



A Step Ahead Summer Camp

Here are the **nitty gritty** details to ensure our campers are prepared each day and to help make summer camp a safe, fun success! We love it when things go....swimmingly!

What kids need to bring to camp:

Here's a speedy little check list! More details below.

- Please label all belongings with child's Last name or initials
- Water bottle
- Hat
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray (optional)
- Good footwear – runners or Velcro strap sandals (no flip-flops please)
- Water shoes for days we go to creeks, rivers, lakes etc.
- Good back pack to hold everything. (A must, please! 2 straps and everything!)
- Swim suit
- Compact towel (like a beach wrap, or cut out from old flannel sheets)
- Plastic grocery bag (for wet stuff after swimming)
- Life jacket – for anyone 8 year old and under or who has not passed swimmers level 4 (which is most of our campers).
- Nutrition- Ample healthy food and snacks: freggie morning snack? Main lunch? Minimized Junk Food?

MORE DETAILS: (Just in case you were wondering =)

Water bottle, hat, sunscreen...oh my! We always carry extra sunscreen, but if the kids have some of their own, it makes things go much faster. We will keep some extra water bottles and hats at camp, just in case, but these should be for emergencies. Please be sure campers have these things every day. Bug spray optional! We will also have 'family' bug spray if the mosquitoes are really bothersome. If you do not wish for your child to wear any products other than their own, please let us know.

Appropriate footwear: flip flops are cute but not advised for busy active days. Sandals with Velcro straps around the heel that tighten up so they don't fall off and kids can run in them are fine on most days, however there are still a number of days that children will require runners. If in doubt, please wear runners and strap sandals to back pack...we can switch depending on the activity. Example of runner activities and venues: wooded hiking areas, corn maze, wheels day, Etc. Also, we do many activities around various types of water, for some of these, having water shoes or Velcro sandals that won't fall off (and float away), makes it much more comfortable to walk in and out of the water-especially creeks or river beds. If you prefer that a good pair of runners don't get wet, it's a good idea to send some extra scrappy footwear to change into.

Backpack to hold it all: We are on the go most of the time. It's important that kids have a traditional back pack, with 2 arm straps; they can carry on their back securely, with their hands free. It should fit well, hold all of their belongings and everything they need for the day (except life jackets). **Towel trouble!** If an extra swim bag is required, it's usually because the towel is so bulky. If you have a cotton sarong/beach wrap, or even an old flannel sheet that can be cut down to beach-towel size, it works just as well to dry off (most of the time kids are dry before they even need the towel, and use it more as a blanket) and it folds up super compact, so they won't need another bag. Please put swim stuff in a plastic bag, so they have the plastic bag to put wet stuff in later. If

they still need a separate swim bag, we recommend putting their towel in the second bag, but keep their suit in their back pack, just in case they need it. Saves lugging the extra bag around. Thanks!

Swimming suit and towel: please bring them every day. Although our plans do not call for swimming every day, we often need the flexibility to shuffle activities depending on the kids' interests and weather variables. Also, if we play any water games, or kids get mucky for some reason, it doubles as spare clothing.

Life Jackets: kids who have not passed swimmers level 4, require their own lifejacket (this is 95% of our campers). Please send it at the beginning of each week. Life jackets should come on Monday and stay at camp for the week (so long as you don't need it elsewhere). But don't worry, we won't drag them anywhere we won't be using them. But if they are left at camp for the week, then they are still available for when we need them.

Nutrition: Please send plenty of healthy lunch and adequate snacks with campers each day. These must not be warm up lunches please, as we will usually be out and about without access to a microwave or hot water to heat lunches.

Morning snack: A Step Ahead typically stops for a snack mid-morning, and for camp we are going to declare morning snack to be a "Freggie" snack (Fresh Fruit and Veggies)! Please be sure kids have at least one fresh fruit and/or vegetable snack, in their lunch every day. (We know kids will be kids, and, if given the option, will eat every last morsel before they touch an apple, thus leaving the apple battered and bruised by the end of the day...wasted money and nutrition. But if we are all expected to have a morning freggie snack, the kids get into it, and enjoy this healthy habit together. A big thank you to parents for helping us with this-we know you are busy folks and lunch prep isn't easy.) So, with your help, morning snack will be a "Freggie" snack. If campers are still hungry after their fruit/veggie snack, then they can have another healthy lunch item-cheese, yogurt...etc. It's not that we don't think those things are good snacks as well, it's just that we know the kids can't wait to eat the other stuff, so why not get the easily damaged, quick to perish stuff, 'down the hatch' first, so it doesn't go to waste. Even the kids who grumble about this eating fresh fruits and veggies get into the swing of it, since everyone else is eating them too! This is why we make it an expectation across the board for everyone. Thankfully, they are often the easiest things to pack because there are lots of easy 'grab and go' fruit and veggie options out there, many that are even pre-packaged.

Main Lunch: Campers should have a healthy 'main' lunch with them each day, preferably not an assortment of processed snack foods. We completely understand how challenging packing lunch is, but we feel kids are worth the effort and encourage everyone to rise to the challenge!

Allergies- Some of those go-to lunches are tougher to do when there are allergy concerns. As soon as we have a full camp roster, and know what types of severe food allergies are present, we will email and let you know if any food items are prohibited.

Us too! We appreciate parents doing their part to pack healthier lunches, and we'll try to do our part as well. No doubt there are some tasty treats that sweeten some of our summer activities, but we will also look for ways to make things healthier as well.

Thanks Everyone!!

Toys and home belongings at camp

Home Items = Home Toys vs. Electronics vs. Video Games: “Can I take this to camp?”.....

Home Toys: A home toy can be anything within reason, from home, that does not involve power (batteries, electricity, etc). Kids may bring a home toy to camp, to play with during ‘non-camp’ hours (7 - 9 AM, 4 – 6 PM), however we would appreciate no ‘weapon’ related toys, toys that encourage aggressive play, that are noisy and loud, or encourage the kids to be noisy and loud. Also, we prefer no toys that we already have lots of at camp, like Lego, because it gets confused with our Lego. If certain toys seem to be accompanied with negative choices, children may have restricted home toy options, or could lose their home-toy privileges. Great home toys are games and puzzles, crafty things, sporting equipment, books, colouring, stuffies, small figures, etc. Also please remind kids, when bringing a home toy to camp, to choose wisely, as other kids may want to play with it as well. If it’s something very special, it’s best to leave it at home. A Step Ahead is not responsible for lost, misplaced or damaged belongings.

Electronics and Video games: Aside from personal music and cameras to be used during free time only, video games and electronics will be permitted on longer bus rides only. Longer bus rides are trips that are a minimum of 20 minutes in one direction.

Got a question?

We hope we covered most of your questions, but please feel free to send us a note or give us a call if you have a question you didn’t see here or if you would like clarification. We’re looking forward to a great summer!
See you soon! - Sandi, Amanda & (Auntie) Chris