

# NETOP PARENT HANDBOOK



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## Welcome to Netop

Choosing to send your camper to overnight camp is a big step. Your child will learn valuable life skills, build strong connections with new friends and counselor role models, and have a real camp experience living in our platform tents away from their screens and technology.

Thank you for choosing Netop for your child this summer. We look forward to a “top life experience” where growth comes natural. Every camper feels their value in our small and focused community.

This handbook will help parents and campers learn more about Netop and be prepared for the upcoming season. Although we call it the “parent handbook,” it is extremely important that you share this information with your camper. Whether you are new to camp or a returning face, we want to ensure that you have the best experience at camp. We have done our best to answer the most common questions about our policies and procedures at Netop.

A reminder that camp forms are due by **May 15** and balance payments are due by **May 1**. All forms are located in your [CampBrain](#) account and you can make your payments there as well. Read through the checklist on the next page to make sure that you have not forgotten anything.

If you still have questions after reading through the handbook, please do not hesitate to reach out us.

We can't wait to see you on opening day!



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## Parent Checklist

*Use this checklist to ensure you have completed the planning steps for camp.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Pay final balance and incidental fees by May 1
  - Credit card or ACH payments through your [CampBrain](#) account
  - Checks can be mailed to:
    - (Before May 25<sup>th</sup>) 1105 Royal Coachman Blvd, Dillon CO 80435
    - (After May 25<sup>th</sup>) 12 Netop Rd., Casco, ME 04015
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit camp forms by May 15 (found in your [CampBrain](#) account)
  - Health history & Health history Addendum
  - Waiver & Liability Form
  - Camper information
  - Camper incidentals (includes bed kit option)
  - Travel confirmation (if arriving by public transportation)
  - Copies/Photos of Health Insurance Card (Front & Back)
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit physical exam & immunization history (exam within previous 12 months of camp)
  - Upload on [CampBrain](#), or scan/email to: [tom@netopsummercamp.com](mailto:tom@netopsummercamp.com).
  - Form typically supplied by physician; i.e. *school/camp/sports "participation" form*
  - Alternate form available in your CampBrain account under "Upload Documents"

*If your son has a late doctor appointment, please complete/send the form prior to camp.*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review packing list
  - Packing list can be found on our website: <https://www.netopsummercamp.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2020-Netop-Packing-List-copy.jpg>
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Order clothing and supplies from MCO (Maine Camp Outfitters); follow [Camp Store](#) link
  - *Required* items include two gray Netop tee shirts and a Netop laundry bag
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review Code of Conduct with camper(s)

## Philosophy, Mission, and Inclusion Statement

### Netop's Mission

Our mission is to be a place where boys unplug, connect, and experience outdoor fun. Our **close-knit community**, **natural environment** and **Four Spokes philosophy** create a powerful path for growth in character, confidence, responsibility, and friendships. We use camp to build great young people.

### The "Four Spokes" Philosophy

Netop's Four Spokes philosophy encourages well-rounded growth in four areas of life: mental, social, physical and spiritual.

**Social** – develop empathy, team skills, communication skills, friendships, community service

**Physical** – improve fitness, develop practical skills, and practice positive sportsmanship

**Mental** – develop responsibility, leadership, confidence, resourcefulness, creativity, problem solving, and good judgment

**Spiritual\*** – strengthen values, build character, appreciate nature, and inspire others

When these "four spokes" are balanced and strong, a person will live a more complete and satisfying life. This philosophy guides the values, program, and day-to-day life at Netop.

**Goal Setting:** Each camper will be assigned a goal-setting mentor. The counselor mentor will assist the camper in developing specific and realistic goals in each of the four spokes. Campers will be encouraged to achieve their goals during the camp season and throughout the coming school year. This process establishes a lifelong tool that can benefit the camper well into the future. Parents can play a supportive role in helping to reinforce this developmental growth at home. Counselors reinforce the process with a mid-year letter home to each camper, as a reminder of the goals they set at camp.

