

KINGSWOOD CAMP INFORMATION PACKET

2012 SEASON

WINTER ADDRESS

7101 Clarden Road
Bethesda, MD 20814
Phone & Fax: 301-656-8406

E-mail: Bob@kingswoodcamp.com
Web: www.kingswoodcamp.com

SUMMER ADDRESS

949 Route 25C
Piermont, NH 03779
Office Phone: 603-989-5556
Camper calling: 603-989-5435
Fax: 603-989-3114

E-mail: Bob@kingswoodcamp.com
Web: www.kingswoodcamp.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. From June 15 through August 31, the Directors may be reached at camp. Except for an emergency, please call us during office hours, 9AM to 1PM; 3PM to 5PM Monday through Saturday at 603-989-5556.

2. As a general rule, we do not permit the boys to call home. However, an occasional call from parents to their sons is permitted. **603-989-5435**. The boys are accessible to the phone exclusively at mealtimes: 8:00-8:30 AM, 1:00-1:30 PM, 6:00-6:30PM. PLEASE DO NOT CALL JUST PRIOR TO THE MEAL. More often than not, the boys have not yet arrived at the dining room and they cannot be paged. Since many calls are received during these times we ask that conversations be limited to seven minutes. It is the camp's strong feeling that you should allow about ten days to pass before you initiate the first call. By this time, boys will be largely acclimated to camp and fewer breakdowns (at either end!) are likely to occur. Note that Wednesday and Saturday evening cookouts often render the boys far away from the phones and difficult to page. Sunday mornings, too, we provide a continental breakfast and boys come down to eat any time between 8AM and 9:30AM. Typically, we don't answer the phone on Sunday morning. Also, on occasion, we give the boys an extra 30 minutes or even an hour of sleep-in time, thus delaying breakfast.

3. We have a dedicated FAX line. This line is open 24 hours a day for incoming messages only. The FAX should be used for business purposes or emergencies only: (603-989-3114) With the lone exceptions of birthdays or very important family matters, E-mails are not to be sent to the boys but rather to camp personnel. Campers, too, will not be afforded the use of the camp E-mail unless the directors deem it appropriate. Our E-mail address is Bob@kingswoodcamp.com. Each boy will write a letter home at least once a week. We encourage parents to write often, as your sons appreciate hearing from you. To get him to write you more often, arrange a "one-for-one" letter writing bargain! Additionally, keep an eye on the camp web site at www.kingswoodcamp.com, "Bob's Blog" for regular updates from the directors, both written and photographic.

4. If you have a summer address that is different from your regular address, please notify us to this and the telephone number along with the appropriate dates. Itineraries of trips involving parents are appreciated, too.

5. The balance of the tuition is due May 1 and you will receive an invoice from us during April. We must have payment before your son may attend. Kingswood's refund policies are as follows:

- * refund of deposit -- deposit refundable through March 1 of the current year and thereafter applied to next summer's tuition
- * refund of camper tuition after May 1 and before camp begins -- no refund is made unless a subsequent enrollment fills the spot made by the cancellation
- * tuition adjustment due to a prearranged shortened session -- patrons may request tuition be based on a daily adjustment schedule.
- * withdrawal for health reasons (upon the recommendation of the camp doctor) -- financial loss will be shared equally between camp and parents
- * withdrawal by parents after camp begins OR withdrawal by decision of the Directors -- due to fixed costs and expenditures based on definite enrollment, no refunds or reductions can be made.

BAGGAGE AND EQUIPMENT

All campers traveling to camp by means other than automobile must ship their trunks and duffels prior to the camp session. Reason: there seldom is room enough on the bus or van from the airport to camp. To be safe, please plan to have the baggage arrive approximately one week before your son's arrival. You may wish to send appropriate keys or locker combinations ahead of time, too, for safekeeping.

Kingswood has a baggage delivery contract with Camp Trucking Service, PO Box 6310, Avon, CO, 81620 (970-949-0690). This company provides door-to-door service both ways and is available to almost all of you. Details regarding this service are included in the general information mailing.

U.P.S. provides reasonably priced baggage service to Kingswood and we have had good luck with them. However, there are some claims restrictions which you must deal with at your end. We will aid you in shipping luggage home via U.P.S. and bill you for the cost. If you make arrangements with U.P.S. to pick up luggage at the end of camp (i.e., pre-pay) YOU MUST INFORM US BEFOREHAND to avoid double billing.

