



# Camp Akeela<sup>SM</sup> Circular



## News From The Directors

The spring always brings us lots of excitement as we get closer to the start of camp. We, along with Kevin, Julia and Margo, will leave for camp in early June to welcome our "pre-camp crew" and get ready for Open House on June 8th. This is the most special time of year for us. The three of us sit in the office all year preparing for just this moment – when we can return to Miller Pond and start doing what we truly love.

Our "pre-camp crew" will include approximately a dozen counselors and support staff who help ready the site for another camp season. Beginning June 13th, our Senior Staff gathers to discuss topics such as camper safety and well-being, the details of the summer's program and activities, and staff training. When counselors arrive on June 19th, our Staff Orientation begins in earnest. We spend a lot of time getting to know each other, forming a well-knit community and preparing our staff to be the most outstanding counselors we've ever worked with. We are thrilled to be welcoming back so many wonderful staff members from years past and to working with many talented individuals who will be joining us for the first time.

Often, parents and campers ask us who their counselors will be for the upcoming summer. Something you may not know about is how we decide which staff members will work with which campers. We do things a little differently at Camp Akeela! We actually don't determine counselors placement until about 5 days into staff training. We take time to get to know each staff member, see how they work with others, get a sense of their strengths and actually take the time to ask THEM with which age group they feel most passionately about working. Only then does our Senior Staff assign staff members into co-counselor groupings and assign them their bunks. It is probably the day the staff look forward to the most during their training. We will post an online news item with photos of the staff members who will be working most closely with your camper(s).

We look forward to seeing all of you soon and to another wonderful summer at Camp Akeela!

Fondly,

*Debbie Erue*



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### 2014 DATES

FIRST SESSION:  
June 28 - July 21

SECOND SESSION:  
July 24 - August 16

VISITING DAYS:  
July 21 and August 16

FAMILY CAMP:  
August 18 - August 24

# CAMP FORMS

Most of this year's camp forms are available online only.

## TO ACCESS THEM:

1. Go to the camp home page, [www.campakeela.com](http://www.campakeela.com)
2. Near the top right corner, click on "Parent Log In"
3. If you don't know your password, click on "Retrieve/Set Password" and enter your email address; it will be sent to you.
4. Log in and click on "Forms and Documents"

Forms with a computer icon are to be completed and submitted online. Those with a downward facing arrow are to be printed, completed and mailed back to the camp office (as of June 1, to our Vermont address, please). Please note that the Physician's Examination Form requires a physician's signature AND the "As Needed" Medication Form requires a physician's signature IF your camper takes "as needed" medications not listed on the form. If you haven't already made a doctor's appointment, please do so right away. (These forms don't necessarily require an additional physical if your child has had one within 12 months of their arrival at camp; however some physicians won't sign the form based on a previous physical.)

In addition to these online forms, you should have received in the mail: a Parent Handbook (with packing list), the Amerasport catalog, the Lice Treatment Center information packet, and a flyer from our preferred label retailer. Please be sure to look carefully at these items.

We know you understand that all of this information is collected to ensure that your child has a safe and rewarding summer at camp. Thanks for your cooperation and let us know if you need any help!



## PEN PALS

It's really helpful to know someone before you arrive at a new place. A few weeks before your camp session begins, we will send you the email address and phone number of one of your bunkmates. (It will get sent to an adult in your house and he/she will share that information with you.) We know that it's not always an easy thing to do, but we ask that you please make contact with your pen pal so that everyone at camp feels connected to someone else.

### NOTE TO PARENTS & GUARDIANS:

If you would NOT like us to share your contact information with other camp families, please call or email us right away to opt out of the Pen Pal program.

## Open House Reminder - Please RSVP



We hope to see many of you at this year's Open House on Sunday, June 8th between 10AM and 4PM. Please note that you do not need to arrive exactly at 10AM. In true open house fashion, there will be on-going tours and activities taking place all morning, including an optional Q&A with Debbie and Eric at 11:30. At noon, we'll enjoy a big BBQ lunch together on the main lawn. After lunch, everyone is invited for a few "work projects" to help get camp ready for opening day! This is a great opportunity to meet other camp families, for your campers to see their new bunks, and for new campers to get oriented to the camp setting.