*\*Netop welcomes and respects people of all faiths. The spiritual program includes grace before meals, an informal weekly (non-religious) chapel service, and brief evening tent discussions or "reflection".*

### Inclusion Statement

Netop Summer Camp strives to be a model of diversity and inclusion. We respect, value, and celebrate the unique attributes, characteristics, and perspectives that make each person who they are. Together we work to ensure that everyone, regardless of ability, age, cultural background, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender identity, ideology, income, national origin, race, or sexual orientation has the opportunity to find space in the Netop community.

We are committed to continuing work on our inclusion practices and making sure that everyone feels socially, emotionally, and physically safe at camp.

Having a close-knit community is part of Netop's mission and everyone in our community should feel their value at camp.

## Roadmap to Camp – Fostering Wellness at Netop

In thanks to a well thought out plan and following the guidelines laid out by the CDC, American Camp Association (ACA), American Camp Nurse Association (ACN) and the state of Maine, we were able to operate safe and successful programs the past few years. We are working towards another great and healthy summer based on what we have learned since then and where we are currently in the COVID-19 pandemic.

All of these considerations are subject to change. This is a snapshot of our thinking if camp were to open next month, based on what we know now from science and best practices. Modifications will be based on updated and relevant scientific research, CDC, State, and local guidelines. Our community's safety will be at the forefront of all decisions. It is important to know that last summer our thinking was "if" we get COVID-19 in camp. Our bubble this year will be more imperfect than last summer, in an attempt to bring back some of the programs and policies that we had to put on hold in previous summers. Our considerations for this summer will still focus on the "if," and COVID-19 prevention. We will also need to be extra prepared for "when" COVID-19 makes its way to camp.

### Vaccination Status

**Staff:** All of our staff are required to be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations.

**Campers:** We have a responsibility to create a safe environment for your campers, their peers, and our staff. We understand that getting vaccinated is a personal decision and we want to be sensitive to everyone's situation. While we are not requiring camper vaccination currently, we strongly believe that the benefit to the Netop community makes the vaccination worthwhile. We are strongly encouraging our campers to be up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations.

### NPIs at Camp

Our safety plans this summer rely on many NPIs (non-pharmaceutical interventions) such as handwashing, social distancing, and importantly our camp "bubble." Each of these NPIs adds a layer of protection. We also understand that one layer alone cannot be perfect, which is why having multiple layers is important.

### Testing

We will be providing rapid antigen tests for anyone at camp who shows signs or symptoms of COVID-19 while at camp. We are following similar protocols to school districts and universities around the country. If we get a positive COVID-19 test, we will test anyone who had direct contact with the positive case.

### Cleaning and Disinfecting

We will have enhanced cleaning and sanitizing around the camp facility throughout the summer. We are making significant updates and improvements to the sanitation and overall hygiene of camp. All cleaning products will be EPA / CDC approved to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### Handwashing and Sanitizing Stations

Campers and Staff will be instructed in proper hand washing techniques and will be required to wash their hands regularly throughout the day. Alcohol-based sanitizer will be used during times hand washing is not available or easily accessible. Hand washing/sanitizing will be required:

before and after each activity, before and after eating, after sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing, after using the restroom and after using any shared equipment.

## Masks

We will not be requiring campers or staff to wear a mask on a regular basis. Per CDC guidelines, if a camper or staff member is exposed to COVID-19, we will ask that they wear a mask for days 1-10 when indoors or in close proximity to others, no matter of vaccination status and depending on possible symptoms. If a camper or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, they will be asked to wear a mask for days 6-10 (no matter of vaccination status) when indoors or near others.

We are still asking that everyone bring 8-10 well-fitted KN95 masks with them to camp in case of a COVID-19 breakout, the positivity rates in Cumberland County increase to the High red zone, or if circumstances change and we feel that it is necessary to mask-up in certain camp situations.

The CDC has recommended [guidance](#) on the best masking choices. Please follow the guide below when selecting masks to bring to camp. All masks must have TWO or more layers of fabric. We **DO NOT RECOMMEND** gaiters that have to be folded into two layers, please use gaiters with two layers built in.

## Pre-Camp Preparation

A healthy camp begins at home! We are asking our camp families to be partners with us so that we can start each session with a healthy group of campers. What you do before camp will contribute to our success this summer.

