

WHAT TO EXPECT AT

Time at Appel Farm is the best way to spend your summer. Camp is the perfect place to ignite your creativity, kindness, and confidence, but things at camp might be a little different than at home. And that's okay!



How to prepare for camp

- Help your camper prepare for separating from their primary caregivers by setting up a sleepover with friends or family. Consider a long weekend or overnight spring break program to help your camper practice being away from you.
- Help your camper practice falling asleep independently by practicing using sleep safe headphones and their own listening device, wearing earplugs, or an eye mask.
- If your camper wets the bed, let the camp team know so we can make a plan that works for us and for you. In the past, some campers have worn pull-ups or used absorbent pads for frequent wetting, or have brought extra bedding for occasional wetting.

What if my camper gets homesick?

- Homesickness is very normal, especially for first time campers, but extreme homesickness is rare.
- It is important to discuss the possibility of homesickness with you camper before you arrive. Normalize the feeling and let them know that you believe in their ability to work through it. Try not to make promises to pick them up if they feel homesick. Encourage your camper to lean on the staff to help them work through their feelings. Growth happens when campers are able to make it through a tough time.
- All of our staff are trained to support campers who are homesick by validating their feelings, engaging in reflective listening, and helping the camper acknowledge the great things about camp. It often helps to identify something the camper is really looking forward to!
- Some campers find it helpful to draw pictures or write letters to family members in the moment.
- If campers experience homesickness that is impacting their ability to participate in daily activities, the bunk head will reach out to you for suggestions to support your camper and help them succeed. We will work with you to make a plan that is best for you and your camper.



Communication at camp

Campers do not have access to wifi or data on their devices (We suggest you leave the SIM cards at home) or the opportunity to call home during their time at camp. They are too busy engaging with their friends and participating in activities. We encourage letter writing during rest hour or wind down time in the evenings. Please send pre-addressed and stamped envelopes with your camper to encourage them to write letters home. You can write letters or email your camper throughout their session at camper@appelfarm.org and include their name and bunk number in the subject line. Mail is delivered to campers Monday through Saturday during Rest Hour, right after lunch. Families of first time campers receive a call from the Bunk Head within the first 72 hours of camp to let you know how your camper is settling in. Other than that, you should not expect to hear from us on a regular basis.



How we handle conflict at camp



- Our staff is trained on restorative practices and collaborative problem solving strategies to support campers having conflict. Staff collaborate with campers to address any harm that is caused and make a plan that is agreed upon by all parties.
- We encourage campers to come to their counselors and instructors if there is a conflict they need support solving. It is important that campers are able to advocate for themselves and communicate how they are feeling during or after a conflict. Please support your camper in learning these skills before coming to camp. If we don't know about a conflict, we can't support them in solving it!
- Regular conflict between campers is an important part of development and not typically something that we immediately discuss with caregivers. In the event of any conflict that has caused significant harm or that requires intervention beyond the skills of our seasonal staff, the caregiver will receive a call or email notifying them of the issue and the steps we have taken to resolve the situation.

Living in a bunk community

- Each bunk has 8-12 campers and 2 counselors. All bunks are air conditioned and have their own bathrooms including sinks, toilets, showers, and changing stalls.
- Your camper will be assigned to a bunk based on their age, chosen bunk community type, and bunkmate request.
- On check-in day all members of the bunk community work together to create a community agreement document including expectations such as where to leave muddy shoes, where to change clothing, how to treat each other, and ways to handle conflict, etc.
- Counselors and Campers are equal members of the bunk community and all work together to create a healthful and safe environment throughout the camp session. This includes contributing to bunk clean-up and honoring the boundaries of others.



Tips & Tricks for Caregivers

- When writing letters to your camper, it can be hard for them to hear about fun things they are missing at home. If your camper is likely to experience homesickness, it can be helpful to focus on asking them questions about camp and letting them know that things at home are going on as usual and you are happy that they are getting a chance to experience camp.
- Help your camper prepare for camp by acknowledging that camp is different from home and that different can be fun!
- [Notes from the Camp Bunk: A Guide for First-Time Campers from a Camper](#) is a great book to read together to prepare and talk about what camp might be like! This young author, Eden Martin, a middle school student and camper, has written a reassuring guide for kids 7-14 who will be attending sleep-away camp for the first time. She offers the unique perspective of a young camper who has been to camp herself for several summers.
- **The camp team is here to work with you. We want your camper to be successful this summer!!**

Mother's Day Weekend
ARTS RETREAT
at Appel Farm

3D + 2D
VISUAL ART


DANCE +
MOVEMENT

THEATRE

DAY
PASSES
AVAILABLE!

May 11 & 12
Register by May 1!

Overnight or Day Pass
Arts Workshops • Campfire & S'mores
Special Mother's Day Brunch

 **Check out our Mother's Day Arts Retreat where your camper will get to know our campus, try some arts and music workshops, sleep in a bunk, and meet some of our summer staff.**