

## What about safety?

The pandemic has brought new challenges when it comes to health and safety. These challenges were still largely unknown when we decided that we would cancel summer camp last year. We now have a year's worth of science, data and even a vaccine. Not all of that information has just been about how the pandemic has affected physical health. We are realizing the impact that the pandemic has had on mental and emotional health.

We truly considered cancelling camp for one more year, but we feel that we know enough about Covid's transmission and effect on young people that we can run a mostly "normal" summer camp without high risks of exposure. Given the effect that not having activities like summer camp has on the mental well-being of young people we decided that it was well worth the risks associated with being together during this pandemic.

## What are we doing to make summer camp safer during this pandemic?

Aside from isolation, there is no perfect tool. We are taking what is now commonly referred to as the "swiss cheese" approach to mitigating exposure for our campers and staff. This means using multiple controls that each, by themselves, have holes in them, but when stacked with other controls minimize the inefficiencies.

Camp Galilee will be using the following controls:

**Low prevalence** - We will not run summer camp if new cases is greater than 25 people per 100,000 people locally. This reduces the likelihood that campers have Covid.

**Vaccinations** – All of the camp's permanent and resident staff will be required to be vaccinated. Camp staff are on the CDC list of tiered populations eligible for early vaccinations. We will make every attempt to have all of our counselors vaccinated as well, but even if they are not vaccinated, they will follow all of the guidelines listed below.

**Screening** - We will be asking all parents to pre-screen camper for symptoms 10 days prior to camp arrival and will sign a statement saying they complied, and the camper did not experience any symptoms during that time. Campers will also be screened by a health care professional upon arrival. Campers will be screened daily while at camp and immediately isolated if they develop Covid symptoms. Camper's will have to return home if it is determined that they are at risk of having Covid.

**Ventilation** - The campers will be outdoors almost the entire time they are here. The exceptions will be sleeping and bathroom/shower time. The cabins will be well ventilated.

**Cohorts** - Campers will be in groups of only 18 people (14 campers and 4 staff). They will not share any enclosed spaces nor be within 6 feet when outside of any other person outside of their cohort. Along with a low prevalence, this minimizes the likelihood of campers being exposed to Covid.

**Youth** – Young people, particularly pre-teens, have low rates of infection and transmission of Covid.

## Why don't we require masks during camp?

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**Youth** - Children have low rates of infection and transmission of Covid.

Masks are an extremely important tool in reducing the spread of Covid in society at large. They are also unpleasant to wear, a barrier to communication, and impossible to wear during certain activities (i.e., swimming). We have developed other barriers to the spread of Covid so that we might eliminate the need for kids to wear masks while at camp.

Masks are one part of a system for reducing people's exposure to Covid. We think that we can eliminate that one part and still minimize the exposure risk for children. What we get in return is a more normal camp experience. One where kids can laugh and communicate and run and play more freely and easily.

If local, state, or federal guidelines mandate that children wear masks at summer camp we will, of course, abide by those directives.

### **Why are we not requiring negative tests (at least for now)?**

Testing, like all other forms of control outside of isolation is imperfect. It has a number of limitations including some that can cause emotional harm.

#### **Access –**

- Getting tested locally is not as quick and easy as one would want, placing burdens and obstacles on parents, particularly those who may already be overwhelmed (financially, physically, etc.) by the pandemic.
- Getting a test does not mean one won't becoming infected at some point after being tested. It is best if one is able to get a test within 24 hours of arrival. This does not seem possible to do locally at this time.

#### **Accuracy –**

- Testing has a much lower ability to identify a carrier if given within the first 72 hours of the carrier becoming infected.
- Tests given when local prevalence is low leads to higher occurrences of false positives. ([There is a statistical reason for this.](#)) If someone in a household receives a positive test, then the entire family is expected to isolate for 10 days, another burden on families and larger for those who can least afford it.