- In the 10 days prior to arriving at camp, we ask that campers engage only in **low-risk behaviors** to limit their exposure. Campers will need to limit exposure to others and avoid large gatherings where mask wearing and social distancing are not enforced (higher risk activities may include graduations and graduation parties, weddings, year-end parties, sleepovers, sports tournaments etc.)

## Travel to Camp

It is preferred that campers travel to camp by personal vehicle. If a camper is planning to fly to camp, we recommend that they wear a face covering and maintain social distancing at all times during travel.

## Opening Day/Closing Day

Both opening and closing day will feel more like they used to, and families will be allowed in Tent Row. On closing day, we will present awards, watch the session slideshow, and eat lunch outside (weather permitting).

## Response Management

In the event someone does fall ill at camp, we will work with our medical team to create a multi-staged quarantine and isolation procedure that will allow us the time to determine the best response, including whether the ill camper will be able to rejoin the camp population.

We will be following the CDC guidelines for quarantine and isolation:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>

	Days 1-5	Days 6-10
<p>If a camper tests positive for COVID-19 regardless of symptoms or vaccination status</p> <p>*Day 1 is the first full day after a positive test result.</p>	<p><b>Isolate</b>  We will have an area at camp for campers to stay away from others during this period. Parents can also pick up their camper for the 5-day isolation period.</p> <p><b>Masking</b>  The camper will be masked if they must be around others.</p>	<p><b>End Isolation</b>  If the camper is fever-free for 24 hours and other symptoms are improving, they can end their isolation.</p> <p>If the camper was very sick or has a weakened immune system, we will have them remain in isolation or have their family pick them up.</p> <p><b>Masking</b>  The camper will be masked for all activities and events, indoors or outdoors.</p>
<p>If a camper is exposed to COVID-19, no matter their vaccination status.</p>	<p><b>No Quarantine</b>  The camper can stay in their tent and continue their normal schedule as long as they are symptom-free.</p> <p><b>Masking</b>  The camper will need to be masked around others, indoors or outdoors.</p> <p><b>Testing</b>  The camper will get tested on day 5, whether they have symptoms or not.</p>	<p><b>Masking</b>  The camper will continue to mask until day 10.</p> <p><b>Symptoms Check</b>  The camper will check in with the nurses for a symptom check every morning.</p>

### Parent/Guardian Communication

As always, Netop strives to communicate with parents in a transparent, thoughtful and thorough manner. Knowing the importance of communication this summer, we are committed to open dialogue and communication with families every step of the way.

- Parents will be kept well informed throughout each session about COVID testing, isolation and quarantine measures if required while respecting privacy and HIPPA rights of all campers & staff. We will continue with the traditional forms of communication such as photos and blogs.
- If a camper or staff tests positive for COVID while in our care, we will notify all parents with campers on site via email and identify the specific measures we are taking to address the situation.

### Additional Questions

If you have any questions about this summer and our plans, please reach out. We are here to talk through any questions or concerns you have. Give us a call at (516) 458-7012 or email us at [lisa@netopsummercamp.com](mailto:lisa@netopsummercamp.com).



## Arrival & Departure

### Arrival days

The arrival/drop-off time at Netop is between **1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.** on the first day of each session. If you arrive earlier than 1:00PM without prior notice, you will be asked to wait in your vehicle until we are ready.

Parents will pull up to camp and be guided by our staff members to the welcome stop. Then you will be sent up to the parking area. A staff member will help you park and help you unload. Luggage will be taken directly to your camper's tent and families can proceed to the check-in tent. Check-in with the Camp Directors, speak with the camp nurses, purchase Netop gear, and then head up to Tent Row to help move your camper in.

We ask that you do not linger - Our staff are great at making campers feel welcome! We suggest preparing your camper for this and giving a long hug before you arrive at camp. If your travel plans require a different arrival time, please let us know. The camp address is: 12 Netop Road, Casco, ME 04015. If your plans require an overnight stay, lodging reservations should be made well in advance, as there are many camps in the area.

### Departure days

We welcome you to join us for a Family Morning at Netop when you pick up your camper.