To RSVP for this event, please complete the online form available on the Forms page of the Current Families section of our website. Thank you!

### A note about...

## BAGGAGE

Please remember that **ALL** baggage must be sent to camp before your camper arrives. Baggage should arrive four days before the start of your camper's session. If you prefer not to use R&B shipping or if they do not pick up in your area, feel free to use UPS or FedEx Ground. We will be happy to assist you in having your child's bags shipped home AFTER camp as well. (We ask that you bring your credit card with you on closing day so that we can use that information in arranging a delivery back to your home.)



## OPTIONAL OUTDOOR ADVENTURE TRIPS



Campers looking for a little extra adventure in their summer can sign up (in advance, with parental permission) for one or more optional Outdoor Adventure Trips. Each session, we are offering a bike ride along a scenic rail trail, a canoe trek down the Connecticut River and an over-night camping trip.

Details, prices and registration instructions were included in the online form. Spots are filling up quickly, if you're interested please get us your trip form soon!



## GEOGRAPHY UPDATE

For the past 5 years, we've published articles listing all of our campers' home states. Each summer, we found that our campers represented approximately 25 states and 1 or 2 non-US countries. Well, we're proud of our diversity so we counted again this year ... and we got almost the same result: 24 states (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico) and 3 other countries! Here's the entire list, as of mid-May:

Alabama, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Vermont. We also have campers coming from Puerto Rico, Washington D.C., the UK, Ireland, and United Arab Emirates.



## POISE-A-THON

We are delighted to tell you about the fourth annual Camp Akeela POISE-a-thon. This will be a fun and exciting community service project offered as a special event in each of our two camp sessions.

Campers will choose their method of participation, all of which will help raise money in support of a great cause.

Details and pledge forms were included in our forms mailing. Donations in support of your child's participation can be made directly to POISE at:

[www.poisescholarship.org](http://www.poisescholarship.org)



POISE

## CLOTHING ORDERS

Our official camp outfitter, Amerasport, tells us that it takes 14-21 days to process orders. Please allow enough time to receive and label your items before camp begins.

We also want to clarify that campers are only required to have ONE t-shirt (grey or white) ordered from Amerasport. Everything else in the Amerasport catalog – while wonderful products – is optional.



# A Letter to Our First-Time Campers (... And Veteran Campers Too!)

Dear Akeela Camper,

Summer is almost here and we hope you are excited about camp, even if you're also feeling a little nervous about it. Many kids go away for part of the summer. Some visit family, some go on teen travel or community service programs, and some go to sleep-away camps. Almost everybody worries about how they will like a place that's new to them. It's OK to feel that way and we're here to help make your transition to camp as easy and smooth as possible. We think that one way to do that is to help you know what to expect ...



If you're taking one of the camp buses to camp, you and your parents will meet some of our counselors at the bus pick-up location. They will be there to welcome you and to introduce you to other campers. They will help you find a seat on the bus with a new friend and will be there to answer any questions you might have. The travel time from NY is approximately 5 hours and the time from Boston is approximately 2.5 hours. You will bring lunch on the bus and there are bathrooms on both buses!

Those of you flying to Boston on Opening Day will be met at the airport by Akeela staff members. They will be there to greet you and to introduce you to other campers who have also flown in! You and your new friends will be driven by our staff in a camp van directly to camp. It will take approximately 2.5 hours to get to Akeela. If your parents are driving you to camp, you will be dropped off at 1:30. Your counselors will be there to meet you at your car and help you carry any last-minute items you have brought with you that day. You, your parents, and counselors will go to your cabin, where you'll see all of your belongings have been unpacked and organized for you so you can easily find your bed. You'll then say goodbye to your family and begin your camp adventure!

