

TO: Parents of children with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and/ or Hyperactivity (ADHD)

We very much want for your child to have a happy and successful camp experience. The information that follows explains how you can help make that possible for your child.

Camp is an active environment--it is also a structured, social environment. It is very important that your child have every possible advantage in being able to follow instructions and interact with peers and counselors. Our counselors are trained in working with children in ways that promote self-esteem and to intervene appropriately when campers do not always behave as expected, but they will do this even better if you will please take the time to write down for them what has worked well in disciplining your child, and keeping your child's attention.

It is also important for you to understand that the drugs used to treat these disorders, including Ritalin, Dexadrin, and Cyclert, are water soluble. These means that when the weather is warmer, and the schedule more active, the effects of these drugs will be diminished by the camper's sweating and more frequent urination. **Your child may need MORE medication, not less, at camp.** Experts are now recommending that children at camp receive a small additional dose of their medication in the late afternoon. We hope that you will discuss this with your physician prior to sending them to camp. We must require that the dosage on the bottle match what is administered. Please be sure to arrange this with your physician prior to camp. Please include a few extra tablets--sometimes a camper will drop a pill, or sometimes parents have miscounted them, and this means an extra trip for the parents.

We require that you bring the camper's medication even if they are not taking it during the summer. We have found that sometimes when parents realize their child is not being successful at camp without the medication, they decide to try to use the medication, and this means an extra trip for the parents. By having the medication on site, these options are more readily available. It is important to realize that some medications take a while to build up in the system. You may wish to start your child on the medication a few days before the camp session begins. **When a camper is sent home because they cannot keep the covenant and regularly behave in a way that is not helpful to the group, there is no refund.**

In addition, recent studies suggest that "medication holidays" may not be as helpful as once thought. Evidence suggests that the growth stunting once associated with Ritalin and other drugs may not have anything to do with the drug, but with the nature of ADHD, and that the growth is recovered naturally later in life. Other studies suggest that medicating children for school, but not on weekends, or not in the summer, may actually lead to frustration for some children, rather than being helpful. It is important to discuss with your physician what is best for your child, remembering that your child's environment is constantly changing. For a valuable resource that discusses these and other relevant topics, please visit www.attention.com

We want to work with you in making this a positive experience for your child. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to call the camp director at (800) 566-1496.

Mike Burcher, Director