



## Dear Parents,

First, let me thank you for entrusting us with the care of your child. It is a trust we work hard to keep. I have been involved in organized camping for over 40 years, but the most significant perspective change I experienced was the day I handed over my then 8-year-old daughter to her counselor at Girl Scout Camp. The Camp Director was a good friend and the camp had a stellar reputation, but that was MY child. I do my best to remember that feeling every time we welcome new campers. – Tom Hussmann

As you know, the power of Camp Albemarle lies in the building of relationships – between campers and staff and campers and campers. Camp creates amazing opportunities for children to be a part of a community that encourages and supports them as they “try on” being more independent and self-reliant. We encourage children to take on new challenges, try new things and make new friends. Most importantly, we encourage them to think deeply about their faith.

Our staff are trained not only to sail or climb trees, but to be intentional and focused on the physical, mental, social, and spiritual needs of your children. From the important physical needs like keeping everyone hydrated and making sure they wear sunscreen, to making sure that they feel safe and accepted, our counselors work very hard every day to make Camp Albemarle a safe place for your child.

We may contact you during the course of your child’s stay at camp – If we are struggling to help your child overcome homesickness or if we need help understanding a behavior that your child is displaying, and of course, we will contact you immediately regarding any health issue that is beyond the occasional stomachache, small bump or bruise, or minor ailment. Our Healthcare Staff are encouraged to over communicate health issues. We know that getting an unexpected call from camp can be scary, but we also know that your assistance in these matters is vital to helping us make sure that your child has a great experience at camp.

Thank you again for allowing us to serve your child. Please do not hesitate to contact us regarding your thoughts and concerns about camp and your child’s experience. We will be sending out a short survey after your child’s stay with us, and we would be most grateful if you would take a few minutes with your child to let us know how we are doing.

In the meantime, please contact us with any questions or concerns: [brad@campalbemarle.org](mailto:brad@campalbemarle.org) or the office 252-726-4848.

We are looking forward to seeing you this summer!  
Sincerely,

Tom Hussmann  
Executive Director  
&  
Brad Basto  
Director of Summer Camp Ministries

## What Should I Do Now?

### Before the Start Date of Your Camp Session Arrives

- Carefully review the “Welcome to Camp” materials.
- Complete and sign the Health History form online by June 1st
- Have a healthcare provider complete and sign the MAR (medical administration record) form **if your camper has medications.**
- Photocopy both sides of your Health Insurance Card (Unless Military ID)
- Pay your camp fee balance by June 1st. Payments can be made online with credit card or by mailing a check to the camp office.
- Please refer to our website [www.campalbemarle.org](http://www.campalbemarle.org) for a mock schedule, packing list, and additional information for your camper.

## Check In Day

### On Check-In Day Before you leave home, be sure:

- Your camper’s clothes are labeled and packed securely
- You have the Health Form filled out online and have paid your balance in full.
- You have the MAR form (if your camper has medications) and your copied Health Insurance Card with you.
- **Medications are in the original labeled containers** and are readily accessible to turn in once you arrive.

**Residential Camp: Check-In is from 3:00pm-4:00pm for camps that start on Sunday or Wednesday.**

- **Receive a number and welcome information from staff at the road. This number will determine the order you will go to the check-in in front of the office.**
- At the direction of staff, families will pull and park in the field located beside the pool.
- Once your number is called, you will bring all you can carry to the table set up in front of the office.
- After going through the check-in process there, you’ll take your things to your cabin. If a second trip is needed, we ask you loop around the bathhouse to avoid check-in traffic. Staff will be available to help with any excess luggage.
- At your camper’s cabin or tent **please sign in with their counselor and be sure to write down the names of anyone allowed to pick them up.**
- Inform the counselors of any additional helpful information and help them move in and set up their bunk.
- Give your camper a hug, say “Goodbye!” and have a safe ride home!

## Check Out Day

### Check-Out begins at 2:00pm on Friday.

- Plan to arrive at 1:45pm to pick up your camper and follow staff instruction on parking.
- Make your way to the Vesper Dell down by the water, where you will meet your camper.
- Have identification with you to verify that you are one of the approved persons who has permission to pick up your camper.
- Sign your camper out with his or her counselor **after** the closing ceremony.
- Retrieve any medication turned in during check-in from the healthcare staff.