- Regardless of how you get to camp, here's what you can expect to happen the rest of that first day:
- You will have a chance to see what camp looks like and enjoy some planned activities with your bunkmates. You might take a tour, play some games, or jump on the jumping pillow.
- You'll also meet our nurses so that they can give you a quick "health check" to make sure you're healthy!
- Our great Chef Grant will give you a small preview of his culinary expertise and provide a delicious hot snack for you and your new friends to enjoy.
- There will be some time after everyone arrives for each bunk to start spending some time together before we meet for dinner. This is a great time to get to know your bunkmates and counselors, and talk about "bunk expectations," so you know what to expect from each other.
- We will all have dinner and Evening Meeting together as a community. You'll eat dinner with your cabin, just like you will for all your meals at camp! Evening Meeting will be at the amphitheatre and you'll get to hear from Eric and Debbie, and have a chance to make announcements about the new friends you've already made!
- Then it will be time for our opening campfire and evening snack. We'll sing songs and do skits as a community by the fire. It's one of our favorite parts of camp!
- Before bedtime, you will preview the next day's schedule and then Debbie or Eric and your Head Counselor will stop by to say good night. Before you know it, your first day will be over and we will all be getting ready for bed!

Many campers worry that they might be sad or homesick on the first night of camp. That is very normal. All of our counselors will be right in your bunk with you to help you. In addition to talking to them, you might want to look at photos from home, write a letter to your family or read a book. We know that after a short time, you will be having such a great time at Akeela, it will feel like your second home.

We can't wait to see you at camp. Many of you will be joining us for our Open House on June 8th. If you're not able to attend Open House, you'll be able to see photos of the event on the camp website. We're so excited for an amazing summer at Camp Akeela. See you soon!

Fondly,

*Debbie*      *Eric*



# WELCOME NEW CAMPERS!

One of our favorite parts of camp is having so many campers return summer after summer. We love what that tells us about how they feel about each other, our staff and the Akeela community. At the same time, nothing excites us more than being able to share the Akeela experience with first-time campers. Soon, there will be no distinction between "old-timers" and "first-timers", as we all become one community. In the meantime, we wanted to welcome the following campers to the Akeela family:

## FIRST SESSION

Colton A, Miami, FL  
 Jack A, Hanover, NH  
 Ryan B-A, Arlington, MA  
 Jack C, New Canaan, CT  
 Brendan F, Westwood, MA  
 Oliver G, Exeter, NH  
 Linn H, Media, PA  
 Aidan K, Wilmington, VT  
 Teal K, York, ME  
 Bethany L, Xenia, OH  
 Justin L, Wilton, CT  
 Ethan L, Summit, NJ  
 Justin M, Lexington, MA  
 Jason M, Tallahassee, FL  
 Lauren M, Ladue, MO  
 Juan M, Weston FL  
 Alex M, Sharon, MA  
 Alena M, Sharon, MA  
 Colin M, Kingston, MA  
 Lauren M, Garden City, NY  
 Isabel M, South Berwick, ME  
 Ethan P, East Greenwich, RI  
 Chance P, Chestnut Hill, MA

Jacob P, Bal Harbour, FL  
 Harry P, Greenwich, CT  
 Molly P, Medway, MA  
 Brandon P, Radcliff, KY  
 Kade P, Brandon, MS  
 Brian P, Tucson, AZ  
 Michael P, West Hartford, CT  
 Jack P, Richmond, VA  
 Mariette P, Dix Hills, NY  
 Toby P-G, Newton, MA  
 Lucas R, Guaynabo, PR  
 Jack R, Bow, NH  
 John R, Concord, MA  
 Julius R, Richmond, VT  
 Eleanor S, Huntsville, AL  
 Reese S, Tenafly, NJ  
 Cameron S, Tewksbury, MA  
 Harrison S, New York, NY  
 Benjamin S, Houston, TX  
 Jake T, Westlake Village, CA  
 Sean T, Merritt Island, FL  
 Ross V, Fairfield, CT  
 Jesse W, New York, NY

## SECOND SESSION

Zachary A, Brookline, MA  
 Matthew B, Princeton, NJ  
 Jackson B, Redding, CT  
 Benjamin B, Charlotte, NC  
 Mariah C, Jamaica Plain, MA  
 Douglas C, Northborough, MA  
 Michaela C, Needham, MA  
 Hannah C, Cranston, RI  
 Thomas D, Andover, MA  
 Ava E, New York, NY  
 Daniel F-M, South Orange, NJ  
 Jacob F, Needham, MA  
 Charles G, Princeton, NJ  
 David G, Lincoln, MA  
 Axel G, Newtonville, MA  
 Marshall G, Newtonville, MA  
 Kristopher J, Eastford, CT  
 Emerson K, Bristol, UK  
 Darius K, Westminster, MA  
 Baras L, Chattanooga, TN  
 Carter L, Olney, MD  
 Cameron M, Carmel, NY  
 Christopher M, Westfield, NJ

