

Summer Camp 2010

Parent Handbook



Mount Desert Island

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Camp Beech Cliff Mission

Our starting premise at Camp Beech Cliff is that children are among a community's greatest assets. Our mission is to foster their healthy physical and social growth by providing outdoor experiences that connect children to the outdoors and build teamwork, self-confidence and self-reliance, the ability to take healthy risks, leadership and relationship development—particularly with their peers and the natural world. We want every child to enjoy being active outdoors, discover new talents, develop attitudes and skills that will serve them for a lifetime, make lasting friendships, appreciate our beautiful natural setting on Mount Desert Island and be inspired to become active stewards of our invaluable natural environments.

Purpose of this Handbook

This handbook is designed to help parents get to know us and understand the unique camp culture of Camp Beech Cliff. You will find information about our mission and program philosophy as well as details regarding daily routines and schedules. It is our intent that this manual be your reference guide to camp. ***Please pay special attention to any information in bold type.*** We understand that this manual may not answer all of your questions; you are always welcome to call our office with questions or concerns.

Letter from the Camp Director

Welcome to the camp season of 2010! Once again, we at Camp Beech Cliff are excited about all the possibilities the coming summer has to offer. Over the winter months, we have been busy preparing CBC for another wonderful summer of fun, learning and friendships.

As a professional educator for almost twenty years, I am passionate about providing children with authentic opportunities to grow and learn. I believe that outdoor experiences, especially camp, play an important role in this development. The time to enjoy and explore the outdoors, create friendships, learn new skills, and grow through these experiences is what camp is all about. At Camp Beech Cliff, our primary goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for these experiences.

As Director, my second goal is to bring together and develop an experienced, caring staff team. I believe that a great staff is fundamental in providing a great summer for campers. These are the people who will be spending countless hours with your children. Therefore, it is my mission to choose responsible and qualified staff members to take on this challenge, people who are enthusiastic about spending their summers at camp. It is also my task to support them as best I can. This includes being out in the camp activities, being visible and approachable on a daily basis. Through this practice I also hope to get to know many campers each summer.

Camp Beech Cliff has a long and rich history in the MDI community. Traditions such as camper bucks, our core program areas and Fracky Fridays have been with us for years. As we continue to grow and improve camp, it is our intention to maintain a balance of these traditions and new programming. This year, we will continue with the very successful addition of a dedicated coordinator for each of our three grade-based camps - Thunder, Lightning and Quasar – and with the half- and full-day blocks for Quasar Camp.

As we move through the camp season, I encourage you to be a part of your child's CBC experience: attend our Family Fun Days or the Overnight BBQ, come visit camp, or simply talk to your child about their day. Additionally, if there is something you want to share with us, please feel free to contact me at camp.

With health and happiness in the camp season,

Kevin Downey

Director of Camp and Outdoor Education

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Absences

Attendance is taken every day when camp begins. If your child will be late or absent, please contact the office as soon as possible, ideally before 8:30 AM, and let us know. A voicemail system is in place for messages if you call the night before. Please leave the message at extension 101 for the Office Manager or email info@campbeechcliff.org.

Arrival At and Pick-up From Camp

Staff members are on hand to supervise your camper from 8:45 AM until 4:00 PM. We cannot be responsible for children on the premises outside of this time frame. We do understand that emergencies arise but we would appreciate your respecting these time constraints. See also “Late Drop-off/Early Pickup.”

Behavioral Expectations and Discipline

Camp Beech Cliff strives to provide a safe environment, both physically and emotionally, for everyone in camp. Camp Beech Cliff emphasizes respect within all aspects of our program. We will be pro-active in teaching, modeling, and reinforcing respect at every opportunity. It will start with our communication with the parents, continue with every contact with our campers, and will then be reinforced by every staff member. Our intention is to make camp a safe and enjoyable experience for all concerned.

Certain behaviors are never tolerated, such as violent language or acts, inappropriate language or acts, and any behavior that we believe may endanger a camper or staff member, either physically or emotionally. Most of the time campers just need a reminder or a gentle redirection. Should the camper persist with behavior that is unsafe, dishonest, uncooperative, or disruptive, he or she may be removed from the group and given the opportunity to talk things over with the Camp Director.

We will do our best to listen to campers’ needs and feelings when discipline issues arise. We do not, however, have the resources to work with children one-on-one for extended periods of time during the day. Depending on the situation, the following steps will be taken:

1. Specific strategies will be developed with the camper and staff, and parents will be notified.
2. If the behavior is serious or becomes a consistent issue, the Camp Director will hold a parent conference. The camper may be suspended from camp for an amount of time to be determined by the Camp Director.
3. Repeated instances of problem behavior will be grounds for expulsion from camp. There are, unfortunately, no refunds available for campers who are either suspended or expelled from our programs.

