



## Outdoor Classroom Parent Health & Safety Information

Dear Parents,

We can hardly wait to meet your child! The Outdoor Classroom nurses, administrators, educators and trip leaders work hard to provide healthy and safety-conscious programs during your child's time here. We also work hard to make our program accessible to *all* students. Please read the following, and contact us if you have any further questions, would like to discuss your child's pre-existing medical condition, or are concerned about the appropriateness of our program for your child. This will help us to prepare the best possible experience for all students.

- **Health History:** The Health History Consent and Assumption of Risk form is required of each student and will be handed out through their school. The form is confidential and gives us permission to administer first aid and provides us with vital information in case of an emergency. More commonly, it alerts our educators to potential health problems, allergies, or medications that will need to be administered. We keep careful records of any and all first aid administered. If there are changes to the information provided on this form before your child arrives, then please call us to give us a heads up (example: a different prescription or altered dosage). Also, remember that we need medical insurance information for each child.
- **Packing Medications:** Please send any medications your child is currently taking. Prescription medications must come in the prescription bottle/package with the original pharmacy label, dosages and patient name. All medications will be collected at the beginning of the program and returned just prior to departure. Medications will be handled as discreetly as possible. Please be sure to send enough medication to last the length of your child's stay. We cannot legally administer prescription medications that do not come to us in this way. Non-prescription medications, vitamins, and natural remedies should also be sent in the original containers and labeled with clear instructions and dosages. In addition, our health center will need a written note from your child's doctor with permission to administer these non-prescription items while they are here. Over the counter medications such as Tylenol and Advil are available in our first aid supplies – please do not pack.
- **Safety:** Safety is a major player in any adventure programming. Our instructors have a minimum of Wilderness First Aid and CPR training, and all of them have anaphylaxis and Chewonki first aid training. Most of them are Wilderness First Responders. During Outdoor Classroom programs our instructors carry complete first aid kits. Although many of our activities are designed to be challenging and exciting, they are also designed for safety. While “risk” is inherent in any outdoor/adventure activity, our instructors are very conscious about potentially dangerous situations and are trained in risk management.
- **Emergencies:** If a medical emergency should arise during an activity or at the campsite at Chewonki, then help can be reached with little delay. Either a Registered Nurse or an EMT is on-duty during the day and on-call at night. Vehicles are available for transportation to the MidCoast Hospital, a 20-minute drive away.\* If a family emergency should arise during non-office hours, then please dial the Chewonki phone number and the Program Director's extension as listed below to obtain contact information for that evening's on-duty-administrator.
- **Wellness Reminder:** Students coming on the Chewonki trip should be feeling generally healthy. To help prevent the spread of illness, please allow for adequate recovery time when deciding if a child who has been ill is well enough to attend.
- **Homesickness:** For many of our students, the Chewonki trip may be their first time away from home

for multiple nights. Our instructors are well-versed in the ways of homesickness and will do their very best to listen to and support children in this struggle. We do not recommend phone calls home or parent visits – in our experience these things can sometimes fuel the homesickness. If you anticipate that your child will struggle with severe homesickness, then please indicate so on the Health Form. It may also be a good idea to speak with a school representative or our Program Director in order to make a strategy for your child's success. If your child has never spent the night away from home before, then we strongly suggest that they practice before coming to Chewonki – an overnight at a friend or grandparent's house can go a long way in preparing them for being successful at a sleep away camping program. A completed trip to Chewonki can be a huge confidence boost for many students.

- **Food Allergies or Intolerances:** Our food packing facility is equipped to accommodate almost all food allergies or intolerances, and our instructors are well-trained in food packing and handling. There may be some situations, however, when a student will be asked to bring some of his or her own “safe” food. Please be very specific on the Health History Consent form regarding the severity and particulars of the allergy/intolerance and contact us for additional paperwork that will help further outline the condition. Please alert us well in advance of any life-threatening allergies so that we have adequate time to prepare. We are happy to go over a menu with you and make the appropriate adjustments. Our educators are trained in treating anaphylaxis and carry epinephrine in their first aid kits.
- **Asthma:** If your child feels more comfortable carrying his or her inhaler with them, then please send two so that one may be kept in the first aid kit which travels everywhere with the group. At times, students will be up to a 1/2 hour walk away from their campsites – inhalers left in tents or backpacks are no good! Please send an inhaler even if your child has not recently had an attack. Inhalers should be non-expired and come in their original box, a doctor's note, or a copy of the current “Asthma Action Plan. Electricity for nebulizer use is available in the main campus area but not at campsites or on off-campus wilderness trips.
- **Diabetes:** Please contact us if your child has diabetes to make an appropriate plan for their care and to obtain additional paperwork that will help to further outline the condition. Additional adult supervision may be necessary.
- **One-On-One Assistance:** If a student requires one-on-one assistance for either physical or developmental disabilities or for behavioral or emotional reasons at school, then we ask that this assistance also be provided by the school or family while the student is at Chewonki, including overnight.
- **Other Medical Concerns:** Please contact us regarding any medical condition that you feel we should know about before your child's arrival.

Again, we are looking forward to meeting your child and hope to speak with you soon regarding any questions or concerns you might have.

Sincerely,

*Outdoor Classroom Administrators and Health Center Staff*

Business Hours (8:00 - 4:30) 207-882-7323

Non-business Hours /Emergency Only 207-504-3021

*\*Emergency procedures for off-campus wilderness trips vary according to the location of the trip and mode of transport. Evacuation routes, emergency contacts, and nearest medical facilities are established in advance of all trips.*