

# Dear Parents,

We recognize that your children are your most precious, valuable, and prized responsibilities. Our overriding goal is to protect the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of your children – our campers – during their time at camp.

To meet that goal, we train our counselors to foster community in their small groups, build trust among campers, and to help each participant feel comfortable in unfamiliar surroundings. Campers are encouraged to share their ideas and be themselves without the fear of ridicule or embarrassment from others. We teach our staff and campers that scary stories, sarcasm, put-downs, and similar things may happen elsewhere, but are not appropriate in a Christian camp environment.

We teach our staff to recognize camp-related risks when leading activities and to take preventative measures, such as making sure campers drink plenty of fluids, wear insect repellent and sunscreen, and wear the proper footwear for a particular activity. As a camp accredited by the American Camp Association, we provide additional training to, or require specialized certification of, staff who lead or coordinate the areas of our program that have a higher degree of risk (for example, the climbing wall or aquatic activities).

And, as we desire Camp Hanover to be a safe place for all of our participants, campers and staff, we ask for some help from you, the parents.

Included with your “Welcome To Camp” materials are a number of forms that we are asking you to complete with your child. Some of these are needed so that we may comply with state health & safety standards and maintain the best practices of the summer camping industry. Others are used by camp staff in various areas to facilitate the day-to-day operation of camp in a smooth and efficient manner. All of what we are asking you to complete and sign makes it possible for us to better prepare for and provide a successful camp experience for you and your child. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

## Forming a Partnership with Parents...

We equip our counselors to handle any number of situations they may encounter with campers during the summer. But when it comes to helping your child have a successful experience at camp, you as parents are our number one resource. You know your children better than we will ever know them, especially in the short span of time that we see them at camp.

Know that if a situation involving your child arises, be it homesickness, a behavioral issue, or a healthcare concern, you may be contacted by one of our Unit Directors, our Associate Director of Programs – Harry Zweckbronner, our healthcare staff, or me. We want to include you throughout the process, to help in working toward a solution, not just at the end, at the point of no return. We may call you to let you know what’s going on in your child’s group, to keep you “in the loop”. We may call you to ask for some advice, or to see if you could shed some light on a particular situation. We may call and ask you to send a letter or an email to help your child adjust to his or her new surroundings. We may even call just to let you know how great a day your child is having.

If you do get a call from camp this summer, don’t panic. Just relax and remember, by working together, we can help your child have a positive and memorable camp experience like no other.

## In Closing...

I encourage you to share your concerns and thoughts about Camp Hanover with me and with members of the Camp Hanover Board. Your feedback is welcome and requested. We need to know from you what we should be doing more of and what we should be doing less of, as well as what you think we’re doing well! What services or programs can Camp Hanover provide that would benefit you and your family?

If you have any questions, concerns or would like to discuss something related to summer camp, now or at any point in the future, please email me at [doug@CampHanover.org](mailto:doug@CampHanover.org) or call me at (804) 779-2811. I and the rest of the Camp Hanover staff are looking forward to seeing you this summer.

Peace,



Doug Walters  
Executive Director



**FROM THE DIRECTOR**

**Camp Hanover is a ministry partner of the Presbytery of the James, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)**

3163 Parsleys Mill Road ❖ Mechanicsville, Virginia ❖ 23111 ❖ Phone (804) 779-2811 ❖ Fax (804) 779-3056 ❖ [www.CampHanover.org](http://www.CampHanover.org)



# Important Items You Need To Complete To Attend Camp

## Preparing for Camp: Get-To-Know Me - Parent and Camper versions

***We prefer that you provide this information online using the camp registration system. Log into your account and complete a "Get to Know Me - Camper" and "Get to Know Me - Parent" for each camper. If you choose to print this file, please complete it, and mail a copy to camp or scan and email it to [GetToKnowMe@camphanover.org](mailto:GetToKnowMe@camphanover.org) at least two weeks prior to your arrival at camp. Bring the original with you to Check-in Day.***

Please complete these questionnaires with your child. These documents go straight to your child's counselors. It is an opportunity to share your concerns and hopes for your child and his or her time at camp directly with the individuals who will be caring for your child and creating this special experience. Use it also as a way to open a dialogue with your child about his or her upcoming camp experience. Talk with your child about what he or she is looking forward to, and what he or she may be apprehensive about. Begin outlining the expectations you have of your child while he or she is away from home and help him or her prepare for the new experiences and challenges that time at camp will bring.

