

# Q&A's *with our* **CAMP DIRECTORS**

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## **WHAT IS YOUR BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE? HOW LONG HAVE YOU OWNED THE CAMP?**

Lori and Ephram have worked at Camp Wekeela since 1997. Prior to Wekeela, Lori was a school Guidance Counselor and Ephram was a school Social Worker as well as a youth Director at a JCC. They bought the camp in 2008. Currently all three of their children work at Wekeela. Please find out more at the *Meet the Directors* page on our website.

**WHERE DO YOUR CAMPERS COME FROM?** Currently campers come from 25 states and 18 countries from around the world.

**WHAT DO THE FIRST COUPLE OF DAYS OF CAMP LOOK LIKE FOR A NEW CAMPER? HOW DO YOU ORIENTATE NEW CAMPERS AND PROMOTE BONDING IN THE BUNK/AGE GROUP?** From day one, we have a lot of bunk activities which are bonding exercises to make sure the transition to camp is easy and fun. The campers participate in getting to know you activities to make sure everyone feels welcome and included. The counselors also go over the daily schedule and also discuss their bunk theme for the summer.

**WHAT IS THE DAILY SCHEDULE? HOW MUCH ACTIVITY CHOICE WILL MY CHILD HAVE?** We have a four-day rotation (A-B-C-D schedule) and there are 6 different activities each day. There are three meals with the bunk as a whole and a rest hour. One of the six periods is an elective period where each of the program areas create a fun choice activity. Campers will often have choices within each program area as well.

**WHAT IS THE CAMPER-COUNSELOR RATIO? WHAT IS THE MINIMUM AGE OF THE COUNSELORS? WHERE DO MOST OF THE COUNSELORS COME FROM? HOW ARE THE COUNSELORS SELECTED AND TRAINED?** There is close to a 2:1 ratio camper to counselor. Counselors are at least a freshman in college and Junior Counselors are seniors in high school as well as former campers. Staff come from the US and around the world. We use agencies who do criminal background checks and in person interviews, and we do interviews of our staff as well. For two weeks before the campers arrive, we have an extensive camp training period.

**WHAT PERCENTAGE OF CAMPERS RETURN EACH YEAR?** Over 91% of campers return summer after summer.

**WHAT ARE THE ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE? (E.G., TENTS, CABINS, ARE THERE BATHROOMS AND SHOWERS INSIDE THE CABIN, ELECTRICITY, ETC.) HOW MANY CAMPERS AND COUNSELORS LIVE IN EACH CABIN/TENT?** We have wood cabins with new bathrooms and real pine wood bunk beds, private showers, toilets, and electricity. On average, there are 12 campers in each side of the bunk. All of our counselors live with and supervise their campers in the bunk.

**WHAT ARE THE CAMP'S VISITING AND COMMUNICATION POLICY? HOW DOES THE CAMP COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS (DO THEY POST PICTURES DAILY, HAVE A FACEBOOK ACCOUNT, HAVE A BLOG OR NEWSLETTER)? WHAT IS THE CAMP'S POLICY ABOUT CAMPERS RECEIVING PACKAGES, PHONE CALLS, AND EMAILS?** Visitor's Day takes place at the end of the first session. It's from 9am-4pm and the campers share with their parents a traditional day at camp. We post daily pictures on a password protected part of our website of our campers in action. Parents get one call for every two weeks of a camper's stay. We also have Wekeela Notes where a parent can send an email to their camper each day. In addition, the camper can handwrite a letter back to their parents and our staff scans the letter back to their email address. Communication is ongoing throughout the summer.

**WHAT IS THE ELECTRONICS POLICY?** We do not allow any electronics of any type that have access to the internet. Music players are allowed as long as they don't require WiFi.

**IS THERE A SERVICE OR WEEKLY CAMPFIRE (RELIGIOUS OR VALUE BASED)?** We have a weekly campfire where staff and campers perform - it is always a camp favorite. We have an optional Friday night candles lakeside service. Everyone is invited to participate. We also offer a shuttle to the local Roman Catholic Church for Sunday Mass.

