

SUMMER CAMP HANDBOOK



Alice Ferguson Foundation
Hard Bargain Farm Environmental Campus

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About the Alice Ferguson Foundation



Alice L.L. Ferguson, 1880-1951



Henry G. Ferguson, 1882-1966

In the early 1920s Alice Ferguson, a creative artist and painter at the Corcoran School of Art, began to look for a country property close to her and her husband, Henry's, home in Washington, D.C., and in 1922, bought Hard Bargain Farm. This special property that changed the course of her life as she transformed it into a unique, remarkable environment that is still alive with the mark of her creative touch.

Henry Ferguson, a well-known USGS geologist, established the Alice Ferguson Foundation in 1954 to steward the farm and lands. In the 1960's the lower half of the 330 acre property was deeded to the National Park Service to form the central part of Piscataway National Park, which preserves and protects the viewshed from Mount Vernon across the river in Virginia.

MISSION

The mission of the Alice Ferguson Foundation is to inspire environmental stewardship by giving people the tools to understand, appreciate, and protect nature. Since its establishment in 1954, the Foundation has connected with hundreds of thousands of community members to provide them with these environmental tools.





70 YEARS OF OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The Alice Ferguson Foundation has...

- impacted the lives of over *1 million students* through our curriculum and outdoor programs
- trained over *3,000 teachers and park rangers* to deliver high-quality, STEM-focused environmental education
- led community cleanup initiatives that have removed *8.5 million pounds* of trash from our waterways

About Summer Adventure Camp



Led by our knowledgeable educators, campers explore the woods, wetlands, and Potomac River through hands-on activities. Our unique property offers campers the chance to experience life in the great outdoors—getting to know our lovable goats, discovering cool critters on nature hikes, and digging in the garden. Campers will spend every day outside, embracing the wonders of our beautiful environmental campus.

The Summer Adventure Camp blends fun, learning, and exploration; exposing campers to new outdoor adventures. Our program helps campers learn new skills, make new friends, and gain the confidence to try new things.

We are proud to be the 2023 winner of Best Maryland Day Camps and a finalist for Best STEM Camps in the Washington Parents' Picks competition!



Our Camp Team



At Summer Adventure Camp, we are privileged to have a team of dedicated staff members who work as outdoor educators year-round. With extensive backgrounds in outdoor education, our staff guides thousands of students through environmental programs during the school year. Their passion lies in sharing environmental knowledge, inspiring stewardship, and encouraging a love for the outdoors.

All of our staff members:

1. Complete a rigorous interview process and reference checks
2. Undergo thorough background checks, including fingerprinting
3. Are CPR and First Aid certified through the Red Cross
4. Participate in extensive training throughout the year
5. Are enthusiastic outdoor educators; excited to explore, educate, and inspire

Our team is committed to providing a safe, educational, and fun experience for every camper.



CAMPER EXPERIENCE & EXPECTATIONS

Summer Adventure Campers Love Being Outside!

The Summer Adventure Camp is an outdoor camp focused on being outside every day! Campers will have the opportunity to explore the forest, meadows, wetlands, and riverbank. They will learn about habitats, observe animals and plants, participate in hands-on activities, join team-building games, and make lasting memories.

Our Location

The camp is located in Accokeek, Maryland within Prince George's County. It is on approximately 330 acres of stewarded land, crisscrossed with nature trails ready to be explored.

Address is 2201 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek, MD 20607

Camper Experience & Expectations

Pool Days

Our Summer Adventure Camp is fortunate to have access to a beautiful in-ground community pool just a short walk from the environmental campus. The Moyaone Community Pool is located at 2311 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek, MD 20607.

Campers will have the opportunity to visit the pool twice per camp week for a swimming session. The pool is staffed with certified lifeguards, along with extra summer camp counselors, ensuring the safety of our campers at all times.

All campers will be required to swim only in the shallow part of the pool unless they pass a specialized swimming test administered by the pool lifeguards.

We request that camp parents bring necessary flotation devices for their campers on pool days. Our staff will ensure that campers wear the flotation devices provided by parents.



Camper Experience & Expectations

Creating a Positive Environment

We strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all our campers. We want them to gain new friendships, learn new skills, and feel comfortable away from home. Our trained staff will gently encourage campers to step out of their comfort zone and try new things, respecting each camper's individual limits.

