



Camp AkeelaSM Circular

Letter from the Directors



Dear Akeela Families,
We are officially in the "dog days" of winter. After it took forever for the chilly winter weather to settle in (we were not complaining about that!), it seemingly has now arrived. This makes our days together at Akeela in



the warm sun seem so far away. One thing we've learned is that while camp seems far away right now, time is going to FLY and summer will be here before we know it. Soon enough your family will be working on camp forms (woohoo!), planning out your packing for camp, and then campers will take to planes, trains, and automobiles to get to camp for Opening Day!

How are you getting ready for camp? This time of year, we spend a lot of our time meeting new families and professionals as we begin welcoming the new families joining the Akeela community. Kevin has spent a lot of time on the road this fall and winter at fairs and conferences spreading the word about camp, while Mike and Kristin are busy meeting many new campers and their families as they prepare for their first summer at camp! We feel so fortunate to have the opportunity to think about and share camp with others every day. That helps us get through the especially tough "dog days" of winter.

In this newsletter you'll find some ways you can start preparing for summer. They'll help you (both parents and campers) get excited about your upcoming Akeela experience and get a better feel of what to expect. Many of us feel better and more comfortable with something, especially something new, when we take time to intentionally prepare for it. We hope the ideas and other notes in this newsletter will spark some anticipation and preparation for the amazing summer we're about to share together! If there is anything we can do to help make your transition to Akeela a smooth one, whether you're a fourth-year camper or this will be your first year at camp, please let us know. We are here to help and can't wait to spend our summer with you!

Love,

Kevin Kristin Mike

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IMPORTANT 2020 DATES

WI FIRST SESSION:
June 29 - July 11

WI SECOND SESSION:
July 12 - July 24

BA FIRST SESSION:
June 29 - July 17

BA SECOND SESSION:
July 20 - August 7

Winter: 314 Bryn Mawr Avenue, Bala Cynwyd PA 19004

Summer: c/o Lawrence University, 711 E. Boldt Way, Appleton, WI 54911

1-866-680-4744 • campaakeela.com

It's not too soon to start planning for camp!

The next few months will pass quickly and before we know it, we'll be together at camp! As we gear up for the summer here in the office, we thought that it might be helpful for you to start preparing at home, too. Here are some suggestions of things you might do between now and summer to get ready for an amazing experience at Akeela:



**MONTHS
BEFORE CAMP**

- If you are a returning camper, email or call an Akeela friend. Get in touch and see how he/she's doing. Talk about what you're looking forward to at camp. Maybe set up a time to get together, in person, or online.
- If you are a new camper, explore the Akeela website to see a daily schedule, photos of camp and more details about the community that you'll be joining. Make a list of any questions you'd like to ask us or your pen-pal (whose contact information you'll get in the late spring).
- Talk to other people you know who have been to camp and find out what they loved about their experience.

- Make a list of all of the things you're excited to try at Akeela this summer.
- Review the camp video so you can really try to picture what camp might be like.
- Plan a sleepover outside of your home to get used to sleeping in a different bed.
- Order any Camp Akeela "gear" you want for camp.



**MONTHS
BEFORE CAMP**



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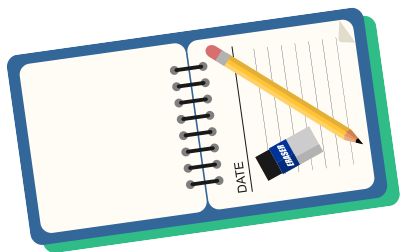
- Start gathering a list of family and friends you might want to write to while you're at camp.
- Address envelopes to those people with your parents and put stamps on now ... It's one less thing to do when you're busy at camp!
- Practice doing more things on your own like making your bed, picking out your clothes, etc.
- Make sure your parents sent all of your camp forms in!

- Get in touch with your pen-pal. Ask him/her questions about him/herself. Talk about shared interests and the things you're excited about trying at camp!
- Make sure you and your parents have everything you'll need to pack – look at the list and check things off.
- Practice the camp daily schedule (wake-up, meal times, showering every day, bedtime routines).
- Start limiting your "screen time" (TV, video games, etc.) so that you're feeling ready to jump right into your fun- filled, electronics-free camp life!



**MONTH
BEFORE CAMP!**

WE'LL SEE YOU SOON!



FAMILY PLANNER

A FEW REMINDERS TO KEEP ON YOUR RADAR BEFORE CAMP!

FINANCIAL

Invoices will be coming via mail and email before each planned payment date. The first half installment is due on March 15, and the second half on May 15. Please let us know if you have any questions at all about payment or would like to speak with us about setting up a payment plan.

MEDICATION

We will be working with a new med packaging company this summer called PackMyRx. We made this change as a result of feedback from you about a need for improved customer service. PackMyRx is a smaller company working with fewer camps and one local pharmacy that will translate to smoother experience for camp families. We are excited about the move to PackMyRx and require full participation from Akeela families to help make medication administration run smoothly. More information about PackMyRx will come in March, and please put this toward the top of the to-do list to ensure timely delivery of your child's medication.



PHYSICAL EXAMS

Every camper is required to have a physical within 12 months of their arrival at camp. Going to the doctor soon? You can access the Physician's Exam and Immunization Forms through the CampMinder portal (Family Log In link at campaakeela.com) in the "Forms & Documents" section. Please remember that a doctor's signature is required on the Physician's Exam form.