The enclosed brochure from Everything Summercamp (Everythingsummercamp.com) provides a solution to the perennial difficulty we have with cheap trunks. Recommended: "The Happy Camper" – the model that fits best under Kingswood beds. Larger items and bulky gear should be packed in a duffel bag. For most boys, therefore, a small/medium trunk and a medium/large duffel get the job done quite well. Another standard suggestion we make is that while a boy is welcome to bring personal gear that is important to him (tennis racket, hiking boots – for example,) there is no need for parents to go shopping for expensive equipment for exclusive use at camp. Remember: Kingswood has all the gear necessary to equip boys for all our activities and no camper will ever be excluded for failure to have a personal item. We get more questions about sleeping bags than any other item and the answer is simple – bring it along! Boys use sleeping bags as an extra blanket and on those especially chilly evenings cuddle up inside for extra warmth!

Despite everyone's best intentions, boys misplace tons of gear. This comes as no surprise to any of us, eh? We do our best to distribute lost and found on a regular basis, but the fact remains that quite a bit of stuff gets left behind on departure day. Our policy is to return to you by mail any expensive items we discover (and usually not until late August, when everyone has cleared out,) saving things like shirts and towels until next year and simply tossing out socks and other grubby things deemed not worth anyone's while. Please call us right away if you want us to attempt to track down any specific items. A useful preventative measure would be to discuss the issue of responsibility for one's belongings with your son before camp. The Kingswood Packing List, enclosed elsewhere in this packet, provides additional details.

TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION TO PARENTS

Quite a few families rely on Kingswood to provide transportation for campers between camp and home or pick-up/drop-off points. With arrivals, it is understood that children sometimes may be in the custody of public transportation operators until the Kingswood escort/chaperone arrives. The camp person shall wear a staff shirt and carry a letter from the directors which authorizes the pick-up. On drop-offs, unless a parent is otherwise notified, the Kingswood escort shall remain with the campers until they board the public facility. In the case of officially chaperoned travel, the chaperone will remain in the terminal area until the last camper has been greeted by his guardian.

Whenever Kingswood vehicles are used to transport campers, strict safety procedures are enforced. Boys must wear seat belts, refrain from any horseplay or distracting conduct, and must otherwise obey all requests and commands issued by the staff drivers and supervisors. When a Kingswood van is used for travel to pick-up/drop-off points, a cell phone is carried by the driver to ensure fast communication with the camp in case of any unforeseen circumstances. If it is deemed appropriate, parents will be apprised of these events by phone.

In recent years, we have noticed a significant increase in family requests for special transportation to airports on days other than our normal travel dates. While we always will be sympathetic to your needs, please understand that it presents a hardship for the camp to pull a staffman off the job on these odd occasions. First, we ask that no one book his son on a flight without our pre-approval of the plan. Second, with the exception of the official travel dates we ask that "odd time" travel be on a Saturday if at all possible. Pierson Transportation, the local school bus company who has driven Kingswood boys for years, has welcomed the opportunity to work directly with camp families for special chaperone needs. Call 802-439-5745 or E-mail tpierson_17@yahoo.com and ask for Wade. Be certain to inform us of specific details of any arrangements you make with Pierson.

HEALTH EXAMINATION

Enclosed is a Health Examination form which is to be completed and signed by both you and your physician. We must have this form on file prior to your son's arrival at camp. There can be no exceptions to this strict standard and boys who fail to have this form completed will be examined by the camp doctor (at the family's expense) before being allowed to participate in any activities. **YOU ARE REQUIRED TO ATTACH PHOTOCOPIES OF YOUR INSURANCE CARD AND THE BOY'S COMPLETE IMMUNIZATION RECORD.** Understand that without this complete form with signatures, a hospital may deny treatment to your son.

PARENT NOTIFICATION

In case of emergency, we will contact you as soon as possible via phone. Our healthcare staff will also consult you by phone if we feel your child needs out-of-camp healthcare for more routine concerns (i.e., ear infection, strep throat treatment). We generally will not contact you if your child is seen in the infirmary for routine problems (e.g., skinned knee, headache) that do not require a physician referral. The decision to consult you in these situations is determined on a case-by-case basis by the camp nurse. If this notification notice does not meet your needs, please contact us.

ACTIVITY INFORMATION

Every Kingswood activity, including off-campus trips, is completely supervised by camp personnel. Most activities, too, including morning clinics, special games, trips, and all-camp events are guided by specific written procedures. These procedures are welcome to be reviewed by any parent who requests them. Examples include swim trips to local streams, riflery safety regulations, and the Fourth of July trips to Woodsville.

