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## Making new friends at camp

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To: ft@northstarcamp.com

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Dear {{RecipientFirstName}},

Making new friends will almost certainly be one of the best parts about camp. It can also feel daunting at the start.

Most first-time campers won't know anyone ahead of time, but they will leave with many new friendships and connections. Having friends from across the country is such a great opportunity for kids, and the closeness that comes from feeling so secure at camp makes camp friendships so special and unique. When your camper arrives at the bus, staff and camp directors will help introduce them to each other and kick off conversations. The playtime, laughter and smiles will follow.

Putting together cabin groups is a very complicated puzzle. Cabin groups morph each summer, and each session as well. As groups are built, camp directors consider many factors to set campers up for success. Campers will learn their cabin assignments when they arrive at camp and cabin lists will be shared with families after all groups have been announced on the first day of camp. We strive to partner and honor family preferences while making cabin groups, but we cannot guarantee requests.

### Set your camper up for success...

To set your camper up for success with friendships at camp, have conversations about what it takes to be a good friend. Have them tell you why other people will want to be friends with them. Practice these moments and skills and empower them to show these skills and traits. It is an adjustment going from living at home to living at camp. Help your child understand how their actions and behaviors can impact friendships and relationships of people around them. Camp staff will continue to talk to campers and coach them through moments and reflections as well.

- *When you're at school or meeting new people, what makes you a good friend right now?*
- *Why do your friends at school and in your activities like to be friends with you?*
- *What do you think your friends now appreciate about you the most?*
- *What do you like about your friends and how they act?*
- *What don't you like about your friends and how they act or behave? What do you do when you don't like their actions or words?*
- *At camp, what are your ideas for how will you work through moments when you don't like what someone is saying or doing?*
- *When you're meeting someone for the first time, how do you show them you're a good person to be friends with?*
- *How do you show that you really listen to your friends and value and appreciate them?*
- *In what ways do you need to practice been a better friend?*

- *At camp, is there something new you'd like to try to be even better friends with people this summer?*

For returning campers, ten months away is a long time and a lot of change and growth can happen. That is true of your son and all the other campers as well! Each summer, new friendships form and the best friendship results are made when effort and opportunity is renewed. Remind your camper that each start to the summer is a fresh one. As campers grow, friendships and bonds tighten. We often ask campers what the best parts of camp are. When campers are young or first starting, they will often talk about their favorite activities or their favorite special events that they look forward to. As campers grow, undoubtedly, the top response is always, "My friends."

On June 1, North Star will host an introductory Zoom for all first time campers and parents together. Attending campers will get to meet each other, start to connect and have people in their age group and session that they are looking forward to seeing again at camp. (Time and Zoom link details for this virtual meeting will be sent out in a separate email.) We don't recommend setting up playdates as they can be awkward, whereas the magic of camp will spur relationships in different ways. Remind your campers that by attending our New Camper Zoom, that they will already have a few familiar faces by the time camp starts and the friendships will naturally grow as they play and participate in camp activities.

And remind them that their counselors and the whole staff are here to support them in making friends. Our staff will be on the lookout for ways that we can support each camper, but please reinforce that if they have any doubts, hesitations, questions or concerns about navigating interpersonal dynamics and creating friendships at camp, we'll be with them every step of the way.

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## Camp Forms

Have you completed all of your camp medical and travel forms yet and ordered your camper's daily medication from CampMeds? If not, don't delay! All medical and travel forms are due by May 1st.

[Login to CampInTouch to complete North Star Camp forms](#)

[Click here to order daily medications through CampMeds](#)

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## North Star Handbooks and Manuals

When your first time camper starts asking you all sorts of questions about next summer like, "What will the food be like?" "Who will I play with?" "What happens if I don't feel good at camp?" "What if I can't find my stuff?" Share the North Star New Camper Handbook with them! It outlines how the first days of camp will go and what to expect from a camper's perspective.

As a parent if you're asking questions like, "How does the mail work at camp?" "What are the transportation options to camp?" "Campers have a spending account at camp- what's that for?" then check out the Preparing for Camp Handbook. This handbook gives a full overview of policies and procedures at camp.

The North Star website also has great videos, our packing list and additional information to review. As you continue to get ready, check 'em all out!

New Camper Handbook

Preparing for Camp Manual

NSC website: Preparing for Camp

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As always, please reach out to us if you have any questions!

Thanks,

-Andy, Dan, Robyn, Glick and Beth



**Andy Shlensky**

*North Star Camp for Boys*

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[www.NorthStarCamp.com](http://www.NorthStarCamp.com)

*Pronouns: he, him, his*



"Remember the Scholarship Fund" - [www.CampForAllKids.org](http://www.CampForAllKids.org)

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