



CAMPER NEWSLETTER

It's Springtime! The trees are green again, we're leaving our coats behind when we go outside, and we're starting to imagine ourselves paddling around Miller Pond!

Right now is the time to *really* prepare yourself for summer! Below is an example "to-do list" with space to add your own tasks, maybe it's learning the rules of D&D before summer, or practicing putting your head under the water!

	<i>my Camp To-Do List</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Make a list of all the activities you are excited to try</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Write down any questions you have and ask your grown-ups to help email them to us!</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Practice doing more things on your own: brushing teeth & hair, showering, applying deodorant, making your bed...</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Ask to see the camp packing list, and think about what to bring. Is there anything on the list you need to shop for?</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Look at the camp schedule online, and practice following it try waking up at 7:30, eating at 8, 12 & 6, and even taking a rest hour at 11!</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Remind your adults to complete the camp forms!</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Set limits on your screen-time, since there are no screens at camp! What else can you spend free time doing? Reading, writing, drawing...?</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Collect addresses for people you'd like to write to this summer, and pre-address & stamp envelopes!</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Gather any (small) games/crafts you'd like to bring to camp to share with bunkmates during free time.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Print a few favorite pictures of family, friends, or pets that you'd like to hang near your bed!</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

Akeela 101

Terms you might hear around camp

Counselor

A counselor is a staff member whose job it is to be with your bunk all day! They'll live in your bunk, go to activities and meals with you, and help you with whatever you need!

Specialist

A specialist is exactly like a counselor, but instead of spending activity periods with you at your activities, they are at their own area *facilitating* for other campers, like swim, or ropes. You'll have 2 specialist counselors.

Evening Meeting

After dinner, the whole camp gathers at our amphitheater. After Debbie and Eric make a couple of announcements, it's a time for campers and counselors to recognize the achievements of other community members.

Evening Meeting is also when we read from the suggestion box!

Suggestion Box

If you have an idea about improving Akeela, you'll write it down and put it in the suggestion box! You might suggest a new activity, a group project we can all work on together, or anything else that helps Akeela be the best it can be. Debbie and Eric read all of the suggestions and often share some of them out loud (anonymously) with the entire community at Evening Meeting.

WHAT TO EXPECT ON THE FIRST DAY OF CAMP

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. 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 as possible. 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 family 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 your 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 in a camp van directly to camp. It will take approximately 2.5 hours to get to Akeela.

If your grown-ups are **driving you to camp**, you will be dropped off at 2 P.M.. Your counselors will be there to meet you at your car and help you carry any last-minute items you have brought with you. You, your family, 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, **Pam & Chuck**, so that they can give you a quick "health check" to make sure you're healthy!
- Our great Chef, **Chef Trina**, will give you a small preview of her cooking skills and provide a delicious snack for you and your new friends to enjoy.
- There will be some time after everyone arrives for each bunk to hang out 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 amphitheater and you'll get to hear from **Eric, Debbie & Erin**, 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, Eric, or Erin 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 your 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 11th! We're so excited for an amazing summer at Camp Akeela. See you soon!

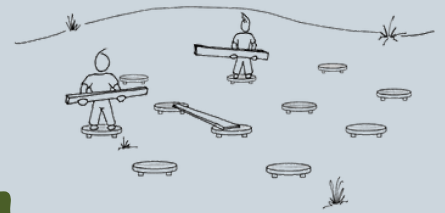
What's New for 2023?

If you're a returning Akeela camper, you probably already have a "favorite thing" at camp - maybe it's the art barn, the zipline, or the library - and those things are awesome! At the same time, we want to always be improving Akeela, and making sure campers have fresh, fun activities and challenges to conquer each summer! That's all part of what makes coming **back** to camp so wonderful.

We're thrilled to announce some new exciting activities and facilities for Akeela 2023:



At the low ropes course, campers will find some great new elements: the **up-and-over wall (left)** and a versatile new challenge called **The Meuse (right)**.



At high ropes, we're also planning to add **crate-stacking**. You're harnessed-in so it's super safe, and the goal is to stack as many crates as possible, while you're also ON them!

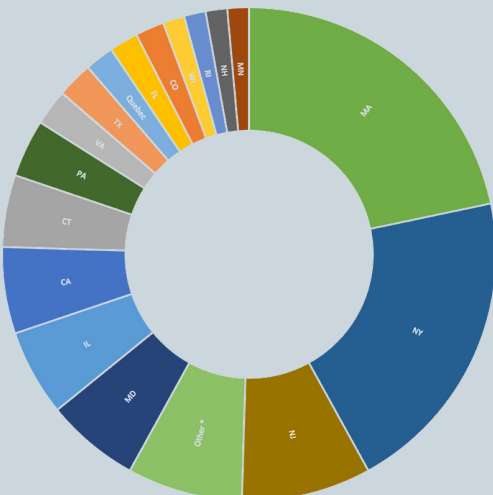


At the lake, we have replaced the slide with an even cooler inflatable. It's called **The Power Tower** and includes a huge slide and an aqua climbing wall!



And as we announced in the last newsletter, we're also adding **PICKLEBALL!**

We are gearing up for an amazing summer!



Akeela Campers: Where Do They Come From?

You might have to zoom in on the image, but as you can see from the graphic, we come from all over!

