



Parent Information Package

Dear Parent/Guardian: Welcome! We are looking forward to having your child join us at camp this summer.

Residential camp is a wonderful opportunity for children to grow and experience *FUN* outdoor recreation. We are committed to providing the best possible camp experience for your children and have created this information package to familiarize you with some of our programs, policies and procedures. Please read it carefully and spend some time discussing it with your child before camp.

Talking to your child about their upcoming camp experience is an important first step in preparing for camp. They may be unsure of what to expect, often nervous and full of questions. Routines will be different, camp meals are delicious, but may not be prepared and served the way they are at home, and there is no TV, Internet or Video games! We are anticipating the campers are willing to try new things and experiences and that they will be prepared to enjoy everything that camp has to offer!

If you have any questions that we have not been able to answer here, please feel free to contact me at camptamarack@telus.net or (780)538-4694.
Verna Milford, Summer Camp Director

"NEW" ONLINE REGISTRATION:

Fast, easy and paperless (eco-friendly). We are now introducing registration ON LINE. Check out our new web site to find all the information you need to secure your spot for summer camp.

Day-camp vs. Residential:

Camp Tamarack is a residential camp (overnight) and campers are expected to stay the night. Camp Tamarack recognizes that campers with certain needs may require going home at night. Our mission is to be accessible to everybody, so please contact the Camp Director if you have any concern regarding your camper's ability to sleepover.

Forms & Waviers

Please ensure all waiver forms included in this package are completely filled out, signed and returned to Camp Tamarack no later than 2 weeks prior to the start date of your child's camp. You may fax, email, post it or hand deliver completed forms. Without completed forms, your child will not be able to participate in some or all of the programming. All campers (except Horse and Adult Camp) must return the Grande Prairie Regional College, Wall Climbing wavier. Horse campers must return the PARDS waiver form to Camp Tamarack and Mountain Bike campers must return the Nitehawk waiver.

Parent Communicator:

Campers are not allowed to bring Cell phones and other electronic items (other than a camera).

Stay in touch with your camper all summer through a great service we are offering On line called "BUNK 1". You will be able to exchange emails with your camper and check out the photo gallery which is posted daily.

Transportation:

Camp Tamarack does not provide transportation to camp. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to drop your child off and pick your child up from camp. Camp Tamarack is located about 6-7kms south of GP on Hwy 40. A map is included in this package and on our website www.camptamarack.ca.

Once camp has begun, any programming travel (wall climbing, swimming, etc) is provided by the camp. Campers are bused to and from all activities on Camp Tamarack buses that have been inspected and certified by a qualified mechanic at the beginning of each camping season. Bus drivers are camp staff members or volunteers that have obtained class 2 or 4 license in advance and are insured by the camp.

Drop off and Pick up:

Drop off dates and times are indicated on the Summer Schedule included in the Camper Application Package. Please double check your child's start date and time.

Please do not come early for camp. Staff will not be ready to take registrations until 7:00pm.

When you first arrive at camp, please proceed directly to the main hall with your child. We will double check all forms, take a headshot for our records and collect TUCK money and any medications. Also, Camp Tamarack bucket hats and water bottles will be for sale. You will then settle your child into his or her cabin and bunk. Once this is finished parents may leave. Campers may come back to the basketball court or main hall to play games and wait for the rest of the campers to arrive. Our first evening will consist of activities for campers to get to know each other and a snack will be provided.

ALL camps end Friday at 4:30pm. You must be here between 4-4:30pm to pick up your child. Their bags will be packed and ready ahead of time. All campers must be gone by 5:00pm.

Packing Guidelines:

Label **EVERYTHING!** Clothes, boots, hats, flashlight, toothbrush... **EVERYTHING** your child brings to camp. (Use masking tape to label items that you don't want to write on). Even older campers misplace things! Attached is a check list of items to bring.