Andrew M, Wakefield, RI  
 Kevin M, Marlton, NJ  
 Tess M, Katonah, NY  
 Eric N, Croton, NY  
 Robert O, New York, NY  
 Rosie P, Washington, DC  
 Ian R, Irvine, CA  
 Brent S, Oyster Bay, NY  
 David S, Abington, PA  
 David T, Chicago, IL  
 Morgan T, Roslindale, MA  
 Dominick T, Flemington, NJ  
 Tatum U, New York, NY



## UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS...

### CAMPER BIRTHDAYS

Aiden S, May 1  
 James F, May 3  
 Bradley M, May 5  
 Ian R, May 5  
 Brooke M, May 6  
 Tess M, May 6  
 Jake N, May 6  
 Kade P, May 7  
 Matthew B, May 9  
 Sergio P, May 9  
 Alexander S, May 13  
 Carter L, May 17  
 Austin G, May 19  
 Lydia K, May 19  
 Emerson K, May 20  
 Jacob F, May 24  
 Eric W, May 24  
 Chance P, May 25  
 Daniel F-M, May 28

Jeffrey M, May 31  
 Wyatt M, June 1  
 Noah G, June 3  
 Gideon L, June 5  
 Ethan S, June 5  
 Allison O, June 6  
 Olivia R, June 6  
 Joseph T, June 6  
 Abe G, June 7  
 Jonah K, June 7  
 Rosie P, June 7  
 Joshua K, June 9  
 Spencer S, June 9  
 Jacob G, June 10  
 Brian P, June 14  
 Philip C, June 15  
 Axel G, June 18  
 Matthew S, June 18  
 Samuel C, June 19

Kevin C, June 19  
 Matthew G, June 20  
 Marshall G, June 20  
 Eitan R, June 20  
 Jordan P, June 22  
 Micah B, June 23  
 Riley D, June 27  
 Nicholas L, June 30

### STAFF BIRTHDAYS

Caleb S, May 4  
 Michael G, May 11  
 Amanda R, May 12  
 Andrea C, May 15  
 Scott M, May 17  
 Alyssa P, May 20  
 Nancy C, May 21  
 David L, May 22  
 Angie C, May 26



Eduardo R, June 7  
 Cassandra M, June 9  
 Nicole F, June 11  
 Megan F, June 11  
 Gregory W, June 11  
 Katherine D, June 16  
 Galen S, June 16

# LETTERS FROM HEAD COUNSELORS



## MIKE DEUTSCHMAN

I stumbled upon Akeela just before the summer of 2010. I had graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in child Psychology and had been working for four years at an amazing autism center in Minneapolis. It was not my intention to search for a camp like Akeela, but it just so happened the first camp I clicked on in a list of thousands was Akeela. (Thank goodness Akeela starts with an "A" and is an intriguing name!) When I saw the children Akeela worked with I started to believe in destiny. Because I was calling so late

in the spring, I was the second-to-last person hired. Speaking of destiny, the last person hired that summer was Nurse Naomi, who is now my wife!

My path through camp has been the best learning experience I could have imagined. I started as a cabin counselor my first year, then moved on to an assistant head counselor, and lastly a head counselor. I could not be at camp last summer because of the birth of my beautiful son, but am very excited to be back this year. I want to let you know that I am passionate about helping children reach their full potential. Working as the Assistant Dean at Middlebridge School during the year, I hear students talk about their past struggles with school life. Akeela offers the opportunity for these children to let down their guard and feel safe to take risks.

I know this summer you are taking a risk, too, and I want to reassure you that I will do my best to be your eyes and ears. Communication is going to be very important and as camp gets closer I am looking forward to talking with all of you about how we can best make that happen.