As an outdoor camp, we believe it's important for children to develop the skill of being comfortable with being uncomfortable. Unexpected situations like rain, wet socks, or insect encounters are seen as opportunities for learning and growth. We encourage campers to embrace these experiences with a positive attitude.

If you have specific concerns about your child's needs, please discuss them with our team so we can make appropriate accommodations.



Camper Experience & Expectations

Camper Responsibilities

We expect campers to be responsible for themselves and their belongings throughout the day. Each camper must be able to use the restroom without assistance and be able to verbally express their needs to our team. Our campers should be comfortable working in a team setting and being outside.

They will be responsible for their own belongings, which can be stored in their own bin when not in use. We will encourage campers to bring their water bottle on adventures, but they must carry their own.

Code of Conduct

We aim to make camp a positive experience for all children. We maintain a code of conduct, expecting campers to avoid bullying, harassment, hate speech, and disrespect. On their first day, counselors will work with campers to create a set of camp rules and expectations, which will be followed throughout the week.

Our Commitment

Our team is fully committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of each camper entrusted to our care. We pledge to maintain a secure and nurturing environment by adhering to rigorous safety protocols, providing comprehensive staff training, and fostering a culture of vigilance and responsibility. Our team is devoted to implementing best practices in supervision, emergency preparedness, and health management to guarantee that every camper experiences a fun, enriching, and safe summer. We are steadfast in our promise to prioritize the physical and emotional safety of all campers, ensuring that their time at camp is filled with joy, growth, and lasting memories.





REGULATIONS OF CAMP

Our team is committed to providing a safe, positive, and respectful environment for all our campers and families. We expect our camp families to review and follow the Rules for Play and Code of Conduct, as well as all applicable Alice Ferguson Foundation rules and regulations to ensure a positive experience for all.

From medical forms to medication administration guidelines, our goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment where every camper's health needs are met with care and attention. Together, we'll ensure a worry-free experience, focusing on each child's health and happiness throughout their time with us.

Camp Regulations

Rules for Play & Code of Conduct

RULES FOR PLAY

- Be a good listener
- Be a good sport, friendly, and respectful
- Be attentive
- Be on time
- Respect the property of others and leave valuables at home
(i.e. cell phones, gaming devices)



CODE OF CONDUCT

Campers, parents, family members, staff, and volunteers are expected to:

- 1) Be respectful, courteous, and considerate of others at all times.
- 2) Communicate in an appropriate manner. Refrain from using abusive or foul language or gestures, harsh words, yelling, or harassing others.
- 3) Be responsible for their actions and understand that irresponsible behavior will result in disciplinary action.
- 4) Refrain from deliberately causing harm to oneself or others. Bullying (in any form) will not be tolerated.
- 5) Be careful to never jeopardize the health and safety of others.
- 6) Be respectful of the property of others and the property of the facility/program.

As a camper, I will:

- 1) Learn and follow the camp's Code of Conduct and Program Rules.
- 2) Follow directions and cooperate with staff.
- 3) Be nice and show respect for others. I will not bully, tease, pick on, kick, bite, hit, or fight with others.
- 4) Use program equipment, supplies, and facilities in a safe, responsible, and respectful manner.

As a parent or guardian, I will:

- 1) Review the camp's Code of Conduct and Program Rules with my child.
- 2) Submit all required documentation and requested information in a timely manner.
- 3) Ensure my child arrives and departs the program site on time.

Camp Regulations

Disciplinary Actions

We recognize that campers may experience nervousness or emotions that are out of character for them. We are committed to supporting our campers through their emotions while prioritizing the safety of all campers.

In the event that a camper's emotions and/or reactions become severe, we will implement the following disciplinary actions.

Disciplinary actions for participants may include (depending on the severity of the incident):

- Time out with notification to parent/guardian via written documentation.
- Phone call to parent/guardian.
- Parent conference.
- Suspension from program (without refund).
- Dismissal from the program (without refund).

Disciplinary actions for parents and others may include (depending on the severity of the incident):

- Warning - either oral or written.
- Dismissal of your children from the program (without refund).
- Suspension of parent/guardian from future Alice Ferguson Foundation/Hard Bargain Farm programs.

Note: Suspension refers to being removed from our program and/or facility for a designated period of time. Dismissal refers to being removed from our programs and/or facility for an indefinite period of time or the duration of the specific program.