No outside food items are allowed at camp. We provide healthy, hearty meals and snacks that have been carefully thought out to accommodate any of the allergies or dietary concerns of the campers in our care. To make special dietary arrangements please contact the Camp Director. Help us keep mice and bugs out of the cabin by not sending food with your children.

"NEW" - TUCK is a small candy store where campers can purchase treats. TUCK shop is opened only on Thursday evening during the camp dance/talent show. Campers are limited to \$5 - no camper will be refused TUCK for lack of money. Please bring any Tuck money to the Registration Table at the time of drop-off.

Each camper will receive a white Camp Tamarack t-shirt, which they may choose to tie-dye.

Medications:

Camp Tamarack staffs a Medical Attendant on site 24 hours/day who will administer all medications under the direction of the campers' physician. The Medic will not be qualified to prescribe medication, or administer any medications without the consent of the parent/guardian (this includes non-prescription medications such as Tylenol). Also, the Medic will not be qualified to administer injections. If your camper requires injections (such as insulin) please speak with the Camp Director to make necessary arrangements.

Mt Bike Guidelines

We recommend that campers have a minimum of a front suspension mountain bike that is in good working order and has been checked by a qualified bike mechanic. Because of our downhill, bike park night, we strongly recommend that bikes be equipped with disc brakes on the front and rear wheels. Campers may rent bikes from Nitehawk for this night if necessary.

Campers should also have:

- Helmets are mandatory
- Riding gloves
- Bike mounted water bottle or camel-pack
- Good fitting closed toed shoes
- Athletic clothing
- Long pants for riding.

Disabilities and Special Needs:

Camp Tamarack is committed to being a barrier free camp. Approximately 15-20% of our campers have special needs and these special needs may include dietary or allergies, as well as physical or developmental delays. The facilities at Camp Tamarack and alternate sites are fully wheelchair accessible.

Camp Tamarack ensures that we hire a staff with the dynamic skills needed to address the diverse needs of our campers. We employ one Special Needs Coordinator with extensive experience in the area of special needs and 2 or 3 Special Needs Counsellors with solid experience working with special needs. In addition all staff receive pre-summer training and ongoing training throughout the summer.

If your camper requires one-on-one assistance or supervision arrangements must be made for Personal Attendants or Aides to accompany your camper. Whether or not your child will need an Aide is decided on an individual basis. A general rule of thumb is - if your child will do well in a 6:1 camper: staff ratio, then he or she will be fine without an Aide. If you are unsure if your child will need an Aide at camp, please call the camp office to discuss it with the Camp Director.

Camp Staff and Cabin Supervision:

Camp Tamarack staff is chosen on the basis of responsibility and their desire to work with children. The vast majority of camp staff members are College or University students pursuing degrees that directly relate to children and camp, such as education and recreation studies. Camp Tamarack has established a comprehensive training program and holds the staff to the highest standards of the camping industry. They are required to submit a Criminal Record Check and Child Welfare Check before work begins, as well as, hold a valid Standard First Aid and CPR certificate.

Camper supervision is consistent with the Alberta Camping Associations standards of camper to staff ratios at 6:1 for ages 6 and under; 8:1 for ages 7-14 and 10:1 for campers over 15 years old. These ratios will decrease in the event of an integrated special need to the group.

There are 3 bunk cabins and 4 teepees at camp. A staff member sleeps in each cabin/tipi and this person is in radio contact with the Medical Attendant and a Program Coordinator at all times.

Each week bunk spaces will be allotted in two teepees on a first-come basis. The other two teepees are reserved for single-night sleepovers of the cabin campers. Every camper will be given the opportunity to sleep in a teepee at least once.