## ROB GLYN-JONES

For the non-summer parts of my year I live in England, where I am an actor. A lot of my work is in theater and radio, but I also spend a great deal of my time touring schools with shows and running workshops with a lot of students aged between 10 and 18. Some of these are acting classes, and some are more "issue-based" - covering a wide range of topics from career development and educational opportunities to anti-social behavior and alcohol abuse.

This year will be my nineteenth working at a US summer camp and my fifth at Akeela! During all of that time, I've gathered a huge amount of experience working in a camp setting, and this is experience that I am now proud to be able to share with the wonderful campers and staff at Akeela.

I believe deeply that to give our campers the best chance of success this summer, it is vital to create an atmosphere in which they feel safe and comfortable - only then will they be able to grow and make the most of the program that we offer. Every single camper will take home some incredibly valuable things this summer: self-confidence, new hobbies, more independence and new friends. Akeela is a place where magic can happen, and that is my goal for each and every camper this summer.

Open communication between Akeela and the campers' families is really important during the summer. My aim will be to give regular updates throughout the summer... sometimes that's not so easy though (as I'm sure you can imagine, we get REALLY busy at times!) so, families - don't ever hesitate to call and leave me a message. I'll make sure I get back to you as soon as I can. Rest assured too, that if there are any issues, we will make sure that you're aware of them - I'm a big believer in the fact that families are an invaluable resource. I cannot wait to start summer 2014 and see old faces as well as meeting new ones!



## CHRISTINE BABCOCK

Hi everyone! I am counting the days until it is time to return to camp! This will be my fifth summer at Akeela. My first two summers I was a cabin counselor on girls' side. Then I was the Assistant Head Counselor for the younger boys' cabins. Last summer, I was the Head Counselor for the youngest boys cabins and that's the role I'm thrilled to have again this year. I am looking forward to seeing returning campers from my bunks last summer as well as meeting our new campers! I moved full time to Vermont two years ago after camp and I currently live in Burlington where I am a behavior interventionist in a local school. I work one-on-one with a third grade student in the classroom. I absolutely love living in Vermont! In my free time I enjoy skiing, hiking and spending time on the lake.

Over the past five years, Camp Akeela has become a big part of my life. Camp is a magical place and such a strong community. I have found that it is a place I can truly be myself. I have been inspired by the friendships I have seen campers make and maintain from year to year. This summer, my number one goal is for your child to have fun and feel that they, too, can be themselves. I also hope to see your child build friendships and learn something about himself. I look forward to sharing your child's successes with you and will certainly let you know if we have any concerns. I will spend most of my day out in camp with the boys but will always check messages and return your call within 24 hours! Every summer at camp is a new adventure, and I am looking forward to embarking on this adventure with you and your camper.



## KATIE FARRISH

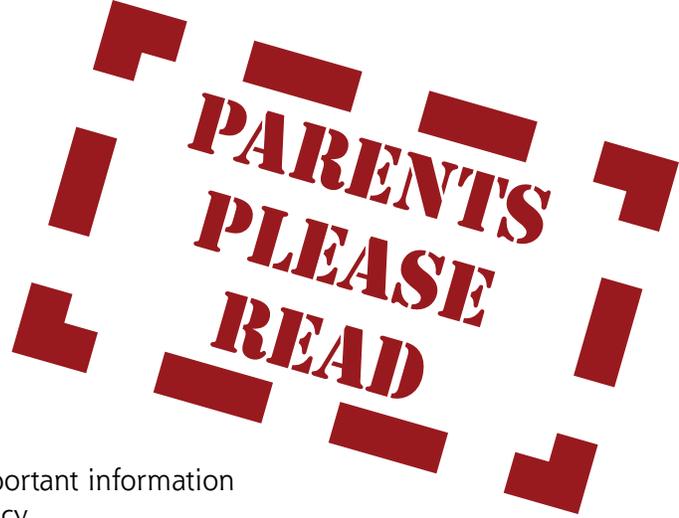
Hello everyone! I am absolutely ecstatic to be returning to my Camp Akeela family (after taking a little break last year) for my 5th summer. For those of you who don't know me, I started my adventure at Akeela in 2009 as one of the ropes specialists, while living in the oldest girls' cabin. At first, I was a little nervous about spending the summer in a new part of the country, 15 hours away from my home in Cincinnati, OH. Luckily, it took no time at all for that nervousness to go away. The combination of living with amazing campers in a supportive community, hiking beautiful mountains in Vermont and New Hampshire, and working on a fabulous ropes course all had me hooked on Akeela and there was no looking back. I returned to camp for the next three summers as the ropes director, Assistant Head Counselor, and Head Counselor, respectively. I love rock climbing, high adventure activities, and singing repeat-after-me-songs (not only at campfires, but anywhere I go!) For the past two years I have been working at Middlebridge School in Narragansett, Rhode Island, as a Residential Instructor and a member of the academic support staff. I love my job and feel blessed to get to work in such a beautiful place right on the ocean with truly amazing students. This fall I am thrilled to be returning to Ball State University in Indiana to complete my Master's Degree in Speech-Language Pathology.

