

PACKING FOR CAMP

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PACKING, Packing, Packing... it's the number one type of phone call we get this time of year in the Southwoods winter office. Parents call asking us questions about which items should be packed for a child's summer experience at camp. While we always direct them to the suggested packing list in our clothing catalogue, we also share with them the following things that are not on that packing list. While these items do not go in a trunk, they are just as...if not more important for your child to bring to camp.

Their smile: Nothing says: "I want to get to know you," "play with you," "be your friend," or "I like you" more than a smile. Sometimes a new friend gets the courage to come over and talk to you or invites you to play when they see you smile at them. Smiles speak a thousand words.

Courage: The courage to try new activities, make new friends, taste new foods, play games you thought you couldn't, or the courage just to ask us for help when it feels tough being away from home.

The ability to be silly: Be willing to sing silly songs! Doing silly dances, making silly faces, and telling silly stories makes for great camp memories. It is okay to look and act silly at camp. It helps teach us to not take our- selves so serious.

The desire to play: Come to camp ready to play and have fun. Be prepared to participate in each camp activity and do the best you can do. If you do not like an activity and your group is going, try it at least once. Who knows, the new staff may teach it in a way that you find fun...or your coordination has improved and you are better than you thought.

The ability to really listen: It is amazing the things you hear when you really stop and listen. There are sounds you will only hear at camp~ like the sound of the loon on the lake or crickets and frogs at night. But also, the sounds of your new friends talking and telling you about themselves, your counselors recognizing your bunk for working together so well...there is so much to hear when we stop and listen. Nothing says I like you like a person who will let you talk.

A respectful voice: Camp is about being a community. There are rules at camp that must be followed to make our community a safe and comfortable one for everyone, but we want everyone to have a say and be able to voice their opinions. We are always available to discuss concerns a camper might have. Know that everyone at camp is there to help you have a great summer. You can talk to any one of us.

An open mind: Come to camp with a mind open wide to accept new things. Accept people who are different from you. Accept activities you thought you wouldn't love. Accept new foods that don't look like something you usually eat.

The person you want to be: Camp is a place to be whoever you want to be. You can reinvent yourself in any way you want at camp. Leave any labels you wear at school or at home behind. Come to camp and be who you want to be. We can't wait to see who gets off the bus!