Camper Groups:

Campers are grouped according age and the development of each child. To accommodate all children in our care our camper groups are flexible. Please clearly express any friend/group requests in the "Blank" section of your Camper Application Form. (Ex: with a friend, sibling or "thrives better with" children older/younger, etc)

Behavior & Discipline:

Camp Tamarack is committed to providing a safe and open environment. Our #1 camp rule is RESPECT: it is the responsibility of all to make sure camp a safe community for everyone. Below are some disruptive behaviors that will not be tolerated at camp:

- Any act which may create a potentially dangerous situation
- Stealing and vandalism
- Physical violence or verbal abuse
- Leaving camp property without permission
- Racial or religious intolerance
- Sexual activity or misconduct
- Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Behaviors which negatively affect another campers experience at camp.

If a camper exhibits any of these behaviors at camp the Director will take appropriate action. Consequences will be appropriate and may include being sent home. Parents or guardians will be contacted regarding serious behaviors. No refund will be issued if a camper is sent home for inappropriate behavior. Please ensure your campers are aware of these guidelines and understand the expectations and consequences.

Homesickness:

Parents please take the time to prepare your camper and yourself by addressing the potential of homesickness. Always, assure your camper that feelings of homesickness are normal and that everyone experiences them to some degree. Let them know that they can write you a letter for when they return home. **NEVER** promise phone calls home or that you will pick them up "if" they feel homesick. Making these promises merely increases the likelihood and severity of homesickness. If you use Bunk1 to communicate one-way with your camper be very careful not overly express your own feelings of "child-sickness". It is best to reassure your camper that you love them and are very proud of them, etc.

Collectively Camp Tamarack staff we have a 50 years of camp counseling and child care experience. We have the wide range of skills and abilities needed to deal with any case of homesickness. In the event that your child is homesick and our trusted tactics fail to refocus them the Coordinator will call home for tips on dealing with your child. Only after consulting with you will we send your camper home or consider alternative arrangements.

Our Privacy Policy:

Camp Tamarack Association is committed to and respects your privacy. Your information is used only for the purpose for which it was given to us. It will not be shared, sold or loaned to any one or business. During the program, pictures and videos may be taken of camp activities. Such pictures may be used for camp promotional purposes such as this web site. See our Media release form for more information

Receipts, Refunds & Cancellations:

Summer camp fees are considered child care expenses for your income tax purposes. Receipts will be available to pick up at the time you drop off your camper.

Cancellations with at least 2 weeks notice will receive a full refund, minus a \$25.00 administration fee. Cancellations or early departures with extenuating circumstances (ie: medical reasons; death in the family) may also be considered for reimbursement. Refunds are not issued in instances where a camper is removed from the camp program at the choice or request of the camper or the campers' parent/guardian, or when a camper is expelled from camp for behavioral issues.

Camp Tamarack reserves the right to cancel any program if the registration numbers are not high enough to pay for the costs of running the program. A full refund will be granted if another date is not suitable.

Evaluation:

Camp Tamarack strives to be one of the best residential summer camps in Alberta. We are continually reviewing our processes, programs and services to ensure that they meet your expectations. Input regarding our programs and services is valued and always welcome. Please feel free to phone, write or email with your suggestions.

Ways To Help

There are MANY different ways that you can contribute to Camp Tamarack!!! We are looking for financial and material support on an ongoing basis. Volunteers are essential to the success of our programs.

Project & Campaign Donations:

- Camp Tamarack Edible Garden
- Hall Renovations
- Cabin Restorations
- Pine Beetle Restoration
- Archery Backstops
- Benches and Tables

Equipment & Supply Donations:

- Camping Supplies
- Tarps
- Basketballs, Volleyballs, Soccer balls
- Dress up clothes and costumes
- Craft Supplies
- Gardening Supplies

Volunteering

- Become a board member. Meetings are the 1st Monday of every month. Minimum commitment of 1.5 hours per month, plus any special events and fundraisers that might interest you.
- Fundraisers, Casinos & Bingos
- Grounds & Facilities Maintenance

Our success is largely due to the generous support of our volunteers and donors. If you think that you would like to become a member of our volunteer family, please call Verna at the office (538-4694).