Bullying and Teasing - There may be times when the staff is unaware that this type of behavior is going on. If your camper feels bullied and you believe that our staff either doesn’t know about it or isn’t addressing it appropriately, please call the Camp Director. We will address the situation in an appropriate and timely manner.

Camp Licensing and Accreditation

Camp Beech Cliff is licensed by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services as a Youth Camp. Camp Beech Cliff has also earned the mark of distinction of being accredited by the American Camp Association. CBC adheres to the ACA standards of quality, health and safety in every area of camp operation. For more information on the accreditation, go to www.acacamps.org/accreditation.

Camp Store

The camp store is open on Family Fun Days, some Friday afternoons or upon special request. Water bottles, T-shirts, baseball caps, and hooded sweatshirts are available for purchase.

Camper Participation in Activities

Camp should be fun! Camp Beech Cliff is about being outdoors all day, learning new skills, being involved in camp activities, and socializing with friends. We would like to see campers fully participating in activities, but we also realize that kids occasionally need down time. If a camper is consistently not participating in camp activities, we will notify the parents to discuss the situation.

Campers with Special Needs

We welcome children of all ability levels. If your child has special needs, please call the Camp Director to discuss the safety concerns and staffing needs for your child. If you live locally, we strongly recommend having the parent(s), child, and even the case manager tour the camp and meet with the Camp Director. We want to be sure that your child will be safe and be able to participate in many of the great programs that CBC offers. ***One important consideration – we have generally found that if your child has an aide at school, then he/she will probably need one here.***

Communication with Camp Office

We want to hear from you! All feedback is welcome whether it's complimentary or critical. The information we get from parents and campers helps us improve the quality of our programs and operations. Here are some important ways to be in touch with us:

- If you have a concern about camp, please contact Kevin Downey, the Camp Director, by either email or telephone (see front page of this handbook). He will be spending most of his time outside with staff and campers to directly oversee camp operations but he'll set aside time each day to be touch with parents. He'll also be briefing the Executive Director on serious matters.
- At the end of the summer, we will be conducting a parent survey. We'll be looking for your overall impressions of camp operations, staff, and programs. Your input to this survey will be gratefully received.
- If you need immediate assistance, please call the office during business hours.

Daily Schedule

Camp runs from 9:00 - 4:00. There are four 60-minute activity periods and one longer camper choice block.

9:00–9:20	Morning Circle
9:20–10:20	Block 1
10:20–10:30	Snack
10:30–11:30	Block 2
11:30–11:55	Lunch
11:55–12:55	Block 3
12:55–1:55	Block 4
1:55–2:10	Camper Choice Sign-Up
2:10–3:40	Camper Choice Activity
3:40–3:50	Afternoon Circle
3:50–4:00	To Buses/Vans/Parents

All campers will be at the waterfront each day for swimming and/or boating. They will also have the opportunity to swim every day during the camper choice period. Lightning Camp will have some 2-block activities. Quasar Camp will mostly have separate half- and full-day adventures.

Campers will also have the opportunity to participate in various “all camp” events—such as Fracky Fridays, end-of-session performances, and trips to Sand Beach.

Directions to Camp

From Ellsworth, Maine, follow Route 3 East (toward Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park). At the “Y” just beyond the causeway onto Mount Desert Island, go straight on Route 102 South (toward Southwest Harbor). Continue straight at the traffic light (in Somesville). At the flashing light and fire department at the far end of town, turn right onto the Pretty Marsh Road. Shortly thereafter, turn left onto the Beech Hill Road and follow it for about 2.5 miles. Look for our sign and driveway on the left.

Family Fun Days

Twice during the summer of 2010 – on July 21 and August 11 – we invite camper families to spend a day (or part of day) at Camp Beech Cliff. Your child does not have to be registered in that particular session, but if not, must be accompanied by an adult. You and your family members will be able to participate in a variety of activities alongside your son or daughter and join us for a free BBQ lunch. You will also have the opportunity to meet the Camp Director and camp staff, Executive Director, and volunteers, such as Board members, who are actively involved with the camp. The camp store will be open on these days.

We understand that work schedules make it difficult for parents to attend a day-time event. Some children may find it upsetting not to have a parent in attendance, so if you are unable to participate we recommend that you talk this over with your camper in advance. You may want to consider having a grandparent, another relative, or family friend attend in your place. We would be happy to have you visit at some other time. Please call the camp office.

