

# 2024



# Camp Handbook



## ON THE COVER

Aerial drone shot of camp.

## CONTACT US

[fun@mountainmeadow.com](mailto:fun@mountainmeadow.com) OR  
[annamarie@mountainmeadow.com](mailto:annamarie@mountainmeadow.com)

### Office

(530) 310-9281

*This number is available in-session as a Parent Line that connects you directly to our on-site "Camp Mom".*

### Mail (Amazon/Letters)

Mountain Meadow Ranch  
Camper Name  
P.O. Box 610  
Susanville, CA 96130

### Shipping (FedEx/UPS)

Mountain Meadow Ranch  
Camper Name  
704-950 Wingfield Rd.  
Susanville, CA 96130

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

- Pre-Camp Checklist
- Packing List
- Forms
- Travel
- Opening/Closing Days
- A Typical Day At Camp
- Activities
- Health Protocols + Fire/Evacuation Protocols
- Homesickness + Kidsickness
- Contacting Your Camper
- International Tips
- Behavioral Standards
- Parent Invitation
- Recommended Further Resources

## EDITOR'S NOTE

We hope you enjoy going through this handbook as a family. We've filled these pages with important information, tips, and beauty to stir both courage and excitement for the summer ahead! We are honored that you have chosen to spend part of your summer with us at MMR.



# PRE-CAMP CHECKLIST

- Pay tuition by MAY 1st. All remaining tuition will be charged automatically on this date. *Please ensure your credit card information is up-to-date.*
  - All parents are strongly encouraged to read this Handbook and the Terms & Conditions of enrollment and refund policy prior to paying tuition in full.
- Review and submit all forms by MAY 1st, these can be found in your [Parent Account](#) under “Forms & Documents”



- Pack with your camper so they know where all of their items are. Consider playing fun music and eating camp food (s'mores!) to share in the excitement together!
- Plan your camper's travel to and from camp EARLY. We can only guarantee a seat on our airport transportation for those that submit their travel forms by the deadline.

# PACKING

*Please have your child participate in packing for camp so they know where to find what they need. Every session a camper thinks they don't have a toothbrush, sweatshirt, etc. only for their counselor to help them find it or them to find it partway through the session.*

## LUGGAGE

We recommend campers pack in two pieces of luggage: one large piece to be used for clothing and a duffle bag for sleeping bag, pillow, etc. A daypack, small like used for school, is also required. Laundry is done once per 2-week session and cabins do not have dressers for camper storage. Campers' luggage functions as their "closet" for the session, so please try not to over-pack and keep this in mind when selecting a suitcase. We recommend something with a little structure to it as this helps with organization. The duffle bag can be used for towels, bedding, shoes, etc. and collapsed and easily stowed away during the session.

## CLIMATE

Summers are simply lovely at the ranch. Our daily temperatures average a dry 85 °F, while the nights average 50 °F. We hope for a few good, rain-dumping thunderstorms each summer! Earlier sessions may experience cooler temperatures, while later sessions may experience hotter temperatures. Please ensure you check the weather for Janesville, CA the week prior to attendance to adjust packing as necessary.

## BEDDING

All campers have a single bunk and we provide one pillow and pillow case. What you choose to send with your camper for sleeping is totally up to their comfort needs. Every camper is required to bring at least a sleeping bag (international campers are exempt and may use our loaner items). Some campers choose to stick with just the sleeping bag and others prefer to bring a full bedding set for extra comfort.

## DRESS CODE

We want the clothes worn at camp to be functional, so we have developed the dress code policy included in the *Standards* section. If campers choose to dress inappropriately they will be asked to change, or wear camp-issued shirts/shorts.

## SHOES

Our main camp grounds are even and grassy, but many activities have rough and uneven ground, so appropriate footwear is a safety requirement. Running shoes and hiking sandals work best at camp. Hiking or any other specialty shoe is only optional, and keep in mind new shoes can cause more harm than good (blisters-yikes!). We recommend a pair of slip-on sandals, hiking sandals, and running shoes.

## LAUNDRY DAY

Each cabin is assigned one laundry day per 2-week session, beginning the first Thursday. That means, your camper's laundry day may not be until the end of the session. Pack enough clothes (especially underwear and socks) for the whole session. Laundry is done by camp support staff with one camper's laundry being washed and dried at a time. So be sure to pack a laundry bag that is clearly labelled on the outside with your camper's name.

## BOOKS

As we are a tech-free camp, we recommend sending your camper with a book or two. This will help them unwind before bed and is a great rest period activity to decompress during the heat of the day. *We do not allow kindles or other e-readers at this time.*

## LETTER MATERIALS

We recommend that you pack your camper with the necessary materials to write and send letters: envelopes, paper, stamps, and the addresses for anyone they may wish to write to while at camp.

### **PRO TIP:**

Send your camper with a few pre-addressed envelopes as a template. Even better, teach them how to address envelopes before they get to camp. *Every session we get letters "returned to sender" for improper addressing or lack of postage.*

## LABEL



Items that are not labeled are less likely to be returned to your camper if they get lost in the cabin, on laundry day, or around camp.



# Mountain Meadow Ranch

## PACKING LIST







### CLOTHING

- 2 Pants \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Shorts \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 T-Shirts  \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Sweatshirt  \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Long-Sleeve  \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Jacket \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Underwear \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Socks \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 PJs \_\_\_\_\_
- Sandals \_\_\_\_\_
- Swimsuit \_\_\_\_\_
- 1-2 Athletic Shoes \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Hat  \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Beach Towel  \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Bath Towel  \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Face/Hand Towel  \_\_\_\_\_

### TOILETRIES

- Toothbrush/Paste \_\_\_\_\_
- Hair Brush \_\_\_\_\_
- Sunscreen \_\_\_\_\_
- Lotion \_\_\_\_\_
- Insect Repellent \_\_\_\_\_
- Chapstick \_\_\_\_\_
- Shampoo \_\_\_\_\_
- Conditioner \_\_\_\_\_
- Body Wash \_\_\_\_\_

### EQUIPMENT



- Sleeping Bag  \_\_\_\_\_
- Extra Blanket  \_\_\_\_\_
- Pillow/Pillow Case  \_\_\_\_\_
- Laundry Bag \_\_\_\_\_
- Backpack (daypack like for school) \_\_\_\_\_
- Disposable or Digital Camera \_\_\_\_\_
- Water Bottle  \_\_\_\_\_
- Sunglasses  \_\_\_\_\_
- Flashlight/Headlamp  \_\_\_\_\_