## Health History Form

***We prefer that you provide this information online using the camp registration system. Log into your account and complete a "Camper Information & Health History" for each camper. If you choose to print this file, please complete it, and mail a copy to camp or scan and email it to [HealthHistory@camphanover.org](mailto:HealthHistory@camphanover.org) at least two weeks prior to your arrival at camp. Bring the original with you to Check-in Day.***

The Health History Form is kept confidential and used by our healthcare staff. Your child's counselors are provided limited information on a "need-to-know" basis as determined by the healthcare staff. Please fill out the form as completely as possible. Campers are not singled out, made to feel embarrassed or treated differently because of information gathered on this form. Rather, the more we know ahead of time, the easier it is to provide appropriate care for your child during his or her stay at camp, and better respond in the event of an emergency. If you have questions or need clarification regarding the Health History Form, please contact Camp Hanover.

## Health Exam Form

***You need to print this file, have a healthcare provider complete it, and bring it with you to camp.***

Camp Hanover is accredited by the American Camp Association for the safe operation and high quality of our programs. So that we may meet the standards for accreditation, participants are required to provide a record of a health exam by a licensed healthcare provider which attests to the participant's ability to safely participate in the program. **The physical exam must have occurred within twelve months** of a participant's arrival at camp.

## Parent/Guardian Release

***We prefer that you provide this information online using the camp registration system. Log into your account and complete a "Parent/Guardian Release" for each camper.***

The foundation of the Christ-centered community at Camp Hanover is built on love, trust, respect and responsibility. The Parent/Guardian Release outlines certain situations that may come up while your child is with us. We try to be as detailed as possible, anticipating as many possible scenarios as we can to limit surprises. Some specific camp sessions engage in other activities, and those campers will be sent session specific permission slips as needed. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the types of activities your child will be involved in while they are at camp. While you are asked to sign the agreement, we ask that you review it with your child. As always, if you have any questions about anything included in this document, please ask!

**Camp Hanover is a ministry partner of the Presbytery of the James, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)**

3163 Parsleys Mill Road ❖ Mechanicsville, Virginia ❖ 23111 ❖ Phone (804) 779-2811 ❖ Fax (804) 779-3056 ❖ [www.CampHanover.org](http://www.CampHanover.org)



# What Should I Do Now?

## Before The Start Date of Your Camp Session Arrives

- Carefully Review the "Welcome To Camp" materials.
- Complete and submit "Get To Know Me" forms
- Complete and submit the Health History form.
- Have a Healthcare Provider complete and sign the Health Exam form.
- Complete and submit Parent/Guardian Release.
- Photocopy both sides of your Health Insurance Card.
- Pay your camp fee balance 10 days prior to the start of your session.

## On Check-In Day

### Before You Leave Home, be sure:

- Your child's clothes are labeled and packed securely. Did you remember to pack rain gear?
- You have the Health Exam Form with you.
- You have the "Get To Know Me" form and Health History with you (unless you provided the information online).
- Medications are in the original labeled containers and readily accessible to turn in once you arrive.
- You know your way to Camp Hanover or have a copy of the Driving Directions from our website printed out and handy.

### Check-In is from 3:00pm to 5:00pm for camps that start on Sunday. You will be sent a check-in time the week before your child's session begins. Check-In is from 9:00am - 10:00am for camps that start on Thursday.

- Pull in to Camp Hanover's Welcome Center to begin your check-in journey.
- Make your way to the Check-In Area to learn who your counselors are, what group you are in, and where you will stay.
- Proceed to the Health Center area, review the Health History with the Healthcare Staff and turn in any medications.
- Pull up to the Luggage Drop-Off Area where our staff will unload for you. We'll deliver the luggage to your child's longhouse.
- Give your camper a hug, say "Goodbye!" and have a safe ride home.