- Check the lost and found for any misplaced items (in front of the Camp Store).
- Retrieve your child's luggage from their cabin. *Be sure you have everything you came with.*
- **Listen with interest and ask lots of questions on the way home and afterwards about your camper's experience.**

## Helpful Packing Tips

### Pack with Your Camper

Packing with your child is a great opportunity to build excitement about camp and to talk about any anxieties or concerns your camper may have about their upcoming camp experience. Plus, you can make sure they pack everything that they need to bring and leave at home the stuff that should stay at home.

### Use The Camp Info Sheet for you packing Checklist

Please be sure to use the packing sheet for the camp you signed up for. Once you are all packed, tuck the checklist in your camper's luggage and instruct them to use it when they pack their stuff up at the end of the week. That way, they have a way to make sure they've got everything they came with and are leaving nothing behind.

### What to Pack Your Stuff In

Pack your stuff so that you can carry it a short distance to their cabin or platform tent. Storage space in the cabins and platform tents is limited. Soft-sided luggage, like a duffle bag or backpack, that can be easily stuffed under beds or in a small spaces is ideal.

### Label Everything

**Put your camper's first and last name on everything using a permanent marker.** Be sure to label your camper's luggage. If your camper loses something, it may turn up in lost and found. Unclaimed items are disposed of or donated to charity two weeks after your camper's session ends.

### Pack Appropriate Attire for Camp

Pack clothing that is comfortable in hot weather, suitable for outdoor play, and has the potential to get wet and dirty. **Campers should not pack suggestive or revealing clothing or outfits nor articles of clothing that promote alcohol, tobacco, drug use, sexual behavior or contains inappropriate language.**

### A Note About Swimsuits

We prefer that female camper's wear modest one-piece swimsuits or tankini suits while at camp and that male campers wear swim trunks or board shorts. Campers must wear a t-shirt or cover up if wearing swimwear outside the pool or waterfront area.

### If You Are Bringing Medications to Camp

All medications (prescription, non-prescription, and over the counter) remain with and are dispensed by our Healthcare Staff. **Please pack your medications separate from your luggage in the original labeled containers so that you will be able to easily access them and turn them into the Healthcare Staff during Check-In.**

## Camp Store/Camper Accounts

You are now able to add money to your campers account via your camp brain account! Or if you want to use cash you can still add it during the check in process!



At the end of your camper's session, you will have the option of picking up the remaining balance on your camper's account. As we have done for several years, any money not picked up is placed in a campership fund to make sure that no one is denied a camp experience because of finances. During Check out, if you would like to refund your camper store account, please stop by the camp store to inform our staff. If you paid cash we will refund you directly, if paid by card then later the following week you should receive a refund back with the credit card you paid with.

## COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CAMPER WHILE AT CAMP

### Should I write to my camper?

**YES!!** Nothing makes a camper's day like receiving a letter from home. Parents are encouraged to write their camper regularly while he or she is at camp. To help you save on postage, you can "pre-write" your message and drop them off with us on Check-In day. We will deliver mail collected at Check-In throughout the Monday-Thursday. Please label specific days of the week for your letter if so desired. Mail is distributed daily around lunchtime.

To mail your camper a letter use the following address:

**For Example:** Camp Albemarle  
Camper Name  
156 Albemarle Drive  
Newport, NC 28570

### Can I send email to my camper?

**YES.** We encourage you to email you child daily. We provide a "One-Way Email" Service at no cost. Instructions for using this service will be handed out to you at Check-In. The email service will be active the day your camper arrives at camp and you can invite others (such as grandparents or family friends) to email you camper as well. Email is delivered to the cabin during h-hour Monday-Thursday (Email will not be delivered on Friday due to checkout). We find that the best email messages are ones where you tell your camper how proud of them you are and how you are looking forward to hearing about their time at camp. **Refrain from telling your camper how much you miss them, or other phrases that might make them homesick.** It's always good to close with "See you on Friday!". Remember, campers do not have access to computers at camp and won't respond to your email (unless they write a real letter home).

### Can I send my camper a care package?

Letters and envelopes no bigger than 12" x 15" x 3/4" are welcome. This year due to the circumstances though, we ask that you refrain from sending care packages so that we can keep outside contamination to a minimum. As an alternative we are offering care packages through the camp store this summer. See the Camp Store section of the welcome packet for more information!

