassment (if they slide at the wrong moment) or injury (falling during games, high ropes elements in short shorts, etc). Clothing promoting alcohol companies or with suggestive comments is not appropriate and we will ask campers wearing these items to change. Again, we have a range of children at camp and we ask that all clothing be appropriate for all ages.



## EMPLOYEE SELECTION, BACKGROUND CHECKS, & TRAINING

Each summer camp staff member is individually interviewed by the summer Camp Director or delegate and is prayerfully considered. Once selections have been made, staff members are required to successfully pass a background check and child safety training through Verified Volunteers. Staff also complete various trainings in preparation of summer camp such as CPR, fire safety, and emergency drills.



## CAMP ACCREDITATION & CERTIFICATIONS

**ACA Accreditation** - Camp Alamisco is certified through the American Camp Association (ACA). "The American Camp Association (formerly known as the American Camping Association) is a community of camp professionals who, for 100 years, have joined together to share our knowledge and experience and to ensure the quality of camp programs" (ACA, 2011 <http://www.acacamps.org/about/who-we-are>). For further information about ACA, please click [here](#). Camp Alamisco became a member of ACA in 2007, and has been an accredited member since then. To maintain accreditation, Camp Alamisco annually reaffirms its continued compliance with applicable ACA standards, code of ethics, and state and federal laws, and is visited once every five years by ACA to ensure compliance.

**Adventist Association of Camp Professionals (AACP)** - Camp Alamisco has been a founding member of the AACP since its inception in 1997. AACP is a network of Adventist camp professionals that works together to train camping professionals, set standards, and achieve the goals of the North American Division of Seventh Day Adventist churches (<https://www.adventistcamps.org/>).

**Lifeguard Certification** - Lifeguards are certified through the American Red Cross in Life-Saving techniques, first-aid, CPR, and AED operation. Swim instructors are certified Water Safety Instructors (WSI).

**CHA Certification** - Horse Directors are trained as a CHA trail guide.

**Dietary Certification** - The Food service director is certified through ServSafe.



# THE PERFECT CAMP EXPERIENCE

When people ask, “What’s your favorite place in the world?” Two places come to mind, Disney World, and summer camp. The first needs no explanation—it’s the Happiest Place on Earth!™ As for the second one, the only people who’d need an explanation are people who’ve never gone to camp. The summer camp experience is hard to put into words. There’s just something about it that defies reason, and transcends geography and bends time.

Many times, families look for their camper’s experience to be absolutely perfect, and we hope for that also. Parents want their child to love everything about camp; having no real struggles or challenges, and for their week to be nothing but smiles and giggles all the time. Sometimes this does happen but from the perspective of Camp Alamisco, we understand that there are challenges and struggles that are included in the “perfect” camp experience.

We understand that campers not only have wonderful life changing experiences, but also learn about situations and how to overcome them. Camp life offers challenges like overcoming social awkwardness, sharing a room with others, time management, following rules from others, dealing with adverse situations and many others. By being exposed to these things, campers learn good social skills, public behavior, building confidence, and begin to learn their role in life. Our staff members hope to guide campers through their challenges as we observe, or are made aware of them and able to do so. We hope the campers will find success in their failures and leave camp with new friends, an appreciation for the outdoors, and a deeper love for Jesus. Camp isn’t really a place at all—it’s a feeling, a spirit. No matter where you went to summer camp or when, you know what I’m talking about. You feel it in your heart.



# PARENTS' EVALUATION

We appreciate your immediate comments and feedback about our staff and program. If you see or hear of a problem with any part of our program or staff, please contact the Camp Alamisco office (817-240-2483) or Gulf States Conference office at 334-272-7493 ext. 123 immediately so corrections can be made. Additionally, comments can be emailed to the director at any time at [mrodriguez@gscsda.org](mailto:mrodriguez@gscsda.org) or [erodriguez@gscsda.org](mailto:erodriguez@gscsda.org).