### OPTIONAL

- Books \_\_\_\_\_
- Bedding (single bed)  \_\_\_\_\_
- Comfort Item (blanket/stuffie) \_\_\_\_\_
- Letter Writing Supplies  \_\_\_\_\_
- Outdoor Sleeping Pad \_\_\_\_\_
- Sun/Rash Guard \_\_\_\_\_
- Costumes/Silly Clothes \_\_\_\_\_

### DO NOT PACK

- Technology (phones/tablets,etc) \_\_\_\_\_
- Expensive/Valuable Items \_\_\_\_\_
- Food/Snacks/Candy/Gum \_\_\_\_\_
- Weapons \_\_\_\_\_
- Personal Sports Equipment \_\_\_\_\_
- Animals \_\_\_\_\_

 Items available to international campers  
 Items available to purchase in Camp Store  
*Laundry is done by support staff once/session*

# FORMS

All required Forms are located online in the Forms & Documents section of your [Parent Account](#). Including:

## Confidential Information

Share any information about your camper that may be helpful to us or their cabin counselors in providing the best possible summer camp experience. *Only our directors and your camper's cabin staff read this form.* **Please provide full information, single word answers will be marked as incomplete.**

## Health Form

Tell us about your camper's health history, considerations, mental health, medications, allergies, etc. and provide alternate emergency contacts.

## Immunization Form

Please provide your camper's complete Immunization record.

## Parent Authorization

Attach your insurance provider information

**SIGN AND DATE the bottom.** *This is a crucial (and oft-forgotten) step that authorizes care be provided to your camper in the event of an emergency.*

## Physician's Form

To be completed by your camper's primary care physician. They can fax it directly to us following the number on the bottom. Alternatively, you can scan and upload within your Parent Account.

## Transportation Form

Tell us how your camper(s) will be getting to camp! Review our travel options below.

### **TRAVEL FORM POLICY:**

Travel information must be submitted on your Transportation [Form](#) by the deadline in order to guarantee a seat on our camp vans (if needed).

## Camper Behavioral Standards Agreement

This form details our standards of behavior and must be read and signed by you, on behalf of your camper, prior to attending camp.

This is a digital form and is read and signed online.

**It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to ensure their camper(s) read and understand the information.**

The information will be reviewed during Opening Day Orientation with all campers.

**ALL FORMS DUE MAY 1ST**

# TRAVEL: getting to camp

The beginning of the adventure - enjoy the journey!  
There are a few ways to get to camp:

## DROP-OFF AT CAMP



**BETWEEN 10AM-12PM, and 1PM-3PM**

This affords you the chance to see camp, meet a Director, and meet your camper's cabin staff at check-in. Please stay in your car and drive following the signs to the designated drop-off location. Here, you will receive your camper's cabin assignment, a map of camp, and be connected to your camper's cabin ambassador. There are refreshments and snacks available at the Check-In station, as well as Directors for you to connect with and chat about any last minute questions, they are also always happy to provide some words of encouragement and a hug for any parents having a hard time with the goodbye (so normal and common!)





# Important Details For Drop-Off

- Please keep your visit to one hour to ensure your camper transitions to camp time.
  - Every summer we see parents lingering, either due to their own nerves or their camper's. While this is a natural instinct, it can actually prolong the difficult goodbye and inhibit your camper from making those first early connections and establishing their independence in the camp space.
- Lunch is only available for our campers and staff.
  - We will have refreshments available at check-in, but we recommend planning to grab a bite before or after drop-off.
- Check-in is closed from 12-1pm for lunch. Please do not arrive during this time. If you find yourself in the area early, here are local coffee shops and lunch spots we recommend.
  - Artisan Coffee - local baked goods and artwork for sale
  - Joe's Coffee - local baked goods, bagels, smoothies
  - Courthouse Cafe - classic diner and street tacos
  - The Golden Poppy - cafe fare

## RECOMMENDED LOCAL ACCOMMODATION

Comfort Inn & Suites - Susanville, CA

(530) 257-3450

SureStay Plus by Best Western - Susanville, CA

(530) 257-4123

## PLEASE LEAVE PETS AT HOME

We cannot accommodate pets with all of the excitement of Opening Day. Our ranch dogs, like all dogs, are territorial and could react negatively to a new animal. Any pets brought to camp will be asked to wait in your vehicle. We appreciate your understanding.

# DROP-OFF @ AIRPORT

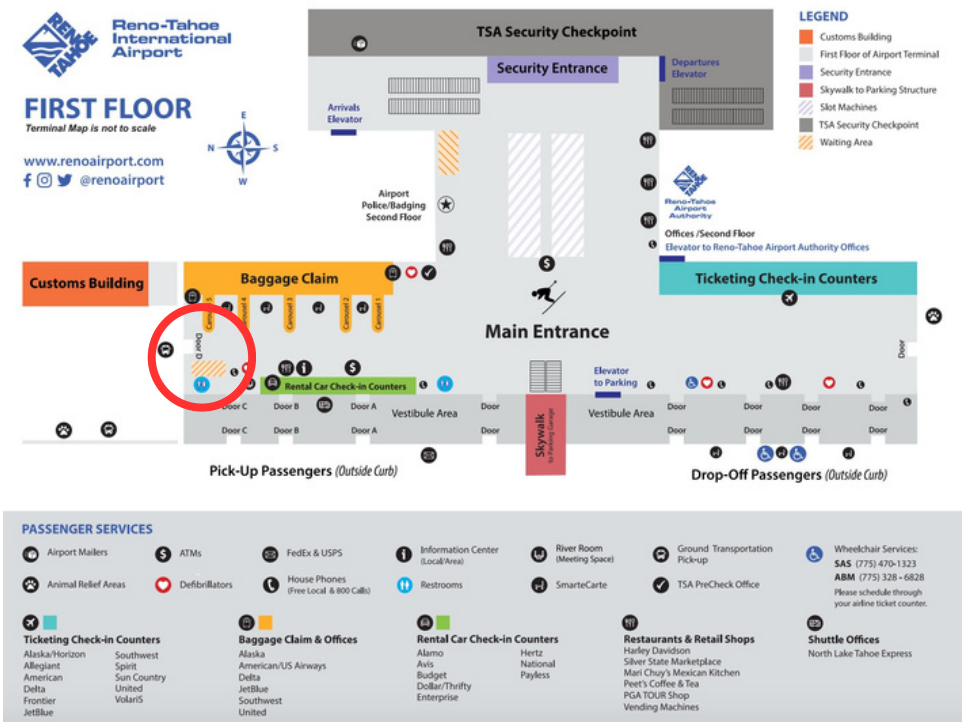


## BETWEEN 9-10AM

We will meet you at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport. You will meet our staff at the waiting area located by Door D and Baggage Claim, located on the ground floor, indicated by the red circle on the map below. From here, once all campers on the van/bus have arrived, everyone will load their luggage and board the vehicles to camp. *If you are flying to RNO to drop-off at the airport, your flight must arrive before 12pm in order to meet our camp vehicles in time.*