**WHAT ARE THE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS TO/FROM CAMP? CAR, CAMP BUS, PLANE? WHAT IS THE MOST POPULAR METHOD?** Depending on their location, campers arrive at camp in a variety of ways: parent drop off, chartered coaches from Rye, New York, and select chaperoned flights into Boston Logan and Portland Airports. If campers arrive via plane, we charter a van or bus to get them to camp.

**IS THERE A PARTICULAR ACTIVITY OR DISCIPLINE THAT YOUR CAMP SPECIALIZES OR EXCELS IN?** We are a traditional sleep away camp and have a varied and amazing schedule of programming in water front, water ski, outdoor adventure, tennis, landsports, creative arts, performing arts, culinary arts, and environmental education.

**HOW DOES THE CAMP INTERACT WITH OTHER CAMPS? ARE THERE INTER-CAMP GAMES, SOCIALS, OR BROTHER/SISTER CAMP EVENTS (HOW OFTEN WILL GIRLS AND BOYS SEE EACH OTHER), TOURNAMENTS?** We have inter camp sports games against other camps in Maine and NH several times per summer. Since our camp is co-ed there is a good mix of activities with both boys and girls all day long.

**HOW WILL MY CHILD EXPERIENCE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE? HOW OFTEN AND WHERE DO THEY GO ON TRIPS? ARE THERE OVERNIGHT EXPERIENCES AS WELL?** We have an outstanding Outdoor Adventure program on campus with a climbing wall, rock wall, high and low ropes, zip line, fire building, and hiking. In addition we have off campus daily hikes and overnight trips for our campers.

**WHAT MAKES YOUR CAMP UNIQUE? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE OVERALL CULTURE, PHILOSOPHY, AND VIBE OF THE CAMP?** We are unique in that we are a family run, co-ed camp which bases its philosophy on kindness, problem solving, nurturing, and fostering independence. We believe in inclusion, having fun, and just being a kid. We are not over-the-top competitive or pretentious. We have amazing children from awesome families where lifelong friendships are made and become part of our family.

**ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL TRADITIONS LIKE COLOR WAR OR OLYMPICS?** We have a College Weekend competition in the first session and a Color War in our second session. In both of these traditions, the campers are split up into teams (either colleges or one of our colors) and participate in a variety of activities that are athletic, silly, and creative.

**ARE THERE TEAM TRYOUTS?** No, we believe we're in the business of building kids up, not cutting them down. Everyone who wants to participate is encouraged to do so.

**WHAT ARE THE MEALS LIKE AT CAMP? ARE THEY FAMILY-STYLE, BUFFET, OR BOTH? DO CAMPERS EAT WITH THEIR BUNK OR SWITCH AROUND WITHIN THEIR AGE GROUP? HOW DO YOU HANDLE FOOD ALLERGIES?** We have a very experienced groups of chefs who prepare by hand all of the meals. We have family-style meals where everyone eats as a bunk with their counselors and bunk mates. We have table service and an enormous salad bar at every meal with appropriate choices for the time of day. We also have special theme meals throughout the summer. We can handle all allergies and are a nut free camp.

**WHO ARE YOUR MEDICAL PERSONNEL (E.G. ROTATING DOCTOR, 24 HOUR NURSES, CONSISTENT DOCTOR ON CALL)? WHAT ARE THE ONSITE HEALTH CARE FACILITIES LIKE? HOW CLOSE IS THE LOCAL DOCTOR'S OFFICE, HOSPITAL, DENTIST, ETC.?** We have a doctor on call 24/7, nurses, EMT's, and student health professionals on our staff at camp all summer. We have a full-service health center and have two leading Maine hospitals nearby.

**WHAT IS SECURITY LIKE AT CAMP?** We have electronic gates at our entrances and patrols very late into the night.

**IS THERE A CAMP UNIFORM?** We are not a uniform camp, but we do ask that campers purchase Wekeela Wear from our store to be worn on arrival days as well as any time we leave campus. We find that many of our children wear their Wekeela clothing with pride throughout the calendar year. There is a packing list with specifics on our website.