- Parents/Families invited to arrive between 10:00A-10:45A
- Closing Ceremony 11:00A-11:30A
- Lunch Buffet & Slideshow 11:30A-12:45P
- Campers/Families depart by 1:00PM

Expect all events to take place outdoors. Counselors will be available to assist campers to pack and load luggage into vehicles. If your travel plans require an early morning departure, please let us know.

### Mini Camp A & B

Mini Camp concludes on a regular camp day, so all campers are in full swing with the camp program. We invite parents to arrive after lunch (between 12:45P-1:15P) to pick-up their camper.

### Arrival/departure by plane, train or bus

For campers arriving/departing by public transportation, Portland Maine offers the closest and most convenient access point. Several major airlines fly into Portland and bus/train service is also available. Arrangements to pick up or drop off campers must be made in advance and a transportation form must be filled out. A fee will apply for transportation to/from Portland, ME or Boston, MA. We ask that families DO NOT book their flight until the times have been approved by a Camp Admin.

Campers will be picked up at the airport by 1-2 Netop staff members. We will let families know within 24 hours of your child's departure who will be picking up your campers and their direct contact information. If your child is flying as an unaccompanied minor, our staff will meet them at the gate (or whatever protocols the airline has laid out). If your child is not an unaccompanied

minor, we will meet them at their baggage claim. Campers will drive to camp in one of our camp vehicles (mini-van or Transit van) and they will be given a quick safety orientation for riding in a camp vehicle.

We will do our best to keep track of your child's flight information on the day of, but we ask that you communicate any changes via text, phone, or email with the Camp Director as soon as possible. Boston is 2 hours away and Portland is 45 minutes away from camp, so the sooner we know of changes and delays, the better.

## Health Care

Your son's health and safety is our top priority. The services of our registered nurse and the use of the camp health center are included in the tuition. Whenever the attention of a physician is required, boys will be taken to a local physician or hospital, as appropriate.

A comprehensive health form is required for each camper. The health form contains the following key parts:

1. Health History – completed online by the parent (in [CampBrain](#))
2. Physical exam form – a separate form supplied by the camper's physician, attesting to a health exam within the 12 months prior to camp. Standard physician sports/camp/school participation forms are acceptable. Alternatively, the physician may sign the American Camp Association form; found [HERE](#).
3. Immunization history – immunization record from physician showing type, date and dose given for each immunization. Note: If your child has not had a pertussis booster (typically given between the ages of 11-13), we recommend that you discuss this with your physician. In addition, please ensure that your child has been immunized against measles. We are strongly encouraging that campers be up-to-date on their COVID-19 vaccinations.
4. Insurance – Medical insurance coverage must be provided by each camper's family. A copy (*front and back*) of the camper/family health insurance card is requested. All campers must have proof of medical insurance to attend Netop. Any co-pays or doctor fees will be billed to the family. Some local doctors do not accept out-of-state insurance for campers, in which case full payment to the doctor is required and parents may submit a subsequent claim through their insurance provider.

All medical records are confidential. Any special medications or dietary needs should be discussed directly with the camp nurse upon arrival, if possible.

**Contacting Parents for Medical Issues:** Either the camp director or nurse will contact parents if the camper:

- is taken into a medical facility for evaluation or treatment.
- If a camper runs a fever over 100 degrees F for longer than 8 hours
- spends the night in our Health Center
- COVID-suspect and COVID-positive cases
- Anytime a tick is found on their child
- anytime an as-needed medication is given and it becomes consistent for 2-3 days
- head injury.
- Dental issues (broken teeth, broken braces, etc.)

**Emergency Contacts:** The camp health form includes an area for two emergency contacts. We will make every attempt to notify parents in an emergency. If you will be away from your home and/or office for even a few days during your son's camp session, please notify the camp director in writing regarding your travel plans and itinerary.

**Medications:** All prescriptions and over-the-counter medications brought or sent to camp must be in the original packaging/bottle, labeled with the physician's instructions, the name of the

medication, and the dosage. Please repeat these instructions on the camper's health form. All medications and/or vitamins will be held by the camp nurse and will be administered by medical staff at camp.