**\*If you are flying to drop-off and require a specific meeting time to make a return flight, please let us know via email by May 1st. Otherwise we will assume you are dropping off between 9-10am.**

### Map of Reno-Tahoe International Airport Ground Floor:



*The Reno-Tahoe Airport is undergoing major construction to their ticketing check-in area. Reduced Speeds and Lane Closures on Airport Loop Road. The lanes closest to the Ticketing Hall are closed and passenger drop-off has moved to the outside three lanes closest to the parking garage.*

*\*Please plan to arrive early for pick-up and drop-off.*

# SOLO FLIGHT TO CAMP



Flights **MUST** be booked to arrive between **9AM-1PM**

A staff member wearing an MMR shirt and sign will greet your camper at their arrival gate in Reno, assist them in retrieving their luggage, and walk with them to the camp vans/bus for the drive to camp (we accompany campers regardless of their age or U.M. status). Please arrange to arrive/depart the Reno-Tahoe International Airport BEFORE 1:00pm.

As flights times/numbers are subject to change, and to save on any confusion, we will not be providing a list of recommended flights. Please book a flight that arrives/departs the Reno airport within the times above.

*If there is a time conflict please email or call to notify us as it could mean your camper may need a special pick-up time, which incurs a \$75 fee each way.*

We can only guarantee seats on our airport transportation for those that submit their travel information by May 1st. Those that submit information after this deadline may need to plan drop-off at camp directly.

***Emailed travel information will not be accepted.***



# GOING HOME

You can “mix and match” your travel preferences to make the trip to and from camp as easy as possible. Here’s how each option works on the trip home at the end of your camper’s stay with us.

## PICK-UP AT CAMP BETWEEN 8-11AM

Unlike Opening Day, pick-up at camp on Closing Day is quick. There is no program for closing day and campers traveling to the airport leave before 9am. Bathrooms, coffee and tea are available, but there are no tours or events planned for this day.

**\*Late pick-ups make for a lonely end to camp for your camper.**



## PICK-UP @ AIRPORT

### BETWEEN 8-10AM

Camp staff will wait with your camper and their luggage at the same location indicated for drop-off on the airport map above.

**Please plan to arrive within the time window so your camper does not have to wait too long.**

## SOLO FLIGHT HOME

### BETWEEN 9AM-1PM

Camp staff will accompany your camper through check-in, security, and wait with them at their gate until the plane departs from the gate, regardless of age of camper or U.M. status.

**Please book return flights that depart between 9am-1pm.**

# TRAVEL TIPS

## CAMP VANS TO/FROM AIRPORT

Our camp vans transport campers to and from the Reno Airport on Opening and Closing Day, free of charge within our time windows. There will be a \$75 fee for transportation from the airport outside of our time windows and on non-travel days.

**Seats on Camp Transportation are only guaranteed for those that submit their travel information by May 1st.**

**NOTE:** All passengers must wear seat belts at all times while traveling in MMR vehicles. No wrestling, yelling, moving about, rocking back and forth, or bouncing. All passengers must remain seated, face forward at all times, and campers who feel sick or need to use the restroom must tell the driver.

## AIRLINE FEES

Many airlines require UM and luggage fees be paid at the departing airport on the day of travel. Please send your child with a pre-paid credit card (minimum balance of \$200) to cover any airline fees that were not paid ahead of time. Reno-Tahoe Airport does not accept cash, and our airport staff cannot cover these expenses. If any additional expenses are incurred on departure day, these will be charged to the credit card in your Parent Account.

## UNACCOMPANIED MINOR

Airlines require a designated person be provided in order to book for a U.M. Staff are assigned this position at a later date. In order to book, please use the following contact as a placeholder\*:

Brandon Whitestone - (530)310-4762 - fun@mountainmeadow.com

\*We will send the updated contact information of your camper's designated pick-up person the week before their travel day. You will need to update this information prior to your camper's flight.

## WHY SHOULDN'T I MAKE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS OUTSIDE OF THE RECOMMENDED TIMES?

Opening day at camp is an exciting time when connections start and campers are able to familiarize themselves with the camp environment. Arriving at camp before 3pm is vital to ensure your camper has the most successful start to their camp experience. Closing day is a travel day and we do not have any events scheduled. If you book alternate arrangements that require an airport pick-up outside of our requested times or on a non-travel day, you will be charged a \$75 fee. If you do not communicate your alternate travel plans prior to May 1, 2024, we cannot guarantee transportation assistance.

# OPENING DAY

The big day has finally arrived! After your camper has checked-in, the day will include:

1

## MEET THE NURSE



First things first, all campers need to meet our Camp Nurse for a lice check, a health check, and to drop off any medications (over the counter and prescription!), vitamins, etc.

**This is the least “fun” part of Opening Day and is the only time where you/your camper might need to wait in line.**

However, it is best for the entire camp community that we conduct these health checks and have medications turned in first thing upon arrival - even before moving in!

2

## MOVE-IN!



A counselor will accompany you to your cabin, show you around, and help you choose your bunk and get settled in.

Bunks are chosen on a first-come first-serve basis. For this reason we cannot guarantee top or bottom bunks. If preference is indicated on your camper's Confidential Form, we will do our best to accommodate.

3

## CAMP TOUR



See the sights and important spots around camp, including a trip to meet the wranglers and some horses down at the arena! This is a great event for parents to join in on. Tours leave throughout the day from the Campfire Area.

4

## WATER SAFETY TEST



Show our lifeguards your aquatic skills in the water safety test at the pool! If you're not a confident swimmer, that's okay! Still swing by and get a fancy bracelet so our lifeguards know to provide you with a lifejacket and extra supervision.

5

## ORIENTATION



Once all campers have arrived in the afternoon, around 4pm, we will gather as a camp family in the meadow and your Directors will go over the rules, the dos and donts, and everything to how we "do camp" at MMR so we can all play and thrive within the agreed upon boundaries.

6

## CAPTURE THE FLAG



After dinner, the whole camp family takes part in an MMR Opening Day tradition! Our first evening activity together is a low-competition version of the camp classic and is all about helping everyone get comfortable, get a little goofy and silly, and make those first vital connections. Complete with dance music! Silly clothes are encouraged, but not required.