Financial Information

Deposits - Deposits are non-refundable after May 15, 2010 with the exception of those paid by Campership applicants (who have a two-week period following notification of Campership award in which they may notify us in writing of a wish to withdraw the camper and receive a return of deposit). If space allows and if we receive a written request at least two weeks prior to the week in question, deposits may be transferred to a different week or to a different member of the same immediate family.

Payments - Payment in full for each camp session is due in the office by two weeks prior to the start of the session. If we have not received payment, we may fill your child's spot with a wait-listed child. Campers with overdue outstanding balances will not be allowed to attend Camp.

Cancellations - Unless a written request for cancellation is received in the office at least two-weeks prior to the start of a cancelled week, payment in full is expected for that week.

Insufficient Funds - We will charge your account \$25 for any check returned for insufficient funds.

First Day Check-In

All campers must check in between 8:30 AM and 9:00 AM on their first day of the summer at camp. Check-in will take place at tables outside Headquarters (inside, if it is raining). ***This is only required on the first day of the summer that the camper is in attendance at camp.*** Ideally the camper will be accompanied by a parent, but this is not required. Time will be saved if all required forms have been completed in advance and your account is paid up-to-date. In order for a camper to remain at camp for the week, all required forms must have been completed and received and payment must have been received for those sessions which are due.

Forms

Required forms for attendance at Camp Beech Cliff are (available at www.campbeechcliff.org/campforms.htm):

- **Health History Form**
- **Immunization Record** - To be completed on the Health History Form, or send a copy from the doctor's office. If your child is not immunized, we are required by the State of Maine to have on file a written statement from the child's parent or guardian stating that this is the case and the reason for it.
- **Insurance Card** - We need to have a copy of the front and back of the insurance card used for the camper. If you do not have access to a copier, please bring the card to the office and we will make the copies for you.
- **Self-Administration of Emergency Medication** - *This is required ONLY if applicable.* If your child does self-administer emergency medication, we need BOTH sides of this form signed, one by a parent or guardian, the other by the child's Health Care Provider.

Health and Safety

Camp Beech Cliff strives to make camp a safe place for campers to spend their summer. We work hard to minimize risks and to educate campers about the differences between healthy and reckless risk-taking. We also train our staff to focus on how to prevent accidents and injuries and what to do when they occur. All staff members working with campers are certified, at a minimum, in Basic First Aid and CPR/defibrillator (we have two defibrillators on site). Camp's Health Office is managed by a Health Professional who is a Registered Nurse, EMT or Wilderness First Responder.

All on-site program areas have immediate radio communication capabilities with Headquarters and the Health Professional. Most accidents at camp are minor (scrapes, cuts, bruises, etcetera) and do not prevent a camper from continuing his/her day at camp after receiving basic First Aid. If the Health Professional determines that a camper needs immediate medical attention that cannot be provided at camp, the camper will be taken either to the Emergency Room at Mount Desert Island Hospital in Bar Harbor or to the office of Dr. Kuffler (our camp doctor) in Southwest Harbor. Parents will be notified immediately, and a camp staff member will remain with the camper until a parent arrives. Additionally, if a camper simply needs to go home for the day, parents will be notified.

All off-site programs and all camp vehicles have first aid and safety equipment with them, and information on how deal with emergency situations. Camper health forms (with emergency contact information) are kept at the camp office where the Health Professional is based. The Office Manager (or a designee) is always available to answer calls from 8 AM to 5 PM.

Late Drop-off / Early Pickup

Campers arriving at camp after morning attendance (9:10 AM) need to be signed in by a parent at the office. Likewise, a camper being picked up early will need to be signed out by a parent or person with written authorization to take the child from camp. Please let the office know ahead of time if your camper will be arriving late or leaving early. This allows us to make arrangements with the staff and camper to be ready when you arrive, especially when a camper is at the waterfront and it takes 10-15 minutes to travel to the office.

Lice

Much as we hate to think about it, lice ARE a fact of life. Please remind your child or children not to share hats, towels, brushes, combs, or hair ornaments. If we find lice and the condition is serious, the child will be sent home that day for treatment.

Lost and Found

Each Friday afternoon, Camp Beech Cliff displays lost items. At the end of the summer, unclaimed items (usually 5-6 large containers filled with clothing) are donated to a local charity. ***We highly recommend labeling camper belongings*** - such as clothing, towels, bathing suits, caps, lunch bags, T-shirts and jackets - in permanent ink or with a printed label. Possible sources for clothing labels are Name Labels at www.namelabels.com or (416) 483-8013 and Bell of Maine at www.bellofmaine.com or (207) 784-2964 x233.