## When Camp Ends

- Plan to arrive at camp at **9:00am** to pick up your camper.
- Follow signs to the camper pick-up area.
- Retrieve any medication turned in during check-in from the Healthcare Staff.
- Pull up to your camper's group, we'll load the luggage for you.
- Have identification with you to verify that you are one of the approved persons who has permission to pick up the camper.
- Sign your camper out with his or her counselors.
- Check the Lost and Found for any misplaced items.
- Listen with interest and ask lots of questions on the way home and afterwards about your child's camp experience. Search for improvements in behavior or attitudes, new talents, and a new awareness of Christian life. You have a wonderful opportunity to nurture the "seeds" that have been planted.

**Camp Hanover a ministry partner of the Presbytery of the James, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)**

3163 Parsleys Mill Road ❖ Mechanicsville, Virginia ❖ 23111 ❖ Phone (804) 779-2811 ❖ Fax (804) 779-3056 ❖ [www.CampHanover.org](http://www.CampHanover.org)



# Helpful Packing Tips

## **Pack With Your Child**

Packing with your child is a great opportunity to build excitement about camp and to talk about any anxieties or concerns your child 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 “What To Pack” Checklist - At The End Of Camp Too!**

Use the checklist when you pack. Once you are all packed, tuck the checklist in your child’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 in something that you can carry a short distance from the Parking Area to the Luggage Drop-off Area. We will transport camper luggage from there to the cabin or longhouse for you. Storage space in living quarters is limited. Soft-sided luggage, like a duffel bag or back-pack, that can be easily stuffed under beds or in small spaces is ideal.

## **Label Everything**

Put your child’s first and last name on everything using a permanent marker. Be sure to label your child’s luggage. If your child loses something, it may turn up in Lost and Found. Check Lost and Found when you pick your child at the end of camp. Unclaimed items are disposed of or donated to charity at the end of the summer two weeks after the last camp session ends.

## **Pack Appropriate Attire For Camp**

Pack clothing that is comfortable in hot summer weather, suitable for outdoor play, and has the potential to get wet or dirty. A special shopping trip is usually not needed. Old, well-worn, broken-in clothes and shoes are optimal. Campers should not pack suggestive or revealing outfits nor articles of clothing that promote alcohol, tobacco, drug use, sexual behavior or contains inappropriate language.

## **A Note About Swimsuits**

We prefer that campers wear swimsuits that are comfortable and will stay in place during camp activities. Campers may wear T-shirts in the pool over their swimsuits if they would feel more comfortable doing so.

## **Pack For The Mud Slide**

The Mud Slide is a classic camp activity that has been a popular fixture at Camp Hanover for over 50 years. For your ride down the Mud Slide, you’ll want to pack shoes, shorts and a shirt to wear that you can toss afterwards. The mud (and the somewhat unpleasant smell of the mud) will never come out, no matter how many times you run your clothes through laundry.

## **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 separately from your luggage so you will be able to easily access them and turn them into the Healthcare Staff during Check-In.

**Camp Hanover is a ministry partner of the Presbytery of the James, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)**

3163 Parsleys Mill Road ❖ Mechanicsville, Virginia ❖ 23111 ❖ Phone (804) 779-2811 ❖ Fax (804) 779-3056 ❖ [www.CampHanover.org](http://www.CampHanover.org)

## Essential Clothing Items

- Raincoat/Poncho or Rain Gear (an absolute necessity!)
- Enough changes of underwear and socks for your length of stay
- A number of short sleeve shirts appropriate to your length of stay
- A number of pairs of shorts appropriate to your length of stay
- Long pants or jeans
- Long sleeve T-shirt
- Sweatshirt or sweater and sweatpants for cool weather
- Pajamas
- Hat
- Swimsuit appropriate for camp (2 if you have 'em)
- Set of clothes and shoes specifically for the "The Mud Slide"
- 1 pair of sturdy, secure fitting shoes that cover your toes for hiking
- 1 pair of secure fitting shoes that cover your toes that can get wet
- 1 pair of sandals/flip-flops shoes for boating or wearing in the shower

## Optional Items

- Small daypack or backpack
- Sunglasses
- Bandana
- Inexpensive or disposable camera
- Paper, pen, pencil, stamps, pre-addressed envelopes
- Fishing pole (Camp Hanover has cane poles you may use)
- Small folding pocket knife with a maximum blade length of 2 1/2"
- Favorite stuffed animal
- Book to read during rest time
- Guitar or other musical instrument