Camp Regulations

Health & Safety

At Summer Adventure Camp, the well-being of our campers is our top priority. To ensure their safety, our camp staff undergo extensive training annually on our emergency procedures. Rigorous hands-on training is conducted to ensure that staff members fully understand procedures and responses. Additionally, our staff adhere to the strict requirements and standards of the Maryland Department of Health.

A licensed healthcare provider is on duty at all times to assist with the needs of the summer camp. Prior to camp, the healthcare provider reviews health history and physician's forms to prepare the staff for any potential concerns. The camp does not have staff members trained or certified to address specialized medical needs of campers or those with insulin dependent diabetes or a history of seizures.

Our nurse station is fully stocked with first aid supplies, and a first aid kit is carried on all hikes, property explorations, and pool trips. For added safety, an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is located in the nurse station,

All medical incidents will be carefully logged in our records, providing details on the circumstance and the treatment administered. In the event of an extreme medical emergency, parents will be promptly notified via phone call to discuss the details of the incident. If necessary, the parents will be instructed to pick up the camper.

Furthermore, the Summer Adventure Camp is conveniently located just 2 miles from the Accokeek Fire Department and 8 miles from the Fort Washington Police Department. In case of emergencies requiring medical attention beyond our capabilities, the nearby Fort Washington Medical Center is located 7 miles away at 11711 Livingston Rd, Fort Washington, MD. Their phone number is: (301) 292-7000.

Your child's safety and well-being are our utmost concern, and we are fully equipped to handle any situation that may arise.

Camp Regulations

Medications at Camp

All medications will be given to the Camp Nurse or Camp Director during check-in. The medications will remain securely stored in our nurse's station throughout the camp.

All medication must be in the original bottle with your child's name, the prescribed dosage, and the prescribing doctor clearly labeled on the label.

If your camper has an epi-pen or an inhaler, our team will consult with the parent or guardian to determine whether medication should remain with the camper or be kept in the nurse's station.

To streamline the process, kindly combine all medication bottles and boxes (both prescriptions and over-the-counter) in a ziplock bag labeled with your child's full name. Please consider including a photo of the camper in the bag for easier identification.

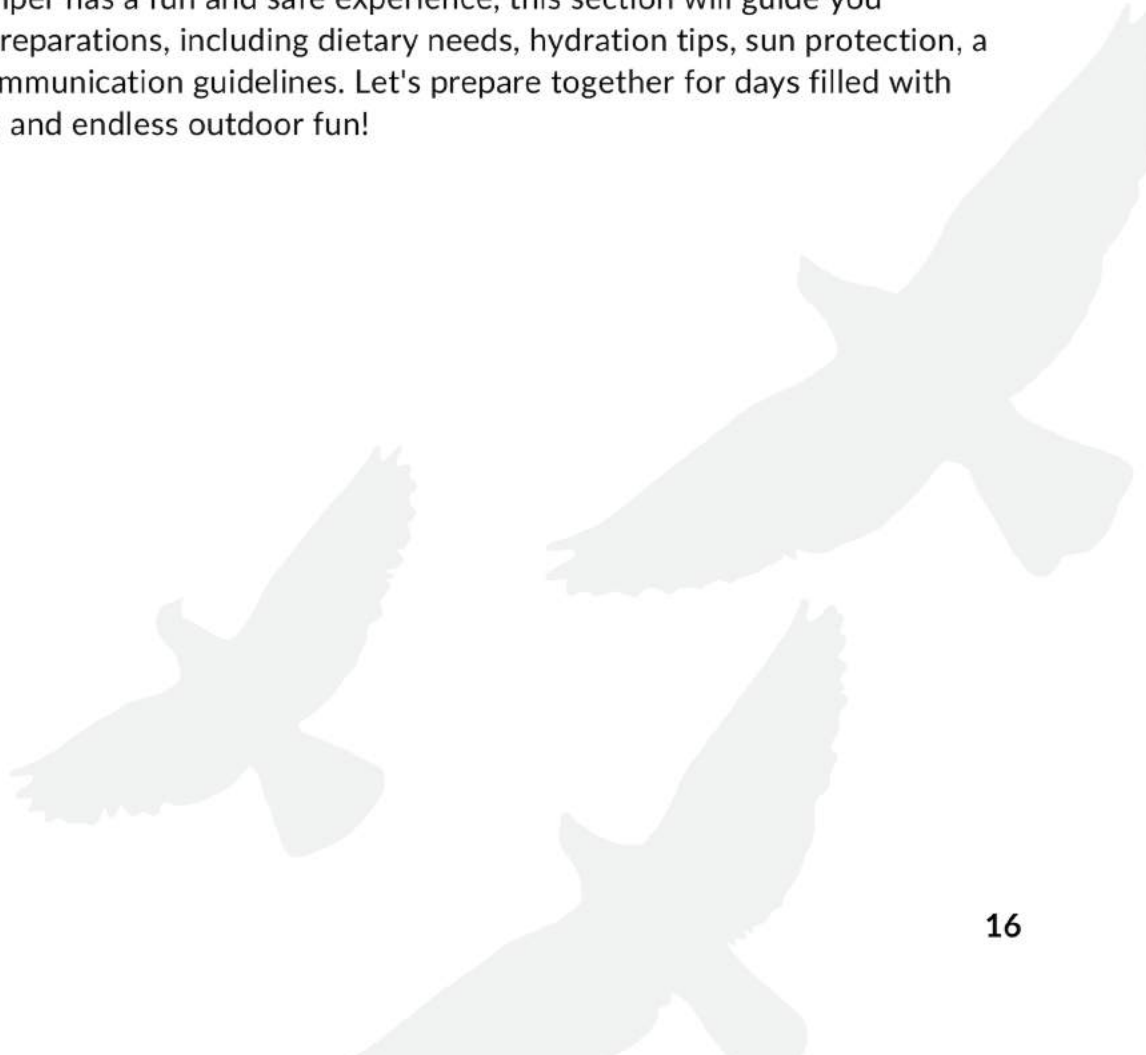
Please be sure to submit the Medication Administration forms before the start of camp. Our dedicated camp nurse will carefully review these documents to ensure our staff is fully prepared. Your child's safety and well-being are our top priorities, and we want to ensure a smooth and comfortable experience for everyone.