**Health Screening:** During check-in, we ask that all family members meet with our nurses. They will verify and update health history information to identify any medication, changes in health status or special needs requiring follow up, and review/collect any medications to be dispensed during the camper's stay at camp. Within the first 24 hours after arrival to camp, the nurse will conduct a health screen on each camper to check for any observable evidence of illness, injury, or communicable disease. Please check your child for head lice before camp and let us know if he has been treated for lice during the months before camp. If head lice are detected in the initial camp screening, a fee up to \$350 may be charged for required treatment.

**Inherent Risks:** Accidents, injuries, illness, and insect bites may occur in the natural course of participation in camp activities and trips. The camp stresses safety and preventive measures in all areas of camp operation. Parents should instruct campers to follow camp rules and apply safeguards such as use of sunscreen, bug spray, and proper footwear as well as practicing good hygiene, staying hydrated and getting proper rest.

**Special Medical Needs:** The camper Health Form provides the initial opportunity to communicate special medical concerns that may require attention or care by the camp nurse. We also encourage direct communication with the nurse to help clarify special medical needs, related to conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy or other chronic health issues. Netop's approach is to provide routine health care and treatment services through our on-site nurse staff, while engaging local physician support for care or emergencies that require specialized treatment.

**Mental Health & ADD/ADHD Medications** – An increasing number of children are on medication for ADD/ADHD, depression, anxiety, or other conditions. These medications allow a child to take advantage of all that a school environment has to offer. Camp is no different in this regard, but some prescribing physicians may take a child off medication during the summer. There are pros and cons to this approach and the right decision depends on the child and circumstances. Many times children at camp need their usual dosage or more, given that stimulants, for example, are often metabolized more quickly in warm weather or active children. Camp provides a wide range of great activities, some of which require careful attention to safety and risk management; for example, archery and sailing. If your son is currently on a medication and you are planning a change in that medication any time up to six weeks before camp, please discuss it with us. Working together, we have the best chance to help your child have a safe, happy and memorable time with us.

**Mental, Social, Emotional Health at Camp** – We do our best to create a safe environment for your camper. We take into account their physical, mental, social, and emotional safety. We do not have a mental health professional on staff currently. If your camper is in therapy and would like to continue their sessions while at camp, we can provide a space for them to do so. We keep our ratios small (1:5) to allow for to have more opportunities for one-on-one attention. Please prepare your camper that camp is an amazing and special place, and there will be a lot of "new" that can affect sensory-sensitive kids – living in close quarters with others, cheering and singing at meal times, etc. We want your child to have the best experience possible – the more that you communicate with us before camp, the better. Use your Camper Information Form to let us know of any concerns that you have for your camper while they are at camp.

## Communication

**Mail:** Campers love to get mail. Letters and cards from home are encouraged. Mail will be delivered to campers on a daily basis (except Sunday). The camp mailing address for letters is:

**Netop Summer Camp  
12 Netop Road  
Casco, ME 04015**

Each camper is required to write a letter home at least once per week. It is very helpful if you send pre-addressed, stamped envelopes to simplify the process.

**Email:** Messages to campers can be accepted via email to *camper@netopsummercamp.com*. However, campers do not have access to computers and, therefore, cannot reply electronically. We will distribute email messages along with regular mail. We prefer handwritten letters and we ask that any incoming emails be limited to a maximum of 1-2 per week.

**Telephone calls:** Our policy is that campers will not receive phone calls at camp. Some campers have a difficult time adjusting to camp after talking with their relatives or friends on the phone. In case of a family emergency or camper birthday, please contact a Director to arrange a phone conversation with your son. The main number for the camp is 207-627-4510, Lisa Thatcher's cell phone is 516-458-7012 and Tom Thatcher's cell phone is 516-458-5761. Parents are welcome to call and speak with a Director at any time; even for a brief check-in. A member of the leadership team will also be in touch with all first-time families during the first week of their camper's session.

**Packages:** Please do not send care packages with food, candy, or beverages. Do not have your child arrive with food, candy or beverages, including energy drink packets. Food attracts animals and bugs and can create a health hazard. Campers receive ample and well-balanced meals and snacks throughout the day. We appreciate your cooperation and ask that you inform friends and relatives about this policy. If there is an essential item that a camper needs (clothing, reading material) please limit these packages to **one** per session. The opening of any package received will be carefully supervised by staff and all food products will be removed.