7

## CABIN PARTIES!



We end the first evening together with some cabin time. Each cabin gathers to get to know each other with fun name games and collaboratively establish the boundaries of their shared living space. This helps set the tone of the cabin as a safe and comfortable environment.

# A TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP

*A typical day consists of three meals a day, activities chosen by campers, snack times, and plenty of time for free play and socializing with friends.*

*Our program allows campers the most flexibility to choose how they want to have fun! Times below are approximate and vary day to day.*

7:30	Optional early morning activities* including round up, swimming, jogging
8:00	<b>BREAKFAST</b>
8:45	Cabin Clean-up
9:15	Activity Time! Campers gather to choose their first activity.
10:45	Snack time*, aquatic areas open, free time for court and field games
12:00	Activities close, campers and staff line up for lunch.
12:30	<b>LUNCH</b>
1:15	Rest period - down time in cabins to write letters, read, and recoup.
2:30	Activity Time! Campers gather to choose their second activity.
4:00	Snack time*, aquatic areas open, free time for court and field games
5:30	Activities close, campers and staff line up for dinner.
6:00	<b>DINNER</b>
6:45	Story Time - the camp family gathers to share stories from the day.
7:30	Evening Activity - all camp group games
8:45	Gather at the campfire for evening words of encouragement/songs.
9:15*	Cabin Time - get ready for bed, relax, work on skits, etc.
10:00*	<b>Lights Out.</b>

\* Not all activities, like horses and high ropes, break for snack time.

\*\* Cabin Time and Lights Out vary based on the camp's need for sleep.

\*\*\* Early morning activities are offered on weekdays and depend on interest.



# ACTIVITIES

*Let the fun begin! Serendipity & flexibility are essential to our program.*

## Weekdays

There is no pre-registration before camp for any of our activities. Campers choose an activity twice a day each weekday. We encourage everyone to try as many new and different activities as possible, but in the end, it is their choice. The length of a two-week session does not allow enough time for us to guarantee that every camper will get to do every activity. In the event that they don't get their first choice, campers are encouraged to have second and third choices. If they are not chosen for their first preference, they are encouraged to self-advocate by talking to the activity counselor and increasing their chances of being selected at the next activity period.

## Out Trips

We run a variety of specialty trips away from camp: Lassen Volcanic National Park Tourist Trip, Lake (water sports and tubing), Desert Exploration Trip, and a two day, one night Backpacking trip for camper's 12+. Due to the small number of activity days in a two-week session, we can only guarantee that campers get to go on one out trip. Camper's sign up for the out trip of their choice during the first two days of camp. Staff create rosters from these lists.

## Weekends

On the weekend, camp is divided into four teams: Red, Blue, Yellow, and Green for all-camp competitions like Relays, Scavenger Hunts, Capture the Flag, Random Talents, and many other fun activities. Sunday morning offers sleep-in breakfast and a time for each cabin to bond, work on skits for the campfire, or do something special as a group.

## Evenings

Evenings are spent in all-camp activities: dances, meadow capture the flag, movie night, sunset hikes, pool parties, and so much more. These often end up the highlight of the camp experience because it is when we are all together.



# THE OVERNIGHT

*Tuesday afternoon through Wednesday morning of the first week all the campers head out to the wilderness!*

## What is an “overnight”?

This is our favorite night of each session! The camp family divides into two groups (boy cabins and girl cabins) to hike to their own camping spot and sleep outdoors, under the stars for one night. Yup, no tents at this event! We do this on purpose as we believe sleeping under the stars is a bucket-list experience everyone should have at least once. What better place than at camp surrounded by friends? Talk about bonding!

Each location is unique with ample opportunity to explore, discover, and build friendships. There is time set aside for each cabin to connect as a small group and bond right away, giving us a head start on deeper connections as a larger camp community. We offer special overnight-specific activities... Most importantly, we get to perfect and enjoy our S'more making skills!

*Both locations are in close proximity to camp for our Camp Nurse and Directors to easily access in the event of an emergency.*



# SPECIALITY DAYS!

## SESSION B: 4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION!



There's just something magical about holidays at camp. The 4th of July is one of our favorite days of the summer, and it comes just once a year - landing in Session B, 1, and 2! A day full of patriotic events that include, but are not by any means limited, to:

- 4th of July-Themed Activities
- Festive Foods
- Dance Party!
- Fireworks Extravaganza + Root Beer Floats

*If your camper is enrolled in this session, be sure to pack some festive attire!*

## SESSION C: LASSEN COUNTY FAIR!

Another beloved speciality MMR day: the All-Camp Trip to the Lassen County Fair! This happens once a summer and lands during Session C, 2, and 3. After a shorter morning activity, we load up all of camp and head into Susanville (10 minute drive) for an afternoon spent on rides, playing carnival games, eating all the fair food, visiting the animals of our local 4H, and perusing local art and displays. After the fair, we wind-down (and cool-down!) with some Lagoon hanging before dinner.



*Camp covers the cost of admission and provides the option to pack a lunch at camp for those that do not wish to spend their money on fair food. More details on how this all works will be sent to Session C families directly via email closer to their session.*



## TECHNOLOGY FREE

MMR is a wonderful place to enjoy the great outdoors and reconnect. We know that cell phones are needed for travel, so campers may turn them in when they arrive at camp. They are returned at the end of the session for the trip home. All tech devices are not allowed for the duration of your camper's session. Including, but not limited to, smart watches, phones, tablets, gaming devices, etc. Any tech devices found during a session will be held until the end of camp.

## LOST & FOUND

Help us reduce the amount of lost & found by labeling all your campers belongings. Personal belongings are most often lost when left behind at an activity, not at laundry as many would suspect. We are not responsible for items lost, however we will do our best to locate & return items that are called for. Anything not called for will be donated one week after each session.

# HEALTH

Once at MMR, all campers will meet the Camp Health Care staff to get acquainted, review their health forms, and turn in any medications.

## HEALTH SCREENING

Should your camper arrive at camp with obvious signs of illness or lice, we will ask that your child be kept in your care until the illness resolves and/or lice treatment has been administered. Should your camper arrive at camp with medical conditions not disclosed beforehand that may impact their ability to participate, they may be returned to your care.

**The health of the camp family is very important to us,** and we can only be as healthy as each member. For this reason, we strongly ask that campers not join MMR if they are sick or were recently exposed to a sickness. *Even the common cold can put a big damper on the fun and play of camp!*

## ILLNESS & INJURY

You will be contacted (at the primary number given on the enrollment form) if your child:

- Stays overnight in the infirmary.
- Is injured.
- Needs to leave camp for treatment (*x-ray, testing, etc.*)
- Presents with new or concerning health concern/symptoms.