PREPARATION FOR CAMP

To ensure your camper has a fun and safe experience, this section will guide you through essential preparations, including dietary needs, hydration tips, sun protection, a packing list, and communication guidelines. Let's prepare together for days filled with discovery, learning, and endless outdoor fun!



Preparation for Camp

Food & Dietary Needs

Please be sure to share any dietary needs or allergies during the camper registration process. Additional dietary requirements or concerns can be communicated directly with the Camp Director prior to the start of camp.

Day Camp Programs

Campers will bring their own non-perishable lunch to enjoy during the day. Lunch bags will be stored in the camper's assigned basket throughout the day. The camper will *not* have access to a refrigerator or microwave.

Snacks may be provided by the camp staff throughout the program, especially during hiking or specialized activities. These snacks will be influenced by the dietary needs of the campers. Please be sure to include this information in the camper health forms. We will notify camp parents if we have dietary restriction concerns for other campers.

Overnight Camp Programs

Balanced meals will be provided to our campers three times a day with a snack. Every meal will include some options for the camper to make decisions about their preferences. We will encourage campers to try new foods. Our food is sourced from local producers and certified grocery stores. When available, we also encourage campers to join us in harvesting fresh fruits and vegetables from our garden.

We encourage families to adopt a "trash-free" lunch approach, focusing on reducing single-use trash. Consider packing lunches in reusable lunch bags and using reusable containers for food items.



Preparation for Camp

Hydration & Sun Safety

At Summer Adventure camp, we take pride in maximizing outdoor time for our campers, and we hope each day is filled with sunshine and pleasant weather. To ensure your camper remains hydrated throughout the day, please send them with a reusable water bottle. We will remind them to drink frequently and refill as needed.

We recommend encouraging your camper to drink water instead of juices or sodas for maximum hydration!

While we spend much of our time in shaded areas on our educational campus and in the forest, we also enjoy activities in the open fields and at the pool. Therefore, it's important to consider sun protection for your child. Sun-protective clothing, sunscreen, or a hat are all effective options.

We encourage you to teach your camper how to apply sunscreen themselves. However, our team does understand some campers may need assistance for proper coverage. If your camper needs assistance, this should be noted in the camper registration form.

Please ensure all personal items, including water bottles and sun protection gear, are clearly labeled with your camper's name or initials.



Preparation for Camp

Packing List for Day Camp

All campers will have their own bin to store items throughout the week.
Please be sure to label all items with the camper's name!