In only two circumstances is the safety of Kingswood campers relegated to others. Whenever a large group of campers needs to be transported at one time, Kingswood engages the services of a local school bus company, which is certified, insured, and uses drivers who drive year-round for the local schools. I know many of the drivers personally, appreciate their knowledge of local roads and driving conditions, and am fully confident of their skills. Kingswood staff always are on board these buses as chaperones. Expect your son to be riding in a school bus three or four times in a typical three or four week season. The other group to assume direct responsibility for Kingswood boys is the Whale's Tale water amusement park in North Woodstock, New Hampshire. As every camper knows, we spend a full day each session at this haunt. Large numbers of camp staff accompany the boys as chaperones, but certified lifeguards at the wave pool, lazy river and the water slides are provided by the park. I have never questioned their competence.

FOOD AND CANDY SHIPMENTS

We strongly discourage large packages of food and candy being either sent to the campers or brought with them initially. Understand that cabin tensions can be generated by the mere comparison of boys' stashes. Please limit the size of any goodie box to the volume of an average bread bag (12x5x5 inches by my rudimentary mathematical eyeballing.) Plenty of candy/cookies arrives via the mail and it doesn't take much for the situation to get out of control. Some fellow directors think I am crazy to allow any foodstuffs onto the property. Please limit yourself to one food shipment per four week session. And, to answer a question I can anticipate, yes, the size restriction stipulation means **NO SODA** shipments. Without a doubt, your son will bug you for a "care package" shipment. Please limit such gifts to a modest amount of foodstuffs. Please refrain from sending nuts, either alone or in food. Quite a few boys have serious nut allergies and food from you is basically out of our inspection scope. Understand, too, that the food may be kept in the possession of the cabin counselor and, regardless where it is stored, he will supervise an even distribution of the goodies among the cabin group on occasions stipulated by the directors. Please use good judgment in what you must appreciate is a "tricky situation" for us!

STORE AND BANK

The camp “store” is funded by the tuition. Replacement items such as soap, tooth paste, writing materials, batteries and insect repellent are available to the boys as the need arises. Naturally, your assistance in packing an initial good supply of these items is appreciated.

Regarding spending money for off-campus trips, the tuition now covers a cash bank account for each camper. Boys will be granted a generous amount of money as occasions merit. **OUT OF A DESIRE TO BE FAIR TO ALL, WE ASK THAT BOYS BRING NO CASH TO CAMP WITH THEM.**

SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICIES

Campers and parents must understand that Kingswood has a zero tolerance for anyone’s possession of illegal substances and weapons. Also, we do not condone inappropriate items such as pornography, flammable materials, or “play” weapons such as slingshots or Chinese stars. We’ve decided also that boys may not use cell phones or pagers at camp. (There is no reception!) Even nuisance items such as water balloons and shaving cream have scant use at Kingswood and campers are expected not to attempt to use them. While boys are free to keep their possessions under personal lock and key, the camp maintains the right to order searches and seizures whenever probable cause or appropriate suspicion warrants.

With the lone exception of musical devices, boys are asked NOT to bring any electronic gear to camp. Camp is an environment where even inexpensive video games or simple DVD's have no real virtue. What about rainy days or during rest hour, one might ask? "Camp is a great place to learn to play card games," says one Kingswood veteran. Board games, too, have plenty of social value which is totally missing in electronic games. Beyond this philosophical notion, there is also the consideration of safeguarding expensive items boys bring to camp. Kingswood elects to be an open community with very few locked doors and where just about anyone can come and go as he pleases. Thefts of opportunity, therefore, are always available and we are most pleased to acknowledge that they happen very seldom at Kingswood. Best, however, to play it cautious with expensive or sentimental items and simply not bring them into harm's way. **The administration will not get involved with disputes over electronic equipment.** Our best advice is that parents supervise the boys' packing and know what they are bringing to camp!!

DEALING WITH ADJUSTMENT TO CAMP LIFE

The following sentences are taken from the Kingswood Staff Manual and are discussed at length during orientation week before the boys arrive: “Beware that homesickness can strike at any age. The problem for us is not so much to ascertain “why” a boy feels homesick, but “what” to do about it now. The symptoms are easy to spot: apathy, lethargy, lack of appetite, tears. Sometimes a boy will be straightforward with you and tell you he is homesick, while at other times he will invent some excuses, usually unfounded (“No one likes me,” or “It’s boring here.”) The best approach in either case is to give the boy a sympathetic, understanding ear and get him to acknowledge the truth. Once you gain his trust, get the boy to turn his attention to the positive forces of camp while acknowledging the occasional need to return to the homesickness issue. Always try to keep the conversation positive. Be sure not to give the boy permission to call home or to leave camp early. Please do not bring homesick boys to me unless I have asked you to. You may assure any boy, however, that I am fully apprised of the situation and will speak to his parents and describe his concerns to them. Lastly, follow up regularly until the homesickness begins to dissipate – in most cases after only a few days.”