FORMS, GLORIOUS FORMS!

The Family Handbook will be coming to you in March, along with a list of required forms for your camper's participation in camp. More information on how to access and complete the forms will come with the Handbook.



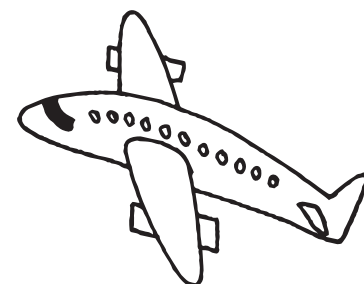
AKEELA GEAR

Instructions for how to purchase Akeela gear will be sent with the Family Handbook. We are using Lands End again this year, and you're welcome to get started on making any purchases through them today! Here is the link to purchase Akeela gear: <http://business.landsend.com/store/campaakeela/> As a reminder, we require one 1 white or grey Akeela T-Shirt to be purchased through Land's End.



TRAVEL PLANS

Will your camper be flying into O'Hare on opening day? Camp families are starting to make their travel plans, so please give us a call when you are ready to start booking your camper's trip to Chicago!





MIKE'S MIC

Hello Akeela Campers!

During the school year, I get to meet so many new campers who are joining our community. I have the opportunity to talk with them about their passions, experiences and unique ways they see the world. Most new campers ask me, "Will I meet other kids like me?" I respond with "will you meet fun, interesting and kind kids? Yes, you will!" They get so excited to hear about those of you who have enrolled this summer and that they will find someone who matches their unique interests. I am so excited every year when I get to see new and returning campers meet as strangers on the first day of camp and leave as friends!

I really hope everyone's school is year going well and first semester's report card came back as hoped. Kevin and I have been working hard on thinking about how we can make camp even more fun and exciting this summer. We have had the pleasure of welcoming back a lot of the great returning staff and meeting new faces that are going to bring new energy to our community!

See you all soon!

Mike

Year Round Professional Development

One of the most common questions we get from our friends and family is "If camp is just in the summer, what do you do the rest of the year?" It's a fun question, because there is so much we can share about the work that goes into making each summer a life-changing experience for our campers. One of the most important things we do is focus on our own professional development to ensure we're in tune with the newest trends in the youth development industry and fine tuning our staff support and training strategies.

Our most recent opportunity for professional development came in January with Dr. Deborah Gilboa (Dr. G), a leading developmental pediatrician who led a session on self-care for our amazing Akeela staff members. Dr. G has many resources available on her website askdoctorg.com and we encourage you to check them out!



WINTER BIRTHDAYS

CAMPERS

Daige D, January 21
Luc S, January 28
Mya M, January 30
Ryan C, January 31
LZ S, January 31
Charlie H, February 21
Elena Q, February 21
Jared B, February 2
Luke P, February 2
Zachary S, February 11
Zachary P, February 14
Jacob M, February 18
Aditi S, February 19
Jack S, February 25
Devin P, March 8
Kate W, March 9
Rainie P, March 11
Gabriel C, March 20
John A, March 24

STAFF

Zak M, February 11
Eleanor A, February 18
Erin S, February 25
JR H, March 6
Meam H, March 12
Julian J, March 20



CAMPER REUNION REMINDER! MARCH 8TH IN ADDISON, IL!

Akeela campers and family members are invited to join us for an afternoon of sharing fond summer memories and bowling! We have reserved a few dedicated bowling lanes and a sectioned off gathering space for Akeela campers and their families. Lunch will be provided for all campers in attendance.

A Few Details....

Where: Stardust Bowl, 37 E. Lorraine Avenue, Addison, IL 60101

When: Sunday, March 8th, 2020 from 1:00pm – 3:00pm

RSVP here:

<https://campaakeela.com/current-families/wi-reunion-rsvp/>

REFER A FAMILY, GET AKEELA SWAG!

We are excited to announce our Akeela Camper Referral Program! All enrolled families that refer a camper who enrolls in camp this summer will have some sweet Akeela swag delivered to their door before camp! What will you get? See the pics below...



As you can see, Mike and Kristin are excited for camp and to meet some new families! We'd love your support in continuing to build the Akeela Wisconsin community and appreciate you helping spread the word about Akeela in your hometown.

Feel free to get creative with this! Want some brochures to share with a parent group? Have a local camp fair in your hometown? Let us know and we'll send some materials your way.

Upcoming Events

- **March 8: Camp Akeela Information Session**

Mike and Kevin will be sharing the Akeela experience through an information session to prospective families in the area. Know a family in the Chicago area interested in camp? This is a great way for them to get to know what Akeela is all about!

10:30am – Watt's Center, Glencoe, IL

- **March 8: Akeela WI Camper Reunion**

Haven't registered yet? It's not too late! RSVP here:

(<http://campaakeela.com/current-families/wi-reunion-rsvp/>) if you're able to make it.

1:00pm – Stardust Bowl, Addison, IL

- **March 10-12: Tri-State Conference**

The whole Akeela team will head to the biggest camp conference in the world at the American Camp Association's Tri-State Camp Conference. It is a special few days of sharing and learning, all with a focus on making camp better for everyone. This year Kevin will be presenting with Eric (Akeela Vermont co-director) about starting a new camp community!

- **May 9-10: IECA Conference**

Kevin will be representing Camp Akeela & Beyond Akeela at the Independent Educational Consultants Association conference in Connecticut this Spring.

