



To: 2022 Day and Resident Camp Families

COVID-19 Safety Notice Updated—January 13, 2022*

National CDC, American Camping Association, and GSME guidelines for safe operation for summer camp

Guidance may change and our COVID Safety Notice will be updated accordingly in June 2022. The following outlines current guidelines for our 2022 camp season, based on CDC recommendations for summer camps.

Camps like ours, with many campers who may or may not be fully vaccinated, will continue to use layered, multiple prevention strategies to help protect them, and slow the spread of COVID-19.

We know everyone is excited to get outside, play, try new skills, and enjoy camp friendships. Together we can make that happen!

*Guidelines may change over the summer; we will keep families posted on any changes.

Testing: All camp program participants (regardless of vaccination status) are required to have a negative COVID test*, either a PCR test or a rapid antigen test, taken 72 hours before camp. Proof must be shown upon camp arrival. Any camper without a negative test should stay home.

Pre-Arrival to Camp

As parents, you play an integral role by making thoughtful and smart decisions in the weeks prior to camp. Following these guidelines and keeping your camper healthy ensures a healthy start for our entire community. Families will be asked to complete the CampInTouch ***Pre-Arrival Screening form***, and agree to keep activities and interactions outside the family low risk, and to skip gatherings like weddings, parties, and sleepovers 7 days before camp.

During pre-camp, we ask that your daughter chooses only low-risk or “COVID-safe” behaviors to limit all exposures. COVID vaccines are impressive, proving well over 90% efficacy. But they are not 100% effective. For these reasons, even if your child is vaccinated, we ask you to continue to follow our guidelines, being intentional about what you do prior to arrival at camp.

Lower risk activities examples: Outdoor activities with members of your family or vaccinated people; small outdoor gatherings with fully vaccinated family and friends.

High risk activities to avoid examples: Attending crowded indoor events like weddings, shopping centers or museums, indoor gatherings, movie theaters, indoor dining at restaurants.

Camper Drop Off and Pick Up

Drop Off: Check-in with the nurse and others will be done as drive-thru. Only campers will exit the car. Campers will provide their COVID test results upon arrival. *This is what worked best at our camps last summer.*

Closing Ceremony on Friday at 2:00p.m.-2:45p.m. At this time, we would like to invite families to attend a closing ceremony on the last day of camp. **We require all that attend to wear masks.** Closing Ceremony will be Friday at 2:00p.m.-2:45p.m. Please arrive between 1:30p.m.-1:50p.m. More detail of ceremony will be sent out in your camper packets.

Pick Up: Parents can check out their campers immediately after the ceremony. If you do not attend closing ceremony, families can arrive just to pick up their campers between 2:45p.m.-3:15 p.m.

Camp Logistics

Masking: Even though the State of Maine no longer requires wearing a mask *in public settings*, we will mask in our congregate community when deemed necessary for the continued good health of everyone at camp.

Masks have been shown to be the number one method of preventing transmission of the virus. Our masking policy will be constantly evaluated and updated. There will be as many mask breaks daily as possible when girls are in their units, outdoors, and can be safely spaced.

Washable cloth face masks have been added to the camp packing list. *Neck gaiters and buffs are not acceptable.*

General masking rules: When masks are required, we will require both vaccinated and unvaccinated campers and staff to wear them as a prevention strategy, which is the recommendation for mixed groups of vaccinated and unvaccinated people.

- **Indoors.** Mask use indoors will be required for all campers and staff regardless of vaccination status.
- **Outdoors.** In general, we will not require masking in outdoor settings. Masks may be required when campers are interacting in close proximity with individuals.
- Masks will never be worn on or near the water, during heavy physical exertion, when sleeping, or during meal times.
- We will be supportive of any camper or staff person who chooses to wear a mask, even at times it is not required (but never during waterfront activities, eating, drinking and sleeping).

Unit Groups: Campers will be assigned to a unit group with other campers in their program. Masks may be required when campers are interacting in close proximity with individuals.

Lodging: Girls will sleep head to toe in cabins and tents. Heads will be more than 6 feet apart. Extra attention to ventilation will be taken. Ask any girl who has slept in a tent before – ventilation is not a problem!

Meals: Meals will be served with girls physically distanced indoors, and outdoors under shelters. Food will only be served by staff wearing masks and gloves. Masks will be worn inside dining halls when not eating or drinking.

Activities: Our popular activities and programs will be offered. Plan to enjoy boating, swimming, archery, outdoor skills, challenge courses and rock climbing, arts and crafts, drama, cooking, hatchet throwing and all the things you love about camp!

Most activities are already outside, where transmission is much lower. As many activities as possible will be moved outside.

- **CDC:** Activities that have the potential to produce respiratory droplets including singing, chanting, shouting, will be done outdoors. Campers and staff, will wear masks and maintain at least 6 feet physical distance during these activities.

Girl Choice: The girl choice activity periods will be modified for summer 2022. Campers will choose individual activities, but some activities may be modified either to facilitate social distance or to require masking.

All Camp & Evening Programs: During large group events, activities may be facilitated to allow unit groups to be distant from one another, or masks may be required.

Handwashing/sanitizing: Even though it is proven that COVID does not transmit easily or at all on surfaces, any kind of viral transmission causes undue stress in a congregate community. Our goal is to be as healthy as we can be, considering not only COVID, but also all other transmissible viruses and diseases. With that in mind, we will continue enhanced cleaning and sanitizing, especially of high touch areas. Personal hygiene will definitely be a priority this summer, including assessing camper skill and instructing campers on proper handwashing and use of sanitizer.

Bathroom & Shower houses: Partitions have been installed between the rows of sinks to limit splashing during washing up and tooth brushing. Showers will be scheduled by units to prevent crowding in the shower houses.

Transportation: This applies to the Pondicherry Horseback Riding program and several Natarswi trips. When campers are transported in camp vans, masks must be worn, windows opened slightly for ventilation and spacing considered.

Immunization: GSME staff are required to get vaccinated prior to their arrival at camp, which will further limit transmission

What happens if there is a case of COVID? If a COVID case is suspected or confirmed: parents will be asked to pick up their child within 12 hours. The camps do not have the capacity to isolate sick campers. The camper's unit will be further monitored and all camp parents in the current session will be notified. For girls without symptoms and in other units, the families can decide to either pick up their child or keep them at camp for the remainder of their stay.

Will all of these precautions guarantee that my child will not be exposed to COVID-19?
The simple answer is no, we cannot guarantee your child will avoid exposure to COVID-19 this summer. Although we can tell you that our intentional, structured and controlled setting with testing, small groups, appropriate physical distancing, and masking is likely to be a safer environment for your daughter than other summer options.

We will do everything we can to try to keep our whole community virus free.

We have a WONDERFUL summer in store! We feel very well prepared with the layers of protocols and safety strategies outlined above, and we know your girls can't wait for the opportunity to safely live, play and grow this summer with their friends!

We're almost there!

Treasa "Tree" Wheeler (Natarswi) | twheeler@gsmaine.org | 207-299-0089

Sarah "Willow" Davenport (Pondicherry) | sdavenport@gsmaine.org | 207-699-7447

Together, we can do this!