If you cannot be reached, the next primary number will be contacted. If they cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be called.

**If your contact information changes during camp, it is your responsibility to update your forms in a timely manner. Emailing new contact information may be missed.**

## INFIRMARY & STAFF

Our Camp Health Staff residence & the infirmary are located in the center of camp, within close proximity to all of our onsite activities. There is a camp healthcare professional (RN/PA/etc.) on staff 24/7, and a fully staffed hospital is only 12 miles away. All of our staff members hold CPR & First Aid certification.

## DIETARY NEEDS

In the MMR kitchen, we are committed to nutritious, wholesome meals. We can accommodate a variety of dietary needs. Please be sure to notify us of any food allergies/preferences before arrival at camp. *Please use the allergy section of the Health Form.*





## MENTAL HEALTH

While camp can be *therapeutic* it is NOT therapy. Our staff are trained to supervise, engage with, and build relationships with campers so they have the best summer camp experience possible. They are additionally trained to understand the signs of potentially serious mental health conditions and alert our Camp Nurse or a Director immediately. As we do not have a state licensed mental health care provider on-staff, we are obligated to dismiss campers that show signs of serious mental health. *See Terms & Conditions of enrollment for an exhaustive description of serious mental health.*

While we do our best to offer low-key activity options for campers that are easily stimulated, camp is generally a fast-paced, high-energy, socially-intense environment. We have observed that this can exacerbate existing, or bring about new, mental health symptoms in some campers. While it may come as a distressing surprise to receive a call from camp that your camper exhibited signs of or communicated a concerning mental health state, we *hope you will view MMR and our staff as team members in desiring each camper has a safe and positive camp experience.* Sometimes that may mean going home early to receive the care needed at that time.



## MEDICATIONS

All medications are turned-in to our Health Care staff on Opening Day\*. Medications are then given at each meal or beforebedtime, as required by the physician. The camp Health Care staff keeps a daily written record, in order to make sure your camper receives his or her medication as prescribed. If your camper takes OTC regularly, such as allergy or pain relief, please send them with the preferred product. If they do not take an OTC regularly, we have a fully stocked Health Center available to them via our Camp Nurse. We will not accept dosed medicines in unlabelled pill dividers, they **MUST** be allocated and packaged by a pharmacy. We cannot legally administer prescription medicines without the prescribing physician's written direction (i.e. the prescription name and instructions on the original bottle).

**\*ALL medication, including prescription and over the counter drugs like ibuprofen, allergy medicine, vitamins, etc. anything orally administered MUST be turned into the Camp Nurse. Campers may keep topical solutions, bandaids, etc. (if prescription strength topical, please discuss this with the Camp Nurse on opening day).**

# FIRE & AIR QUALITY

We recognize the risk of wildfires in California as a result of climate change and unpredictable and extreme weather patterns. We are always hopeful for a summer without the impact of fires or smoke, but we are also prepared with cautious protocols that place safety of campers and staff above all else.

If a fire were to threaten MMR so as to require an evacuation, we would initiate our Evacuation Protocol early and with ample time to ensure the safe and calm evacuation of the camp family. Should air quality in our area diminish due to fires near or far we would initiate our Air Quality Protocol.



# HOMESICKNESS

*Not a sickness, but an emotion that most campers feel to some degree during their time at camp. A successful camp experience starts at home. Here are a couple tips to help prepare your camper!*

## 3 WAYS TO PREPARE

### 1 TALK ABOUT IT.

Acknowledging with your camper the potential for homesickness can be a great first step in preparing for it. Like other feelings, once we acknowledge their existence they can become a lot less scary and more manageable.

### 2 STAY POSITIVE.

Keep the focus on how much FUN camp will be! Let them know how proud you are of them for practicing their independence. Your child needs to know that you think they will be a great camper. Encourage them to write letters, journal, and take pictures of the experience.

### 3 DON'T DOUBT.

Expressing a lack of confidence in your camper's ability to be away from home, either directly to them or in front of others, undermines your child's budding confidence. Don't make any "deals" with your camper about coming to get them. For a homesick camper, these promises become the focus, instead of learning to cope with their feelings.



# HOW WE CARE FOR HOMESICKNESS

Our staff are trained in various tools for responding to homesickness. Below are a few they often employ to help guide your camper through the normal adjustment period of being away from home:

1

## **EMPATHIZE.**

First, we will give your child time and attention, recognize their feelings and let them know they are totally normal. Homesickness is a complex set of emotions and giving space to feel them is an important first step.

2

## **COMFORT.**

Second, we will offer some ideas of things that can bring a little comfort to help move out of the hard feelings and into feeling safe and secure for camp play. This might be a cup of tea at the Nurse's Cabin, special access to their preferred activity at the next period, or something to make the cabin feel a little more homey.

3

## **ENCOURAGE.**

Third, we encourage your camper to use the coping strategies below. Ultimately, we have found that the best remedy for homesickness is CONNECTION and PLAY. After providing some TLC (tender loving care), our staff will encourage your camper to get back in on camp life, with the promise to check in on them later that day.

# 4 COPING STRATEGIES

**Talk with your camper about these & other tools they can take to camp:**

1

## **TALK.**

Acknowledge your feelings and reach out to a counselor, Director, or Camp Nurse for a listening ear or a hug. They are here for you and would love nothing more than to support you as you process some hard feelings.

2

## **PLAY.**

Dance outside of your comfort zone to make connections and have fun! After all, that's what camp is for, right? Practice gratitude when feeling sad and focus on fully participating in the moment. Enjoy all that camp has to offer. Remember, it's not forever! Imagine the stories you will have to share with your family when you get home.

3

## **WRITE.**

Keep a journal about what you're doing at camp and your feelings so you can share all the stories back home. Write letters home to friends and family members about camp life, what treasured gifts to receive!

4

## **SERVE.**

You are a part of a bigger community here at MMR, and when we take care of the people around us it can often help us feel better in the process. There are so many opportunities to practice Servanthood at MMR: from including a new friend to join you at an activity, to volunteering for a clean up duty at the Dining Hall or in your cabin, to being the biggest cheerleader at Color Wars.

# WHAT IF I RECEIVE A SAD LETTER OR MY CAMPER LOOKS SAD IN A PICTURE?

1. Zoom out. Tell yourself, "This moment doesn't represent their entire camp experience."
2. See your child's capability. Remind yourself, "Two things are true: my child can feel sad and cope with hard things."
3. Limit rumination. Give yourself permission to disconnect. Put that phone down, infuse fun into your day.
4. Trust the process. Remind yourself that your camper is in the care of camp professionals, and that you will be contacted if anything concerning or out of the ordinary occurs with your child.