This is the recommendation by a team submitting a paper to the British Medical Journal: The harm afforded by false positive results should not be ignored and the potential for adverse consequences during periods of low prevalence needs to be considered when deciding on testing strategies. We recommend that testing strategies need to be more agile and decisions on screening of various populations should be flexible and respond to the changing prevalence in the community / setting that is being investigated. Large volume screening at a time of low prevalence has the potential to do more harm than good and some of these strategies should be temporarily suspended. Some of these strategies are likely to be of greater benefit in interrupting transmission during periods of high prevalence and we propose that they are re-instated when the prevalence in the community or particular settings warrant such an approach.

In the absence of reliable access to quick, accurate testing, we feel that relying on testing may be doing more harm than good. If quick testing does become more accessible, we will definitely consider adding it as another layer of our Covid defense.

In the meantime, as part of our plan to mitigate the possibility that we admit an infected camper, Galilee will implement the following measures:

We will not run camp if local prevalence is high (the likely number being more than 25 new cases per 100,000 people)

We will mandate pre-arrival symptom checks.

We will do symptom checks upon arrival at camp. (Monitoring symptoms has proven very useful in even the most high-risk environments such as hospitals.)

### **What is Camp Galilee asking of families?**

Covid-19 is a serious health and safety risk to all people. Until it is controlled, we must all do our part for the greater community.

#### Screen for symptoms

One of our controls for mitigating risk to campers is for the entire family to screen for symptoms for 10 days before your camper's arrival date. We have enclosed a Symptom Check form for you to use to monitor symptoms. This will also need to be signed and sent to camp 24 hours prior to your arrival at camp. If anyone in your family has symptoms, please do not come to camp. We understand that this will be an enormous disappointment, but we are taking the health risks that Covid poses very seriously. You will, of course, get a 100% refund if you must cancel.

Isolate as much as you are able.

We are aware that not all families can isolate 10 days prior to your arrival date to camp. Families have jobs and commitments that do not allow this. We do ask that when you can please consider not doing any activity that presents a high risk of exposure to Covid. This would primarily include any time a family member will be in an enclosed space with others for a considerable length of time. The virus spreads through aerosolized particles of saliva floating in the air. The smaller the space, the poorer the ventilation, the longer the time or the more people there are determines how much potential exposure one has.

Some examples of high exposure might be:  
an office workplace (again, we understand this is likely completely unavoidable)  
an indoor birthday party or an outdoor birthday party with no social distancing  
eating inside a restaurant  
a doctor or dentist visit  
sitting in the waiting room at your mechanic's.

Shopping is generally not a problem as people are wearing masks, the buildings are typically large, the time spent is shorter. Outdoor activities are generally great unless people are spending a great deal of time closer than 6 feet apart.

We understand that perfect isolation is not reasonable, but we ask that the 10 days prior to camp that you consider what activities increase your exposure and whether they can wait until your child is at camp.

#### Be available to pick up your child at camp.

Our policy will be that any camper that develops symptoms of Covid-19 will be isolated and they will need to return home. We do not have the staff or cabin space to care for a camper or staff that is isolated from the rest of camp. It would also not be an enjoyable experience for the camper. Therefore, if we deem that a camper must be isolated, we will immediately contact the parents or guardian to come pick them up. Please be available to come to camp and get your child for the dates that they are at camp.

#### **What will arrival look like?**

When you arrive at camp please wear a mask at all times. Please maintain social distance between your household and others even if you know that household well.

There will be signs directing you to Hunting Lodge. You will look for parking at the church and walk to Hunting Lodge or near Hunting Lodge itself.

There will be a registration table set up near Hunting Lodge. You will check in there. You will then be shown to our health care provider(s) who will make sure you have your Medical Forms, your signed Symptom Check form and take any medications. You will then be screened for Covid symptoms.

Please allow yourself enough time to complete this process, wear your mask and maintain social distancing from other households. There will be staff present to answer any questions you have.

After the registration and health screening you will be taken by a staff member to your camper's lodgings to put their stuff away, but we ask that you do not enter their lodging.

After that your child will join their group and you are welcome to depart.

#### **What will pickup look like?**

When you arrive at camp please wear a mask at all times. Please maintain social distance between your household and others even if you know that household well.

Pickup will be at Hunting Lodge (same as arrival). Your child will be nearby with their bags packed. You will go to the Checkout table so that a staff person can be sure that the child is departing with the proper person and to return any medications your child may have. After checking out you are welcome to depart.