Many boys require several days to fully adjust to camp life. Do not be too concerned if the first letters home contain several negative thoughts. Letter-writing, naturally, takes place during down time, the most likely moments for pangs of homesickness to creep into one’s conscience. If things do not improve by the two-week mark, please contact me, although it is most likely we’ll have identified problems at our end well before this time.

Before your son leaves for camp, even, you can lay the groundwork for a quick adjustment to life away from home. Rather than reassure your son that he will probably not be homesick, acknowledge that it could happen but is no big deal. When preparing for camp, keep the dialogue positive and under no circumstances tell him that if he is homesick or does not like camp he may leave. Instead, remind your son that homesickness is like a headache – it surely is unpleasant, but short in duration and rarely disabling. Thus prepped by you, a boy who experiences temporary and expected discomfort will have a much less difficult adjustment to camp.

GOOD PARENT STRATEGIES

Parents, too, need an adjustment to camp life! It's only natural that you, just as much as your son and perhaps even more, will feel the pangs of separation. The best strategy for you is simply to rationalize: camp is a wonderful growing up experience for your son that will enhance his prospects for success down the road when he one day leaves home for good. By all means enjoy the very short time period you are apart. The time passes exceptionally fast and he'll be home before you know it. While we at camp have no problem with an occasional phone call from you to him during meals (see page one,) we strongly urge you not to overdo the privilege. Boys who receive fewer calls from their parents are no less loved than ones who do. They know this, believe me. Sometimes, honestly, boys are embarrassed when they realize everyone sees how many calls they are getting. And, please don't ever call when you fear you are the one who may break down upon hearing his voice. Call me instead for a report in this circumstance. On the other hand, do not abandon your son either. Kids love mail (regular hand-written letters -- something very rare to them in this age) so keep the cards and envelopes coming. One "care package" too per session is fine, but don't overdo this privilege either. As cited elsewhere in this package, do not allow your son to manipulate you while away from home. Lots of boys, otherwise as sweet as the day is long, will resort to this obvious tactic to maintain an edge over you!

DISCIPLINE

The Directors reserve the right to dismiss any camper whose conduct warrants such action. This qualification enables us to maintain our high standards and ensures you that your son will be camping with boys of fine character.

While we are very proud of the cooperative boys we have at Kingswood, occasionally campers get into scrapes which require intervention by the directors. In these rare instances, we will both call you and write a letter to describe your son's difficulties and steps we are taking to remedy the situation. A fair but firm approach to discipline safeguards the good intentions of the large proportion of our community.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Campers traveling to Kingswood by car should arrive on Sunday (June 24 or July 22) after 9:00 AM but before 3:00 PM if possible. The departure dates by car are Saturday, July 21 and Saturday, August 11, anytime in the morning hours. Special arrivals/departures should follow the same "time of day" suggestions cited above. Directions to Kingswood can be found on the last page of this packet.

FAMILY WEEKENDS

Our Family Visiting Days have been scheduled to correspond with the closing of each regular session. Parents and siblings are cordially invited to arrive at camp at 3:00PM on the afternoon of Thursday (July 19 or August 9) to greet your sons and later to take them out for dinner. Please do not invite friends of your son to join you unless those boys have received permission from their parents. On Friday, parents are welcome on campus from 10AM to 5PM to both observe and participate in a regular camp day. Dinnertime and the evening events are special, and are for the boys only. Families driving boys home may return Saturday morning after 8AM to pack up and depart. If you are unable to attend for any of the above, fret not -- all the boys enjoy the final days of the session. P.S. While we do not have official visiting days for odd-time departures, parents are most welcome to hang out a bit and capture that essence of Kingswood!

CHECKLIST:

- * TRAVEL ITINERARIES E-MAILED TO BOB@KINGSWOODCAMP.COM
- * BALANCE OF TUITION DUE MAY 1 (Receipt of tuition acknowledges parental awareness and acceptance of the camp's procedures and policies explained in this information packet.)
- * NON-AUTOMOBILE ARRIVING CAMPERS HAVE LUGGAGE ARRIVE ONE WEEK EARLY, INTERNATIONALS EXCEPTED
- * HEALTH EXAMINATION FORM RETURNED (signed by physician and parent)
- * CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION SHEET RETURNED BY JUNE 1