Medications

All prescriptions and medications must be dropped off with the camp's Health Professional before camp begins and picked up after camp is completed. ***Parents of a camper needing inhalers, insulin, epinephrine or other self-administered medications must inform the Health Professional of these requirements with written documentation from a physician.***

Prescription medication must be in the original container and all medications will be kept securely in the Health Professional's office. Written instructions regarding dosages (frequency and amount) must be provided along with the medication. CBC's Health Professional will administer medication based on these instructions. We recommend that you talk to your child's physician about having the medication dispensed before or after the camp hours.

The Camp Health Professional's office regularly administers the following over-the-counter medications, according to label instructions, to manage illness and injury:

<u>Symptom</u>	<u>Medication</u>
Sore throat	Vitamin C drops
Headache	Tylenol/Ibuprophen
Upset stomach	Pepto Bismol
Menstrual Cramps	Ibuprophen/Advil
Poison Ivy	Calamine Lotion/Cortaid

Use the Camper Health Form (page 2) to designate any your camper should NOT be given.

Overnights on Fridays

Camp Beech Cliff has a longstanding and fun tradition of allowing campers to stay overnight on Fridays. This optional program costs \$35. Groups will be limited to a maximum of 30 children each Friday and have a minimum of 3-6 staff present, including the Camp Director or Camp Coordinator. The overnights are for designated camper age-groups only (see schedule on next page). A child does not have to be registered at camp for that particular week in order to be able to attend the overnight. However, he/she must be brought to CBC with the proper equipment at 4:00 PM on the Friday of the overnight.

The purpose of overnights is to provide a different experience from the day program. Campers will have an opportunity to sleep in a tent, enjoy an evening hike, and sit around a campfire singing songs, hearing stories, and eating s'mores. We may take an evening swim, with waterfront staff in attendance. Overnights happen even if it rains. If weather conditions are extreme, we will move the event inside the Eagles Nest Building and have a great time playing games and cooking there.

Spaces are limited, so register early. Registration forms are available at our website and in the office. If we are overbooked for an overnight, preference will be given to campers who have not had a prior opportunity to participate in this activity, followed by other campers in order by the date registration was received.

Parents of overnight campers are invited to join in for the BBQ cookout, from 5:00-6:30 PM on Fridays.

Length of Overnight - Friday 4:00 PM until 9:00 AM Saturday. Pick-up is 9:00 AM Saturday morning at CBC Headquarters.

Equipment List – Sleeping bag and pad, pillow, warm clothes, change of clothes, extra towel, bathing suit, water bottle, flashlight, and teddy bear, if needed. Also don't forget the toothbrush and toothpaste. Camp Beech Cliff will supply tents.

Food - CBC will provide a dinner and breakfast for the campers and staff attending the overnight. Campers may be asked to assist in the preparation of the food for either meal. Please remind us if your child has dietary restrictions.

Further Details - If your child has never attended an overnight before or slept out in the woods, please talk with him/her about the possibility of being homesick or scared. We will do our best to encourage your child to stay at the overnight and enjoy the experience.

Medications - Any medications must be checked in with the camp's Health Professional as soon as the camper arrives at camp. The Health Professional and overnight staff **MUST** know what the medication is and when/how it is given. The Health Professional will relay all medical and medication information to an overnight staff member.

This summer's overnight schedule is as follows:

Session 3 – July 9 – Thunder Campers (grades 2-3)

Session 4 – July 16 – Lightning Campers (grades 4-6)

Session 5 – July 23 – Quasar Campers (grades 7-9)

Session 6 – July 30 – Thunder Campers (grades 2-3)

Session 7 – August 6 – Lightning Campers (grades 4-6)

Session 8 – August 13 – Quasar Campers (grades 7-9)

Special Requests

Camp Beech Cliff provides a great environment for campers to make new friends and to be with people they already know. Campers are assigned to a traveling group within their camp to foster social bonds with campers and counselors. If a camper wants to be placed with a friend or relative in the same group, a written request must be received at least two weeks in advance of the camp session. We will make every effort to honor this type of request but cannot guarantee it since we need to consider group dynamics and scheduling as a whole. Moving campers around on Monday morning or during a session in progress is simply not feasible.

Sunscreen Recommendations

Campers spend most of their time outdoors while at Camp Beech Cliff. Even on a cloudy day, every camper should apply sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 15 (30+ is preferred) to all exposed skin. We strongly recommend that you send a bottle of lotion (labeled with the camper's name) with your child each day. Staff will help younger children who may be unable to effectively apply their own sunscreen.