### What are the camp policies related to telephone calls and campers having cell phones?

During camp, we work hard to build a sense of community among campers. We design the program, activities, and experiences for campers so that they can "get away" from the distractions and "busy-ness" of the everyday world, and to be in a place that they can connect with the Holy Spirit in nature. Camp is also a time of self-discovery and testing out one's independence. Experience has shown us that allowing campers to have telephone contact with friends or family in the "real world" detracts from the camp experience, is counter-productive to our mission goals, and disrupts our ability to build community at camp. **For these reasons we do not permit campers to carry cell phones or make or receive phone calls** (unless accompanied by a staff member after consultation with the Director).



Know that if a situation involving your child arises that warrants parental involvement, be it severe homesickness, a behavior issue, or a healthcare concern, we will contact you as soon as possible. If you have an emergency and you need to contact your camper, please call the camp office at 252-726-4848

### **Can I visit my child at camp?**

For many of the same reasons outline above related to our policy on telephone calls, we strongly discourage visitors to camp during our camp sessions. Parents and visitors are welcome and encouraged to tour Camp Albemarle on Check-in Day and after picking up your camper at the end of camp.

## **An Overview of Family Group Camping**

At Camp Albemarle we focus on building community and the give and take that goes along with it. To that end, the family group is at the core of our program. Upon arriving at camp, children are placed in “small groups” that are typically comprised of 5-7 boys and 5-7 girls, and a male and female counselor. This group remains together for the duration of the camper’s time at camp, traveling to and from activities together. We find this model allows campers to form meaningful friendships and for the counselors to get to know their campers. A genuine sense of close-knit community forms along the way among the members of the group. Within the group, each person can find his or her role and contribute to the wellbeing of others. Campers learn to recognize and appreciate the uniqueness and value of everyone in the group. With the guidance of their counselors, campers learn to consider the needs, desires, and perspectives of all members of the group. Through team building challenges and other group building activities counselors and campers learn to work together, reach agreement, and create win-win situations when differing opinions and personal priorities are in play. Campers are encouraged to participate enthusiastically and to the best of their ability in all aspects of camp life, even if the activity or decision made by the group “is not their favorite”. Ultimately, while we do always require campers to remain with their group, no camper will be forced to participate in any activity they are not comfortable with. We call this “Challenge by Choice”

## **5 Things You Can Do to Help Your Camper Succeed at Camp**

### **1. Discuss the camp’s policies with your camper beforehand**

Make sure your camper understands what the policies are and that he or she must honor them.

### **2. Talk with your camper about his or her concerns and what he or she is looking forward to**

Acknowledge your camper’s concerns positively. Let them know that you understand that he or she is anxious, unsure, or nervous and that it is okay to feel that way. **Resist the temptations to “rescue” your child from homesickness. Acknowledge in a positive way that you will miss your camper and you are confident that he or she will be able to complete the camp session.**

### **3. Pack together with your camper**

Pack things with your camper that they will be comfortable wearing. Pack a flashlight with lots of extra batteries. Pack a favorite stuffed animal or storybook for bedtime. Use the packing list included in this packet.

### **4. Let your camper know that the camp staff is there to help them**

Make sure they understand that if they have a problem, they should let their counselor know.

**5. Prepare your camper for spending time away from home at camp.**

Visit the website with your camper and look at pictures. Encourage your camper to ask question about camp. Practice being away from home overnight. Have a sleep out in the backyard or at friend's house.

## Avoid Doing These 5 Things That Set Your Camper Up for Failure

**1. Avoid making deals or bribes**

For example, avoid saying, "If you don't like it, Mommy will come and pick you up" or "If you stay at camp, Daddy will get you a new bike when you come home."

**2. Avoid statements or actions that conflict with camp policies**

Avoid saying things like "If you get homesick, you can call me", camp has a policy that does not permit campers to call home, or allow your child to pack a music player, e-reader or cell phone please leave it at home!

**3. Avoid sending your camper to camp during a disruptive home situation**

For example, in situations where a Grandparent died last week, or parents just got a divorce, it's best to give your camper time to adjust. Check with us to see if it's possible to switch to a session later in the summer.

**4. Avoid keeping helpful information from camp staff about your camper**

For example, information about things like bedwetting, are important for us to know so we can best help your child have a great experience. By providing our staff with as much information as possible, you help us help your camper. Having information ahead of time saves us from having to "troubleshoot" a puzzling situation in search of a solution. Instead, we can be pro-active!

**5. Avoid taking your camper off prescription medications for their week at camp**

Camp is a less structured environment than your child may be used to at school. Children are more active and stay up later at camp. If your camper requires medication while at home under normal circumstances, it is beneficial for him or her to remain on those medications and continue with a routine that the body's metabolism is familiar with.