## Things To Leave At Home

- Pets
- Food, snacks or candy
- Alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, firearms and fireworks
- Clothes you wouldn't want to get dirty
- Expensive items, sentimental items, jewelry
- Electronic Items, cell phones, video games, digital music players, e-readers
- Extra spending money, wallets, purses
- Anything which would result in tremendous unhappiness if it were lost, broken, or got dirty

## Other "Must Have" Items

- Bible (It's okay if you don't have one, we have extras)
- Sleeping bag or bed linens and blanket for a single bed
- Pillow & Pillowcase
- Laundry bag for dirty clothes
- Flashlight & Extra Batteries
- Water bottle
- Sunscreen
- Insect Repellent (we prefer lotion or pump sprays)
- Any medications you are taking
- Face masks, if desired.

## Toiletries

- Toothbrush and Toothpaste
- Shampoo and Conditioner
- Soap in a container
- Something to carry toiletries in. A mesh bag works well.
- Bath Towel & Washcloth
- Beach Towel to use at the Pool
- Deodorant
- Feminine necessities





# Communication With Your Child While At Camp

## Should I write to my child at Camp?

**YES!!** Nothing makes a camper's day like receiving a letter from home. Parents are encouraged to write their child regularly while he or she is at camp. To help you save on postage, you can "pre-write" your messages and drop them off with us on Check-in day. We will deliver mail collected at Check-in throughout the week. Mail is distributed daily after lunch. To mail your child a letter, use the following address:

Camp Hanover  
Camper Name, Gender, Camp Name & Dates  
3163 Parsleys Mill Road  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

For Example: Camp Hanover  
Billy Smith, Male, Spread Your Wings 6/22 - 6/28  
3163 Parsleys Mill Road  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

## Can I send email to my child?

**YES.** We encourage you to email your child daily. We provide a "One-way Email" service at no cost. Instructions for using the service will be emailed to you before camp starts and also available when you arrive at Check-In. The email service will be active the day your child arrives at camp and you can invite others (such as grandparents or family friends) to email your child as well. Email is delivered every day at lunch. 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 child how much you miss them, or other phrases that might make them homesick. It's always good to close with "See you on Saturday!" (or whatever day of the week your child's camp ends). Remember, campers do not have access to computers at camp and won't respond to your email (unless they write an "old-fashioned" letter home).

## Can I send my child a care package? Is it okay to send a package with food, snacks or candy?

Care packages that do not contain candy or food are great! We ask that you do not bring or mail food or candy to camp. Campers are served delicious and nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day while at camp. Including food or candy in care packages only encourages insects and critters to find their way into cabins, longhouses and other places where they don't belong. Care packages containing food or candy can also create challenging situations that upset the sense of community which counselors work hard to build among their groups of campers. If you do choose to send a care package containing food or candy, your camper will be given the choice of sharing with the rest of his or her group at a time determined by the counselor, or having the items held until the end of the camp session when he or she departs.

## 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 the "busy-ness" of the everyday world, be in a place apart, and 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 camp director).

Know that if a situation involving your child arises that warrants parental involvement, be it severe homesickness, a behavioral issue, or a healthcare concern, we will contact you as soon as possible. If you have an emergency and you need to contact your child, please call the camp office at (804) 779-2811.

## Can I visit my child at camp?

For many of the same reasons outlined 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 Hanover on Check-In day and after picking up your child at the end of camp.

**Camp Hanover is a ministry partner of the Presbytery of the James, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)**

3163 Parsleys Mill Road ❖ Mechanicsville, Virginia ❖ 23111 ❖ Phone (804) 779-2811 ❖ Fax (804) 779-3056 ❖ [www.CampHanover.org](http://www.CampHanover.org)



## Small Group Camping

At Camp Hanover we focus on building community and the give and take that goes along with it. To that end, the small group is at the core of our program. Upon arriving at camp, children are placed in “Family Groups” that are typically comprised of 5 or 6 boys, 5 or 6 girls, one male and one female counselor. This group remains together for the duration of the campers’ time at camp, traveling to and from and participating in activities together, eating meals together and living near each other. We find this model allows the campers to form meaningful friendships and for the counselors to really 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 has the opportunity to find his or her role, and contribute to the well-being of others. Campers learn to recognize and appreciate the uniqueness and inherent value of each individual in the group.