The *Other category includes:

* AL, DC, GA, KY, LA, ME, MI, OH, OK, UT, VT & Peru

Our staff this year are coming from all over the U.S., plus Ireland, England, Scotland, Mexico, Cyprus, Germany, Poland, and South Africa!

What is a Head Counselor, and who are the 2023 HCs?

Your head counselor is another adult, in addition to the counselors who live in your cabin, who you will get to know very well this summer. Head counselors have lots of camp experience and oversee one of our age groups at Akeela (Junior camp, Middle camp, Upper camp or Senior camp). They make sure that campers are having the best possible time at camp, as well as keeping in close touch with campers' families, so they know how well you're doing at camp. Most of all, your head counselor will be there to have fun with you, to help you when you need it, and to share an incredible summer with you! Below is a quick introduction to this year's head counselors.

Justin Rivera



Justin (he/they) is from New Jersey, where he works in an elementary school, and has spent summers at camps for nine years. Justin loves community living, and help teens gain life skills to successfully enter adulthood. He will be returning to Camp Akeela for his third summer as a Head Counselor. When Justin is not busy working with students, he loves being a dance theater artist, yoga instructor, and writer. He loves to go on trail walks and long hikes in New Jersey, reading on a comfy chair, and a casual game of chess!

Favorite Book: *Upstream* by Mary Oliver Place I'd Like to Visit: Barcelona Favorite Camp Food: Cookout Burgers

Courtney Smith



Courtney (she/her) is proudly from North Carolina, and calls Raleigh home. She is currently a K-5 Special Education teacher and loves her class! When Courtney first came to Akeela in 2019, she fell in love with camp, and the amazing friend she met there. This will be Courtney's fifth summer and when she's not at Akeela, you can find her cheering on the NC State Wolfpack in various sports, volunteering, or playing in an adult sports league. Courtney also enjoys catching up with staff friends around the world throughout the year and just got back from Ireland where she met up with lots of international staff members from various years at Akeela!

Favorite Book: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* Place I'd Like to Visit: Portugal Favorite Camp Food: Brookies

Jake Ferguson



Jake (he/him) has been working at Camp Akeela since 2017, in a variety of roles, and worked his way up to becoming a Head Counselor. He was born and raised in Washington State, but came to the East Coast for college and has been here ever since. He currently live and works in Vermont as a special educator. He loves soccer, backpacking, and swimming, and you will find him running all over camp in flip-flops because he doesn't like wearing sneakers!

Favorite Book: *Invisible Cities*, Italo Calvino Place I'd Like to Visit: Gates of the Arctic National Park Favorite Camp Food: Grilled Cheese

Nicole Frederick



Nicole's (she/her) first summer at Akeela was in 2014, and she has kept in touch with the community and been trying her best to return ever since! In Nicole's school-year work, she works as a music therapist and mental health counselor. She particularly enjoys working with adolescents and this will be her second summer as a head counselor. Outside of work, Nicole enjoys playing the violin in community orchestra, doing yoga, being outside, and playing with her dog, Juniper, who is from the farm around the corner from camp!

Favorite Book: *Walk Two Moons*, Sharon Creech Place I'd Like to Visit: Costa Rica Favorite Camp Food: Good Old Grilled Cheese

A TYPICAL DAY AT AKEELA

SCHEDULE											
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7:30 Wake up

Campers get dressed, make their beds, brush their teeth and wash for breakfast

8:00 Breakfast

Campers eat as a bunk

8:30 Clean-up

Counselors guide campers as they help bunkmates keep their bunk neat and clean

9:00 Group Meetings

Campers meet daily as a bunk with counselors and key staff to discuss bunk concerns, individual and group goals, and to preview the day's schedule

9:15 First Activity Period

Bunk groups go to activities together with their cabin counselors

10:15 Second Activity Period

11:15 Down-Time

Counselors supervise free play, and campers wash for lunch

12:00 Lunch

12:45 Rest Hour

and preview of afternoon schedule

1:45 Third Activity Period

2:45 Snack

3:00 Specialty Period 1

Campers choose their favorite activities to attend even more often

4:00 Specialty Period 2

5:00 Shower Time

6:00 Dinner

7:00 Evening Meeting

The entire camp community meets to recognize camper achievements, read from the suggestion box, and look ahead to upcoming activities

7:30 Evening Activity

A mixture of all-camp events, special interest exploration and small-group games

8:30 Snack & "Day In Review"

Campers enjoy a healthy snack while participating in a nightly bunk check-in activity

Bedtime varies depending on age

but camp is quiet from 9pm onwards to allow younger campers to get the rest they need



Hi everyone, I'm Pam and I am so excited to be a nurse at Camp Akeela this year!

I have been an RN (registered nurse) for 36 years, mostly working with children.

I haven't worked as a nurse at camp before, but I have volunteered at camps, and they are so fun!

I have two children, five grandchildren, and a little doggie who you might just see around camp!



Hi, I'm Chuck (he/him)! I've been an RN for over 17 years in Northern Idaho, and I am ready to meet all the campers and help them with their medical needs!

I love golfing, being outside, swimming, and making new friends. I heard about Akeela from a friend of mine who has worked there for a few years, and I just had to see what he was talking about!