*\*Adapted from [Summer 365](#).*

## We'll call you if...

Your child is visibly upset (crying frequently, not participating, having trouble eating, or sleeping) and not adjusting after two full camp days, we will call you to let you know what is happening and discuss a plan for helping your child adjust. This is rare and most cases of homesickness respond and get better over the first couple of days. As the old saying goes: no news is good news.



# KIDSICKNESS

"Kidsickness", again not a sickness, but a variety of emotions you might experience while away from your child. When your child goes to camp for the first time, their experience with homesickness is usually the focus, while it is increasingly found that [the separation anxiety of camp is harder on parents than kids](#). For this reason, we offer a few tips:

## 3 WAYS TO PREPARE

### 1 LEAN IN... TO YOU.

There is so much information now to help parents prepare themselves for the camp experience. We encourage you to spend some time in education and reflection, learning from the tips and findings of research and blogs. We have included a "recommended further reading" section at the end of this handbook to jump start this process. We are also here to help. Give us a call before your camper's session and we are happy to talk through your concerns and provide you encouragement and further information on any area.

### 2 FINE-TUNE YOUR CIRCLE.

Do you have a circle of friends and family that you typically go to for support? If so, that's amazing. If not, or if you're not satisfied with the give and take of your existing relationships, we invite you to consider ways to "fine-tune your circle". Do you have other friends/family that send their kids to camp over the summer? Having relationships with other people making similar family choices can help build your confidence and excitement about something that might be new and unknown.

## 3

## PLAN AHEAD.

We encourage parents to book a trip, event, or something else during their camper's stay at camp so they have something to 1) look forward to, and 2) help the time pass with enjoyment. This can be a full two-week adventure, a short weekend getaway, a staycation, a spa day, a new class, even a dinner date with friends you don't often get to see. Planning ahead can also look like having the tools to employ when the panic and worry strikes while your child is at camp.

Consider making this a fun project and build an "emergency kit":

- Start with a basket or box
- Fill it with whatever might be helpful to you:
  - Flashcards with affirmational statements.
    - "My child is capable of doing hard things. I am capable of doing hard things." "Camp will grow our independence from each other and build a stronger relationship in the long-term."
  - A letter you wrote to yourself with reminders about why you chose the camp experience.
  - Pictures of your child in other settings when they had a fun adventure away from home.
    - Maybe a hike, a prior camp experience, a weekend trip to their grandparents. This can help you visualize the positive benefits of the camp experience.
  - A gift card to your favorite coffee/smoothie/book shop. Take this as a nudge to get out and do something fun *for you*.



# 3 WAYS TO COPE

## 1 KEEP IN TOUCH

One of the unique things about camp is that it's one of the only opportunities for children and parents to exchange hand-written letters. Writing and sending letters can be a great exercise in staying connected and helping the separation anxiety. However, be mindful of letting your anxiety come through the letters to your camper. Letters should be up-beat and positive, with encouragement for the experience and news from home. Let friends and relatives know the camp address, so they can send mail too! The letters your child writes and receives may be some of the best written memories from their childhood - what treasures!

## 2 BE MINDFUL OF THE BENEFITS

Why did you decide to send your child to camp? Remember that you are giving your child a gift that will follow them throughout their life:

### **CONNECTION:**

At camp, children practice communication, collaboration, social and cross-cultural skills. Campers get to meet people from all over!

### **EXPLORATION:**

Two weeks to just be a kid in the great outdoors, enjoying a much-needed break from the stresses of school, competitive sports, and busy schedules.

### **UNPLUGGED:**

The opportunity to live technology-free and focus on building face-to-face social skills, in a community of people all doing it together, is rare!

### **GROWTH:**

Overcoming challenges independently allows them to build confidence, adaptability, resiliency, critical thinking, and leadership skills. Among a host of other valuable skills!

## 3

## TAKE CARE OF YOU

While your camper is at MMR, we encourage you to take time to have some quality experiences yourself. It's a great time to do projects and trips that are not kid-focused or perhaps not so kid-friendly. Take the time to treat yourself to some fun, friends, and growth while your camper is doing the same here! You will *both* gain from this enriching experience and have stories to share when you reconnect. This is where your preparation comes in handy. Hopefully you took our advice and have something fun or self-care oriented scheduled to look forward to. Perhaps you built an emergency kit and now is the time to look through it.

Ultimately, camp is one of the stepping stones and "training grounds" for developing healthy boundaries with your child(ren), as they grow into independent adults who will someday move out, go away to college, get married, or go on an entirely unique adventure of their own.

*There is so much good advice out there, follow us on social media as we share our favorite articles on all things camp preparation!*



# CONNECT WITH YOUR CAMPER

*We think staying in touch with your camper is important!*

## 4 WAYS TO CONNECT

### 1 SNAIL MAIL

Campers love to get mail. We're talking about the real thing: pen on paper, maybe some doodles or stickers, in envelopes, with stamps. Family should send campers mail 3-4 times over the session. What wonderful keepsakes! Campers are encouraged and given time to write letters daily, but as you can imagine it is nearly impossible to make this happen. Mail goes out from the camp mailbox daily on weekdays starting on Tuesday of the first week and ending on Wednesday of the second week.

*Any letters received after the session are returned to sender.*

#### **Camp Address:**

Camper Name  
P.O. Box 610  
Susanville, CA  
96130

**NO CARE PACKAGES.** If you need to send something that is not available in the Camp Store, we will gladly accept your package! Please contact us with info on contents of the package so we can let you know when it arrives and give you the shipping address.

### 2 EMAIL

Send an email to "camper@mountainmeadow.com" with your camper's full name in the subject field. These notes are printed daily and given to the cabin counselor to hand out. We receive a tremendous number of emails each session, to help keep this number realistic, please follow these guidelines:

- Limit your emails to one every few days.
- Emails with pictures or attachments will not be delivered.
- Only email from family will be delivered.
- Campers are not able to reply.



3

## CAMP PARENT LINE

Direct phone calls with your camper are not available, so our Camp “Mom” is here to serve you. Please leave a message or text and our Camp Mom will check in with your camper, speak with their counselors, and return your call within 24 hours. You may receive a text or call. We invite you to wait 48 hours before calling to check-in. We send an email on Opening Day, confirming that all campers have arrived safely and are settling in.