## The Day-To-Day Schedule and Small Group Camping

In Camp Hanover’s small group camping model, campers themselves play a large role in determining what activities they will do, when they will do them, and other aspects of the program, all under the guidance of their counselors. Counselors will make sure the group knows what opportunities are available for their age group, then the camper group will make decisions on which activities they will actually do. We believe empowering youth in this way helps build competence and confidence. It’s important to remember that every group’s schedule will be different as a result of this unique planning process. Below, are some sample schedules to give you a sense of what a day “might” look like.

An element of this small group model that is sometimes frustrating for campers is that each camper will not get to “have their way” all the time! (For example, a camper may not want to go to archery when the group as a whole has decided to do so). With the guidance of their counselors, campers learn to consider the needs, desires and perspectives of all members of the group. Through weekly “Town Meetings,” a nightly group “Check-In,” team-building challenges on the Low Ropes Course and other group-building activities, counselors and campers learn to work together towards compromise, reaching agreement and creating win-win solutions to the situations they encounter where 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, though, while we do require campers to remain with their group at all times, no camper will be forced to participate in any activity they don’t want to, or are not comfortable with. We call this “Challenge by Choice.”

### Sample Wingers Daily Schedule

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| 7:00am  | Open those eyes to a brand new day!  |
| 8:00am  | BREAKFAST at Camp Site   |
| 8:45am  | Morning Devotions  |
| 9:00am  | Opportunities to Serve (cleaning/sweeping lodges & bathrooms, recycling, etc.) |
| 9:30am  | Group Building Games   |
| 11:30am | BIBLE STUDY around the campsite table  |
| 12:30pm | TRAIL LUNCH on a hike  |
| 1:30pm  | Rest Time  |
| 3:00pm  | MUD SLIDE!   |
| 4:00pm  | SWIMMING   |
| 5:00pm  | Planning for your group’s leadership of Vespers (evening worship service)      |
| 6:00pm  | DINNER & Singing outside Wise Lodge  |
| 7:00pm  | Pack up sleeping bags, hike to the Treehouse for OVERNIGHT                     |
| 8:00pm  | Small group activities   |
| 8:30pm  | Evening WORSHIP, sharing stories, songs, s’mores around the CAMPFIRE.          |
| 9:15pm  | Your group “checks-in” about the day. A time of reflection, sharing, prayer.   |
| 9:30pm  | BEDTIME  |

### Sample Middlers or Seniors Daily Schedule

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| 7:00am  | Snooze. Snore. Open those eyes to a brand new day! Fall back asleep.                    |
| 8:00am  | BREAKFAST at Camp Site  |
| 8:45am  | Morning Devotions   |
| 9:00am  | Opportunities to Serve (cleaning/sweeping lodges & bathrooms, recycling, etc.)          |
| 9:30am  | High Ropes Course   |
| 12:30pm | LUNCH and Singing outside Wise Lodge  |
| 1:30pm  | Rest Time   |
| 3:00pm  | Adopt a Spread-Your-Wings group at the MUD SLIDE  |
| 4:00pm  | Water Volleyball  |
| 5:00pm  | BIBLE STUDY on the Blue Trail.  |
| 6:00pm  | COOKOUT over the campfire (Fajitas and Fried Oreos! YUM!)                               |
| 7:00pm  | Cookout clean-up  |
| 7:30pm  | Invite another small group over to churn some homemade ice cream                        |
| 8:00pm  | Plan an out-of-camp adventure trip (canoeing, hiking, climbing) for later in the week   |
| 9:00pm  | WORSHIP with other groups at the lake and watch shooting stars while laying on the dock |
| 10:00pm | Your group “checks-in” about the day. A time of reflection, sharing, prayer             |

**Camp Hanover is a ministry partner of the Presbytery of the James, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)**

3163 Parsleys Mill Road ❖ Mechanicsville, Virginia ❖ 23111 ❖ Phone (804) 779-2811 ❖ Fax (804) 779-3056 ❖ [www.CampHanover.org](http://www.CampHanover.org)



# Things to Know About the Camp Hanover Experience

## A Place Apart... Living in an Outdoorsy, Rustic Setting

Camp Hanover is, by design, a rustic camp site and program, without many of the amenities or "creature comforts" one may be used to outside of camp. The outdoor setting is conducive to a simple way of living in which campers have opportunities to relax, slow down and experience quiet stillness. We believe this helps campers connect with God and with God's Creation.

