



IMPORTANT INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR CHILD & CAMP

Dear Parents,

Shetek Lutheran Ministries takes the safety and well-being of our campers very seriously. Our goals are to provide a safe, affirming experience where your child will learn more about God, grow in faith, and try new challenges in a natural, outdoor environment. We acknowledge that it is a big act of trust as a parent for you to entrust your child into the care of other people. We aim to do everything we can to earn and keep that trust. We also know that we cannot do this without your help. Please read through this letter to hear more about how we can partner together.

Homesickness: Is this your child's first time away from family for an extended period of time? Is it *your* first time with your children away for an extended time? It is natural to feel bad about not being around those we love. Homesickness happens but we don't have to feel helpless about it. Here at SLM we keep campers busy with the normal flow of the daily schedule, rather than staying in their cabin or in our health center. We also realize that there are real symptoms, aches and pains that can accompany homesickness. For more on homesickness and to gain tips from the American Camp Association go to: www.acacamps.org/campers-families/parent-blog/homesickness-dos-donts-parents-preparing-sleepaway-camp.

Cell Phones: As mentioned in our "What not to bring" section of your pre-camp information. **We do have a "no cell phone" policy at camp.** Given all the technologies that allow us instant contact with our family, it can be difficult to consider limits on that communication. We hope insights into SLM's policies regarding cell phones will provide understanding and reassurance. Camp is a place where children can grow in confidence, learning to overcome some of their own challenges. There are always people within the camp community for your child to reach out to that can assist him/her with this process. Cell phones can also be lost, stolen or used by campers inappropriately with photos or calls to outsiders who could potentially put campers at risk. There is also a larger problem with campers having cell phones at camp, and that is trust. When children come to camp they, and you, are making a leap of faith. By sending a phone to camp, it is implying that the camp staff may not be capable of handling situations that may arise. If a cell phone is brought to camp, it will be kept locked in the office and given back at the end of a camp session.

Tips for How We Can Partner Together

- Speak openly about the possibility of homesickness before your child leaves for camp. Set your child up for success by assuring your child of your love and that he/she will have a great time at camp and brainstorm some coping strategies. It's not helpful to tell your child that you will come and get him/her, or call him/her. Overcoming homesickness will be a great success for your child.
- Send Letters to your child while s/he is at camp, or turn in letters at the registration table for staff to deliver throughout the week. Pack stationary and stamps so your child can write to you. You may also email a note to your child from your Campwise registration account and we will deliver it.
- **Trust that camp staff will call you if there are any health concerns or if your child is experiencing an especially difficult adjustment to camp.**

We look forward to having your child here at SLM this summer! We are grateful for your partnership in setting your child up for a successful and positive camp experience.

God's Peace,

The Shetek Lutheran Ministries Staff