### When will we call you?

- If your camper spends overnight in the infirmary or is injured or presents with new or worsened health concern.
- If your camper presents with new or worsened mental health.
- If your camper is experiencing extreme homesickness that does not respond to our practices above and gets worse after the first 48 hours (incredibly rare).
- If your camper had to have a 1-on-1 with a Director for a behavioral matter.
- If anything concerning or out of the norm occurs with your camper.

**NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS!**

**PARENT LINE: 530-310-9281**

4

## VIEW SUMMER PHOTOS

We are an unplugged camp, in the backcountry, with occasionally unreliable internet. We do our best to upload new photos a couple times each week. Directions for viewing summer photos will be included in the Welcome email you receive on your campers first day of camp. We aim to capture 1-2 photos of each camper over the course of the session. *Please note, this is a service that we offer and not a guarantee that you will see your camper every day.* If you find yourself suffering from Kidsickness, please see the above section for tips on coping. For more info on our photopolicy, see [HERE](#).

# FAQ ON CONNECTING

*We hear the following questions every summer, and hope that the information provided below will help any new or returning families better understand and support our "why".*

## WHY CAN'T I TALK TO MY CAMPER DIRECTLY?

Direct contact home can negatively impact the camp experience in a number of ways:

1. It takes your camper out of the moment.
2. It inhibits the mental and emotional growth of camp.
3. It can exacerbate, and even cause, homesickness.

When you send your camper to MMR, you are sending them to a safe and fun environment full of opportunities to grow. However, this mental and emotional growth can't happen if parents and adults at home are maintaining a tight grip of concern and control. At camp, kids learn that sometimes things don't go as expected, and other times they do. No matter what happens, they are on a learning adventure to trust themselves, find their footing, and build resilience.

## WHY CAN'T I SEND CARE PACKAGES?

We have found packages to create unnecessary stress for parents and campers. Whether it be the feelings of obligation to send the "best package ever" so their camper doesn't feel left out, or to provide something for the *whole* cabin, the items rarely end up being used and often end up in the trash. Camp life is busy and fun, and we provide all necessary supplies for the experience. Please plan ahead and pack any fun costumes, letter writing materials, stickers, magazines, sundry items, etc. Further, MMR is located in the beautiful Sierra Nevada wilderness. For this reason, we do not allow food, candy, or gum in our cabins or out in camp. Homemade goodies have never been allowed at MMR.

### **If we receive a care package:**

We will return to sender and bill the postage fees to the primary credit card on your Parent Account. If there is no return address, we donate the items to our local Goodwill.



# INTERNATIONAL

*Our campers come from all around the world, each bringing their own culture. For many, English is their second language. Rest assured we work hard to make each camper feel included and informed. However, we are not equipped to teach English and recommend all campers have a basic understanding of English to get the most out of their experience with us.*

## INSURANCE

We recommend travelers insurance for any campers traveling from outside of the continental U.S. The combination of being in a location that is both rural and foreign makes travelers insurance a good, inexpensive option to insure the *complete* coverage of any medical costs incurred while at camp.

## EQUIPMENT PROVIDED

We have the following items available to our international campers to use while at camp, at no extra cost:

- Towels
- Sleeping Bags
- Bedding (sheets, pillows, pillow cases, blankets)

# STANDARDS

*Our mission is to create a safe environment for all campers. We have developed the following behavior and appearance standards to aid this mission. The below standards are now a **REQUIRED** form that every camper must sign in order to attend MMR.*

## BEHAVIOR

Campers are expected to treat other campers and staff with respect at all times, and value each other's right to have a positive experience.

*MMR is not equipped and cannot accommodate campers requiring repetitive 1-on-1 attention from a staff member, and or repetitive calls for director support.*

**The following behaviors are not permitted at Mountain Meadow Ranch and will result in dismissal from camp, without refund, and at the Director's sole discretion:**

1. Violence of any kind; any verbal communication or discussion of harm to oneself or others, real or imagined.
2. Threatening, harassment, taunting, teasing, discriminating comments, hazing, or bullying of any kind.
3. Use of foul language, discussion of inappropriate topics, or possession of inappropriate media (magazines, books, etc.) as determined by the Camp Directors.
4. Possession or use of tobacco (including vapes), alcohol, drugs, or weapons. (All prescription and over the counter medications must be stored in the Infirmary and administered under the supervision of our camp Health Care Supervisor.)
5. Sexual or intimate behavior, relationships, or conversation.
6. Unauthorized absence from cabin or activity.
7. Abusive or disrespectful behavior towards any member of the camp community.
8. Inappropriate appearance or attire (Standards section of Camp Handbook).
9. Unsafe use of camp equipment or flagrant violation of camp guidelines and rules.
10. Destruction, vandalism (including graffiti), or theft of any property belonging to camp or another community member.

If a camper engages in any of these behaviors, the staff will immediately separate the camper from the group and seek Director Support to phone home. The severity of the situation and the degree to which your child's behavior negatively affects the camp family determines if they will need to be sent home, at the Director's sole discretion.

We do not label or stigmatize camper's for any of the above behavior. However, our main priority is to ensure MMR remains a safe and healthy environment for the whole community. As a result, the above behaviors will result in a dismissal from camp, with the hope that the camper is able to receive the further "leaning in" presence and care they need at home.

***In the event a camper is dismissed from camp, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to A) retrieve their camper within 24 hours, or B) appoint an authorized adult to retrieve their camper within 24 hours.***

MMR reserves the right to dismiss a camper whose conduct is dangerous, illegal, or at the discretion of the camp director, detrimental to the camp and/or to other campers, otherwise unsatisfactory, or does not meet MMR's Behavioral Standards.

## APPEARANCE

Campers should pack clothing that is appropriate for a kid-friendly, outdoor, and active camp life. Use of make-up and/or wearing of expensive clothing are discouraged while at camp. The following are not allowed at camp:



1. Clothing with any logos or graphics depicting violence, bands that play violent music, drugs, alcohol, or inappropriate language or topics.
2. Jewelry that includes collars, chains, and excessive face or body piercings (*Ear and nose piercings are okay*) as these may be unsafe for certain activities.
3. Clothing that does not cover underwear (Clothing should *fully* cover stomach, lower back, chest, and bottom).
4. Any extra tight or extra loose clothing - *unsafe for certain activities*. In the case of swimsuits – two pieces are allowed. If it breaks number 3 from above, they may be asked to change.