One of our program goals is to "live in, live with, learn about and care for God's Creation." Whether it's a nature hike, night-time star watch, helping care for our chickens and goats, or cooking a meal over a fire, there are numerous opportunities to accomplish this goal. The camp lifestyle becomes one where exploration, self-expression, discussion and celebration are encouraged. Realizing that spending a lot of time in the outdoors is easier for some than others, we work hard to help campers with the transition. Ensuring your camper is prepared to spend the great majority of time outside, rain or shine, can help us with this goal. Using the "What To Pack for Camp" list, you can set your child up for success by making sure he or she has appropriate clothing for whatever the weather brings.

The rustic setting and goals of our program are also why we ask your child to leave electronics like cell phones and ipods at home. We know that adjusting to life without these devices can be challenging for many campers. However, besides the reality that electronics tend to not fare well in a camp setting, our experience is that not having them around helps the community form, and ensures that campers interact on a deeper level with each other. Please help us with this policy by making sure your child leaves electronics at home.

## Bible Study and Worship

We enthusiastically welcome children of all faith backgrounds as well as those with no previous experience in a faith-based setting. As a ministry partner of the Presbytery of the James, Camp Hanover is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA). We value this relationship and it shapes many aspects of our program. Our goal is to create a safe place where kids can think about, explore and talk about faith-related issues. One way we do this is with daily Bible study. Our Bible study curriculum is selected by the Program Committee of the Camp Hanover Board. In selecting a curriculum, committee members, along with a team of pastors, Christian Educators, camp staff and other volunteers review it to ensure that the material is theologically sound and age-appropriate. Often, this group will work to adapt particular lesson plans to fit the unique program and facility resources found at Camp Hanover. Using the curriculum, and working with our pastors-in-residence during the summer (visiting ministers or Christian Educators from Presbyterian congregations), counselors will use scripture, stories, songs, discussion, and activities to help campers explore their faith.

## Critters, Critters Everywhere!

The reality of being on 600 acres of woodlands means that we are likely to encounter some animal life. In fact, it's often intentional. Campers may find themselves helping with the camp chickens and goats, crossing paths with a deer while hiking a trail, or watching a bald eagle soar above the lake. After dark, it is not uncommon to hear owls hoot in the treetops, see raccoons scamper through the field, or watch bats flit back and forth in the night sky. As stewards of God's natural world, we strive to be good neighbors with all of these creatures. We are also aware that we share this land with some less popular critters, like mosquitos, spiders, snakes and ticks. Skunks, mice and other rodents all call Camp Hanover home as well. Please know that we train our staff on how to avoid unpleasant encounters with these animals, and just as importantly, what to do when they happen despite our best efforts. You can help your child prepare for camp by packing bug spray and encouraging them to wear long pants while hiking. You can help us keep scavenging critters out of longhouses, cabins and other buildings where they don't belong by making sure your child leaves any food, candy or snacks at home. Only send care packages that do not contain food items.

**Camp Hanover is a ministry partner of the Presbytery of the James, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)**

3163 Parsleys Mill Road ❖ Mechanicsville, Virginia ❖ 23111 ❖ Phone (804) 779-2811 ❖ Fax (804) 779-3056 ❖ [www.CampHanover.org](http://www.CampHanover.org)





## Some Things to Think About: Summer Camp Policies

### **Homesickness is something that can occur with any age camper at any time.**

As a parent/guardian, you can help to prevent homesickness by talking honestly about your expectations for your child and of camp before the camp starts. Help your child think about all the fun to be had. Talk about meeting new people and how much is learned from making new friends. Help your child to remember how he or she has made new friends in similar situations in the past. Help your child set realistic goals for things that he or she wants to learn or ways that she or he wants to grow while at camp. Let them know that they may not get to do everything that they want to do all the time... they may need to make compromises.