Camp Akeela has turned into one of my favorite places in the world for a few different reasons:

- 1) The staff that gathers together every summer is always energetic, caring, and devoted to making each summer one that campers will never forget!
- 2) Watching campers establish meaningful and lifelong friendships with other campers. (This is true for the staff as well, as many of us have made some of our best friends at Akeela!)
- 3) The fresh Vermont air and beautiful layout of camp creates a peaceful and stress-free atmosphere with sights and scenes that could be on postcards!
- 4) Finally, I love seeing campers return year after year and learning about how much they have grown in their time away from Akeela.

As this is my seventh summer working at a summer camp, I also fully understand the importance of keeping an open and honest line of communication with campers' families. While some campers will experience some homesickness and other completely normal bumps in the road, our entire staff is fully prepared to help them (and their families at home!) weather these storms. Although I will try to spend as little time as possible in the office, so I can be out in camp with your children, I will check messages frequently! I can't wait to see everyone this summer on the shores of Miller Pond!

# IMPORTANT REMINDERS



## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

Please read through our Parent Handbook carefully. It contains important information about everything from first-day transportation to our phone call policy.

## **SPENDING MONEY**

Parents of campers completing grades 7 - 10 are asked to provide spending money for their camper's one-day trip out of camp. We recommend \$20 - \$30 for 7th and 8th graders and \$40 - \$50 for 9th and 10th graders. That can be mailed as a check to Camp Akeela, marked "spending money", given to a bus counselor on Opening Day, or dropped off at the camp office upon arrival.

## **CAMPER PHONE CALLS**

Please note our camper phone call procedures, outlined in the Parent Handbook. The online schedule system will be activated a couple of weeks before the start of your camp session. At that point, you can use the Parent Log In on our website (the same place you go for forms, photos and news from camp) to schedule one phone call during the camp session. Of course, our team of directors and Head Counselors are ALWAYS available to speak with you about how your child is doing at camp. Call any time and leave a message for us and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

## **SPECIALTY PERIOD SELECTIONS**

Keep an eye on your email box for a link to your camper's first week specialty selection form. Specialties are the individual choice periods that take place each afternoon at camp. As a family, you'll be able to send preferences for the two specialties in week 1. Campers will then make their 2nd and 3rd week selections once they're at camp.

## **PACK AN ITEM FOR TIE-DYEING**

Our art staff is planning to offer tie-dye as an activity. Please pack a shirt (or pillowcase, etc.) that you don't mind coming home multi-colored! We recommend labeling this item for our counselors so they can help have it ready for tie-dye day.

## **\*\*\* REQUIRING YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION: CAMPMEDS \*\*\***

Our medication policies require that ALL daily medicine -- including supplements and vitamins -- be dispensed by CampMeds. We want to be clear that we do expect 100% participation in CampMeds from families with campers who will take daily medication at camp. If your camper does not take daily medication, you do not need to register with CampMeds.

You will find details about how to enroll in CampMeds, along with an FAQ, on your family's online Forms Dashboard (accessible through the Parent Log In on Akeela's website). If you have any questions about CampMeds, you can reach them at 954-577-0025 or [www.campmeds.com](http://www.campmeds.com). Any other medication (i.e. items administered on an "as needed" basis) must be mailed to camp in its original packaging at least three days prior to your camper's arrival. Please call the office to notify us if medications will be arriving by mail. It is camp policy not to accept any medication (including vitamins, supplements, etc.) on Opening Day.