\* Pictured: What TO wear 😊

# CALL HOME POLICY

At MMR, we believe in Restorative Justice, which reframes discipline and personal responsibility allowing the opportunity to express remorse, repair any damaged relationship, and experience emotional and social growth. *Should a camper's behavior not align with our standards, our staff is trained to handle the situation according to this process:*

## 1.REMOVE/REDIRECT:

A staff member will encourage positive behavior by asking your camper to engage in the appropriate task at hand. If your camper is unresponsive, or ignores the counselor's request the first time, they will move to step two.

## 2.CHOICES:

Your camper will be given the choice to a)engage in appropriate behavior or b) have a time-out away from the group (but still in view of the counselor). If your camper continues to display negative behavior, the counselor will move to step three.

## 3.DIRECTOR SUPPORT:

A Director will come to meet your camper to discuss their misbehavior. When a Director is called to assist with a behavioral issue, this is when you will receive a first phone call to assist us in preparing a plan for reparation.

## 4. SECOND PHONE CALL HOME:

If you receive a second phone call, this will be to share that your camper has continued in their misbehavior and has been told this is their last opportunity to express remorse, repair any damaged relationships and experience emotional and social growth past said incident. Your camper will be informed if a third phone call has to be made, it is to go home.

## 5. THIRD PHONE CALL HOME:

If a third phone call home needs to be made, this is the point you will need to make arrangements for pick up/travel home.

Some behavior, particularly any behavior that breaches the standards above and on our Behavioral Standards Agreement Form, may bypass this process of Restorative Justice. In the event, you may not receive warning phone calls and only receive one phone call informing of the camper's dismissal from camp.

**In the event a camper is dismissed from camp, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to retrieve their camper within 24 hours. If the parent/guardian is unavailable, it is their responsibility to appoint an authorized adult to retrieve their camper within 24 hours.**

# UNABLE TO CONTACT POLICY

*If under any circumstances under the director's discretion, we are unable to reach you, MMR will abide by the following policy:*

- If contact is necessary for any behavioral, medical, or emergency reason, a MMR director or representative will first attempt contact with the primary contact given on camper's application.
- If unable to contact after attempts of all resources i.e. phone, text, e-mail, etc. emergency contact listed in camper application will be contacted.
- If unable to reach emergency contact, we will have no other option but to contact the appropriate authorities.



# CANCEL FOR ANY REASON INSURANCE

*One of the greatest concerns we hear from parents when it comes to dismissals, an early retrieval from camp, or a late cancellation, is that of recouping the financial costs incurred.*

We recommend that parents consider a "cancel for any reason" insurance package via their preferred insurance provider. The American Camp Association (ACA) provides a great overview of what this means, and some resources on agencies that provide packages tailored specifically for the summer camp experience and it's associated (and often nonrefundable) costs. Read more here:

[Cancel for Any Reason and Interrupt for Any Reason Insurance: Protect Your Nonrefundable Camp Costs | American Camp Association](#)

# WE INVITE YOU TO: BE ON THE SAME-TEAM.

Here at MMR, we believe in partnering with parents and the adults at home to ensure that your camper has the absolute BEST camp experience possible. To do that, we invite you to review and reflect on the following:

## WHAT MOUNTAIN MEADOW RANCH AGREES TO:

- Treating all campers with respect, empathy, and curiosity.
- Having their comfort, well-being, safety, health, and needs in mind. *Sometimes, like in instances of mental health or behavioral issues, that means going home early.*
- Communicating our standards, expectations, and policies early and clearly with both you and your camper; and upholding our standards, expectations, and policies at all times.
- Communicating with you following our above communication policies, meaning that should *anything* concerning happen with your camper you will hear from us.

## WHAT WE INVITE YOU, THE PARENTS AND ADULTS AT HOME, TO:

- Trust the camp experts (that's us!) to do what we do best.
- Understand and comprehend fully our standards, expectations, policies, and consequences of breaking them (*including the terms & conditions of enrollment and our cancellation & refund policy!*)
- Treat all MMR staff with respect and kindness, in-person and digitally (over the phone/email).
- Ensure your child is ready for the camp experience and communicate any considerations (mental health, physical health, etc.) to MMR as requested on our required forms.





## DIVERSITY + INCLUSION

At Mountain Meadow Ranch, we believe that summer camp experiences equip young people with a robust and inclusive worldview, established through meaningful, real-life connections with the diverse community of people often met at camp. We also recognize and acknowledge the privileged legacy of organized camping that has often made it difficult for all populations to gain access to the camp experience.

We are actively working to increase the diversity and representation of different backgrounds at MMR, through maintaining curiosity in the ways we can improve, educating ourselves to better implement those strategies of inclusion, and increasing access and/or removing obstacles to the camp experience where we can.

If you would like to hear more about our efforts to make MMR a safe and inclusive space to all, or if you have a perspective, resources, or input to share, we invite you to reach out to us either by email to [fun@mountainmeadow.com](mailto:fun@mountainmeadow.com) or call us at 530-310-9281.

# 2024 Dates

## **STANDARD SESSIONS**

Session A: Sunday June 16-Friday June 28

Session B: Sunday June 30-Friday July 12

Session C: Sunday July 14-Friday July 26

Session D: Sunday July 28-Friday August 09

## **PREMIUM SESSIONS**

Session 1: Sunday June 16-Friday July 12

Session 2: Sunday June 30-Friday July 26

Session 3: Sunday July 14-Friday August 09

We are so excited to meet (and reconnect with) each and every one of you! We truly believe in the power of camp and look forward to sharing that with each of you this summer season!





## RECOMMENDED FURTHER RESOURCES

*There is so much information out there now to educate and support campers and parents ahead of the summer camp journey. There is also a lot of research that we need in developing our policies. We have included a few selected items for further reading for those interested.*

### BLOGS/TED TALKS

[Sunshine Parenting](#)- Blog by Audrey Monke, Audrey is a fellow camp professional with a passion for researching well-being in kids.

[Ted Talk: How to raise successful kids, without overparenting](#)

[Harvard Research Stories: Lessons From Camp](#)

[Top Things Every Parent Should Know About Sleepaway](#)

[Camp What Your Child Really Learned At Camp](#)

[The Magic Tricks of Summer Camp](#)

### BOOKS

[The Whole Brain Child](#)- Daniel J. Siegel & Tina Payne Bryson

[Rewilding Childhood Raising Resilient Children Who Are Adventurous,](#)

[Imaginative, and Free](#)- Mike Fairclough

[Happy Campers: 9 Summer Camp Secrets for Raising Kids Who](#)

[Become Thriving Adults](#)- Audrey Monke

[Free to Learn: Why Unleashing the Instinct to Play Will Make Our Children Happier, More Self-Reliant, and Better Students for Life-](#)

[Peter Gray](#)