If a camper does get homesick, our staff will work in a caring manner with your child to help them get through it. Assure your child that if they feel homesick, he or she needs to talk to their counselor about how they are feeling. Please do not promise or tell your child he or she can call home whenever they wish. Campers do not have access to the phone. If homesickness persists for more than 24 hours, we will call you (the parent/guardian) and discuss the situation. Together, we may decide that talking with a parent is the best course of action. If either you or the camp decides that it is best for the camper to leave camp early, we will affirm the camper for what they have already accomplished. If a camper departs camp due to homesickness or other reasons of personal choice, no refund of camp fees will be made.

### **Behavioral Challenges and Discipline Strategies**

We want camp to be a mountaintop experience for everyone who attends. Building Christian community requires that everyone be willing to work together to achieve the goals of the group. Sometimes a camper, for a variety of reasons, has a difficult time behaving or speaking in an appropriate manner. Should that occur, we will take the following steps:

- A.** Counselor and camper will talk through the issue and try to resolve it in a positive manner using the Participant Agreement as the starting point for this discussion. Our goal in this process will always be to help the camper to take responsibility for her or his own choices and actions and to understand the consequences of those choices, both for themselves and the people around them.
- B.** If the camper continues to make inappropriate choices, there will be consequences. For example, he or she may be removed from the immediate activity for a period of time. Under no circumstances will corporal punishment ever be used as a consequence.
- C.** If the camper continues to choose to disregard camp policies or agreements, there may be a conference with the Director and a call home. The camper's stay at camp will be shortened if the issue cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the camper, the group, the counselors and the camp administration. If it is necessary to shorten a camper's stay at camp for inappropriate choices, disruptive or harmful behavior, or failure to abide by the Participant Agreement, no refund of camp fees will be made.

### **Respect for Property**

Many persons use our facilities during the year. During the past year over 7000 people sought peace and fellowship at Camp Hanover. Many enjoy the beauty and natural feel of our facilities. All of us need to work together to keep Camp Hanover clean and inviting. We do not allow graffiti on or vandalism of any of our facilities. If you feel a need to leave your mark on this community, we ask that it be made through your words and deeds by uplifting and affirming other persons. Campers who violate this request may be billed for the clean-up and/or be expected to do the clean-up themselves.

### **Appropriate Footwear**

Securely fitting shoes that cover your toes must be worn at all times except when being barefoot is appropriate (as determined by our staff). This is for your protection and to help ensure that you will be able to safely participate in and enjoy all the camp activities. "Closed-toed shoes for safety" is more than a chant that you will hear around camp... it is the norm, the expectation for camp activities. Please pack accordingly.

**Camp Hanover is a ministry partner of the Presbytery of the James, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)**

3163 Parsleys Mill Road ❖ Mechanicsville, Virginia ❖ 23111 ❖ Phone (804) 779-2811 ❖ Fax (804) 779-3056 ❖ [www.CampHanover.org](http://www.CampHanover.org)

## 5 Things You Can Do to Help Your Child Succeed At Camp

### 1. Discuss the camp's policies with your child beforehand

Make sure your child understands what the policies are and that he or she has to honor them.

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

Acknowledge your child'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 temptation to "rescue" your child from homesickness. Acknowledge in a positive way that you will miss your child and you are confident that he or she will be able to complete the camp session.

### 3. Pack together with your child.

Pack things your child 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 the Welcome to Camp materials.

### 4. Let your child 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 child for spending time away from home at camp.

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

## Avoid Doing These 5 Things That Set Your Child Up For Failure

### 1. Avoid making deals or using 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," when camp has a policy that does not permit campers to call home, or allowing your child to pack a digital music player, e-reader, or cell phone when the packing list says to leave it at home.

### 3. Avoid sending your child 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 child time to adjust. Check with us to see if it is possible to switch to a session later in the summer.

### 4. Avoid keeping helpful information from camp staff about your child

For example, not letting staff know your child is prone to bedwetting is counter productive. By providing our staff with as much information as possible, you help us help your child. 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 child off of prescription medications for their week at camp

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