- Lunch
- Reusable Water Bottle
- Sunscreen (at least 30 SPF)
- Bug Spray
- Rain gear (rain jacket or poncho)
- Cap or brimmed hat
- Boots or closed toe shoes that can get dirty
- Change of clothes (pants, shirt, underwear and socks)
- Swimsuit
- Slip-on shoes or flip-flops for the pool
- Beach towel
- Boots (if necessary)

It is recommended that these items (besides the pool gear) are brought at the beginning of the camp and remain onsite until the end of the week.

On scheduled pool days, campers should wear their bathing suits to camp for easier transition to the pool. It is important that campers are able to remove their bathing suits and redress themselves without needing adult assistance. The camp counselors are not permitted to assist campers with dressing.



Preparation for Camp

Packing List for Overnight Camp

All campers will have their own space around their bunkbed to store items. Consider packing items in a trunk or suitcase that provides easy organization.

- Reusable Water Bottle
- Sunscreen (at least 30 SPF)
- Bug spray
- Rain gear (rain jacket or poncho)
- Cap or brimmed hat
- Daypack/ Small backpack for day hiking trip
- Sleeping bag/ blankets/bed sheet (twin sized)
- Pillow
- Small flashlight or headlamp (with extra batteries)
- Bath Towel
- Beach Towel
- Bathing Suit
- Personal toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, non-aerosol deodorant, etc.)
- Sneakers or Light hiking shoes for general activities
- Boots or closed toe shoes that can get dirty and/or wet
- Sandals for showers and pool
- Wool/ fleece sweater or light jacket (1)
- Long sleeved shirt (1)
- T-shirts (3)
- Shorts (2)
- Long pants (2) (Light weight for Hiking, Jeans for low temperatures)
- Underwear (3+)
- Socks (3+ pairs, at least 2 tall socks for hiking)
- Book (with optional book light)
- Comfort item (ie stuffed animal or blanket)

Preparation for Camp

Packing Notes

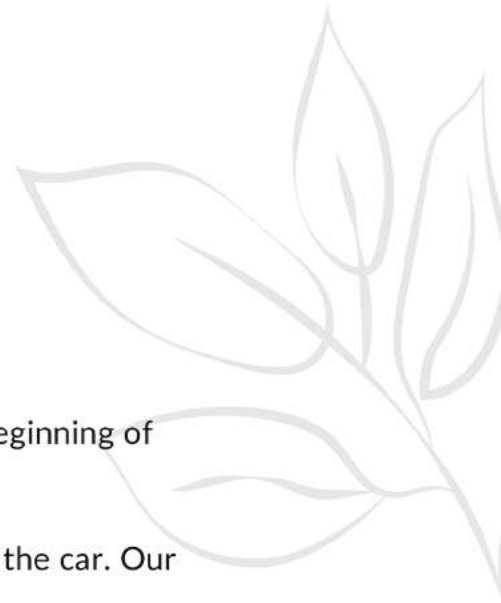
Please be sure to label all items with the camper's name!

It is recommended that the day camp items are brought at the beginning of the camp and remain onsite until the end of the week.

As a camp parent, we suggest arriving to pick-up with a towel in the car. Our campers may end the day with water play.

DO NOT BRING

- Cell Phones
- Electronics (iPods, watches, speakers, etc)
- Knives
- Jewelry
- Expensive Personal Belongings
- Aerosol Deodorant



Preparation for Camp

Camper Communication Devices

Summer Adventure Camp is intended to be an immersive activity that embraces the natural world and the environment in which we live.

Accordingly, our goal is to have a cell phone and technology-free camp. Because personal devices are often lost, misplaced or can be damaged during outdoor activities, we encourage you to protect your camper from the risk of breaking or losing their devices, or not getting the most out of their week, by sending them to camp cell phone and technology-free!

We understand the importance of staying connected with your camper. However, we encourage you to allow them to disconnect from their phones while at camp.

To ensure their safety and your peace of mind:

- The main office is equipped with a landline phone for emergencies.
 - This main office number is 301-292-5665.
- The camp director will be onsite every day with a cell phone for parents to contact.
 - The camp director number is 301-401-5628.
- Camp counselors stay connected with each other and the director using walkie-talkies.
- Each camp group's location is updated and shared with one another.





OVERNIGHT CAMP

The Alice Ferguson Foundation has been hosting overnight guests for 70 years through school-led programs. Building on the success of our Summer Adventure Day Camp, we are thrilled to introduce our 2024 Summer Adventure Camp Mini-Overnight!