Swimming and Swim Lessons

- Campers will be swimming most days at Echo Lake (weather permitting).
- All campers will participate in a swim evaluation on their first day of camp so that our staff can determine where it is safe for your child to swim or play in the water.
- Camp's swim area is divided into two areas: a shallow area for beginner swimmers, and a deep area for swimmers who have passed the swim test.
- Our certified lifeguards adhere to the Red Cross, State of Maine and ACA regulations. All of our lifeguards are certified.
- As part of our swim program, we offer Red Cross swim instruction especially geared to non-swimmers and beginners.
- Usually two or three times during the summer, a camp group takes a trip to Sand Beach. You will be notified two days in advance of a special trip such as this.
- At the boating area, all campers and staff are required to wear PDFs regardless of a person's swimming ability.

Tips and Gratuities

Camp policy is that individual staff may not accept tips or gratuities of any type. Making a donation to underwrite a Campership for a child who might otherwise be unable to enjoy a camp experience is a wonderful way to say "thank you."

Transportation

Camp Beech Cliff offers free transportation from Ellsworth, Lamoine, Trenton, and points around Mount Desert. You must be registered through the camp office to take advantage of this service. The 2010 transportation schedules are available in the CBC office or from both the Camp Forms page and the Transportation page of our website: www.campbeechcliff.org.

IMPORTANT: Any changes to a camper's normal transportation arrangements (even if it is a one-time only change) must be submitted to our office in writing, by noon of the day of the change (email acceptable). ***Bus drivers will pick up and drop off ONLY at scheduled stops.*** We cannot make exceptions.

Other Important Information:

- If there is unclear communication with camp resulting in confusion about a camper's drop-off location and a parent cannot be reached, the camper will be held at camp until picked up by parents.
- Should we learn of any major problems with transportation (i.e. vehicle problems or traffic jams), an attempt will be made to notify parents immediately so that alternate plans can be arranged.
- Traffic is always unpredictable, but this is especially true in our busy summer months. We will do our best to adhere to our schedule, but arrival and departure times can only be estimates.
- Camp Beech Cliff supervises the campers on the bus and at camp (or camp program off-site); it is the parent's responsibility to supervise their son or daughter at the pick-up and drop-off locations. Drivers cannot wait for campers who are not at the stop when the bus arrives, nor can they stay with your child if you are not there for drop-off. Please arrive at least 10 minutes before the scheduled bus arrival/departure time.
- There will be a staff member on the bus with the bus driver to supervise the campers and help with any difficult situations that might arise.
- Transportation is a privilege. Please be sure to inform your children that if they do not follow the basic bus and van rules, the drivers have the right to immediately suspend this privilege.

TRANSPORTATION RULES

- Stay seated while the vehicle is moving
- Wear a seatbelt whenever one is available
- Bad language is not acceptable
- No open food or drinks are allowed on the bus/van
- Keep hands inside the windows
- Do not throw anything out the windows
- Keep your hands to yourself
- Keep bags and personal items out of the aisle

Note about camp vans: Again this year we will be using fifteen-passenger vans for field trips. These recent models have a new stability system, making them safer than earlier models. As has been our practice, all camp van drivers are at least 21 years old, have a clean driving history, and will be tested for driving a van. All vans are inspected weekly and carry emergency equipment.

Visitors

All visitors to camp must check in at Headquarters upon arrival. Parents are free to visit and observe at any time, but they must check in at Headquarters too. If you'd like to have a tour of camp, please call ahead of time to arrange it.

What to Bring

Camp will be an enjoyable experience if you send your camper with a knapsack or backpack containing the following each day:

- Lunch
- Healthy snacks
- Full water bottle
- Swimsuit & towel
- Sunscreen
- Camera (optional)
- Hat
- Light jacket/sweatshirt
- Sneakers/athletic shoes

Please be aware of weather predictions and prepare your camper accordingly. Unless there is thunder and lightning or a major downpour, we will likely be outside most of the day. Please label all clothing and belongings. ***Because the children are very active and tend to get hungry, we recommend that you pack at least a little bit more nourishment than you might ordinarily.***

What Not to Bring

Camp does not allow weapons (this includes knives of any kind), trading cards, MP3 Players, iPods, CD Players, radios, Gameboys, cell phones (they don't work here anyway) or any other electronic devices. Camp phones may be used only for communication directly with parents/guardians; they are not to be used by campers to make after-camp social arrangements.

PLEASE NOTE! Camp cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items and we highly recommend that valuable items be left at home.

We look forward to having your child at camp!