Our overnight camp section covers everything your camper needs to know about their home away from home. From bunk arrangements to evening activities and sleep routines, we've crafted an experience that combines adventure with comfort, ensuring every moment is memorable and safe

Please note that overnight programs for campers with specific medical or behavioral needs may not always be possible. Please contact camp@fergusonfoundation.org to discuss individual camper needs.

Overnight Camp

Overnight Camp Experience

Our overnight campers will enjoy all the wonderful experiences of our Summer Adventure Day Camps, plus the added excitement of nighttime adventures! The days will be packed with activities across our over 330+ acre property, including day and night hiking, gardening, farm chores, crafts, team-building games, and more. We will wind down around the campfire before heading to bed.

Our camp features two spacious and modern bunkhouses located on our environmental campus. The bunkhouses include twin-size bunk beds, composting toilets, and private showers. Each camper will have space to store their personal items, ensuring a comfortable and organized stay.

Balanced meals will be provided to our campers three times a day with a snack. Every meal will include some options for the camper to make decisions about their preferences. We will encourage campers to try new foods. Our food is sourced from local producers and certified grocery stores. When available, we also encourage campers to join us in harvesting fresh fruits and vegetables from our garden.



Overnight Camp Experience

Overnight Camp Preparation

Being Homesick

Being away from home in an unfamiliar place can be uncomfortable for new campers, and this is perfectly normal. However, we don't want it to hinder your camper's experience. Talk to your camper about what to expect and reassure them that it's okay to feel homesick. Encourage them to engage in camp activities and make new friends.

Lights Out Away from Home

At camp, everyone follows the same sleep schedule. This means that if one person stays up past lights out, everyone in the cabin might lose sleep. It's important to follow the lights out rule so everyone can rest up for the next day's activities. If your camper feels anxious about the dark or has trouble falling asleep, consider packing a comfort item from home. If they tend to wake up at night to use the bathroom, a small flashlight can be very helpful. Discuss strategies with your child for falling asleep, such as counting sheep or flipping the pillow to the cool side.



Overnight Camp Experience

Overnight Camp Preparation

Keep Your Personal Space Clean

Your child will be in close quarters with other campers, so it's important for them to keep their sleeping and living areas organized. Before camp, go over ways for your child to stay tidy. Provide a laundry bag to separate clean and dirty clothes, and encourage using the under-bed space and provided hooks rather than living out of a suitcase or camp trunk. Avoid overpacking by following the camp's packing list guidelines closely. This helps your child know what they have in their luggage and makes it easier to find what they need.

Trying New Foods

All meals at camp are provided and are healthy and balanced, with fruits and vegetables locally sourced. The meals might differ from what your camper is used to at home, but they will have a few options to personalize their meal. Campers are expected to eat what is provided. Encourage your camper to try new foods and reassure them that the meals will be nutritious and delicious.





SEE YOU AT SUMMER ADVENTURE CAMP!

Thank you so much for choosing to spend the summer with us! We are thrilled to welcome your camper(s) to Summer Adventure Camp and look forward to an adventurous and safe summer for all.

Feeling nervous about camp is natural for both parents and campers, and we take our responsibility of caring for your camper(s) very seriously. We are honored to play a part in your camper's growth and are committed to setting them up for a successful summer at camp.

If you have any questions or concerns about your upcoming Summer Adventure Camp experience, please don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to help and ensure your camper has the best summer ever!

Camp Director: Michelle Hickerson
Office Number: 301-292-5665
Cell Number: 301-401-5628
Email: camp@fergusonfoundation.org



Handbook Highlights

- **Submit Camper Health Forms:** Ensure all camper health forms are submitted before the start of camp to guarantee forms can be reviewed by the camp nurse.
- **Leave Electronics Behind:** Cell phones and other electronics are not permitted at Summer Adventure Camp, encouraging campers to fully “unplug” and immerse themselves in outdoor experiences.
- **Double Check the Packing List:** Review the packing list thoroughly to ensure your camper is fully prepared for the week ahead with all necessary items.
- **Communication Is Key:** Take the time to talk to your camper about any concerns they may have regarding camp, helping to alleviate any worries and ensuring they feel comfortable and excited.
- **Embrace Outdoor Adventure:** Get ready to embrace outdoor adventure every day! Encourage your camper to immerse themselves in the natural surroundings and enjoy the wonderful experiences awaiting them at camp.