## Electronics, Money & Camp Store

**Electronics:** Netop is “unplugged”. One of the great features about being at camp in the middle of the Maine woods is the opportunity to disconnect from our assorted electronic gadgets. Netop campers stay busy with a wide range of outdoor activities and social interactions. Therefore, **all** electronic devices are to be left at home. This includes: cell phones, personal music players (iPods), radios, e-readers, CD players, laptops, portable video games, smart watches and electronic games. Should campers arrive to camp with electronic devices, we will store these safely in the camp office for the duration of the session.

**Money & valuables:** In general, we advise against sending cash with your son. The one exception is for “senior” campers (entering school grades 9,10 and 11). Seniors may want to have a small amount (for example, \$30 per session) of pocket money for special outings such as the Senior Beach Trip. They can sign this in at the camp office at the start of the session and we will give it to them for the trip. There is no need for campers to have valuable items at camp, including expensive watches. Therefore, we recommend that these items be left at home.

**Gratuities:** We request that families do not offer tips for staff members and instead, consider a gift in a staff member’s name to the Netop Scholarship Fund. We appreciate your thoughtfulness, but gratuities are not necessary or encouraged.

**Camp store:** Netop has a small camp store for snacks and beverages. The store is open several times each week. Camp store privileges are included in tuition; there is no separate fee.

## What to Pack

The [Packing List](#) gives guidance on how to pack for camp. In general, **try not to over-pack!** There is limited space in the tents and campers are more comfortable – and can keep better track of things – if they have only what they need. PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING and do not send anything to camp that your camper wouldn't be upset if it got dirty or lost. We do our best to help campers keep track of their belongings, but it's not a perfect system.

**Bedding:** Campers sleep on comfortable cots with mattresses. Campers may bring their own bedding or we offer a ***Bed Kit Rental*** option if you want to lighten your load. This includes a complete bed kit (two sets of sheets, blanket, pillow, mattress pad, laundry bag and bug net for the bed) for a nominal rental fee. Bed kits can be reserved on the Camper Incidentals form (in [CampBrain](#)). A sleeping bag is recommended for camp-outs, but should not be substituted in place of sheets for the regular bed at camp.

**Netop apparel:** Netop apparel is ordered directly through Maine Camp Outfitters (MCO). You can access MCO's catalog through the "camp store" link on the Netop website or [HERE](#). Or, you can call MCO at 800-560-6090 or 207-348-2459. Note that campers will need at least two gray Netop tee shirts, plus a Netop laundry bag. All items are shipped directly to your home (except international orders are shipped to camp). Please place orders by May 15, if possible.

**Laundry service:** Each camper changes his clothes daily and bed sheets weekly. Laundry will be sent out weekly for each camper and it will be returned the following day. Please mark your son's name on each item. The camp is not responsible for clothing, equipment and other personal items that are left behind, misplaced or damaged.

**Shipping luggage:** Camper luggage (camp trunk or duffel) may be shipped to camp via UPS. The shipping address is: Camper Name, Netop Summer Camp, 12 Netop Rd., Casco, ME 04015. It should be timed to arrive approximately 2-3 days before the session begins. If you wish to have the luggage shipped home at the end of camp, please send a pre-paid shipping label to: Lisa Thatcher, Netop Summer Camp, 12 Netop Rd., Casco, ME 04015. This label should be purchased at the time of your shipment to camp.

## Daily Life at Netop

**Camper code of conduct:** *(Please review at home with your camper.)* Netop is a community where all campers and staff live together in a safe, fun and respectful environment. Each person has a responsibility to contribute in a positive way to the community. We expect behavior that includes respect for others, good sportsmanship, being a good team player, following instructions, respecting the belongings of others and offering encouragement. Behaviors considered unacceptable include bullying, causing another person to be uncomfortable, hitting or fighting, foul, abusive, and racist language, destroying property, stealing or tent raids. We expect campers and staff to be helpful and friendly and uphold the Netop ideals to make the experience successful for all. Unacceptable behavior can result in dismissal from camp, without a refund.

Campers SHOULD NOT be in the possession of alcohol/drugs and/or weapons (knives, guns, etc.) at any time while at camp. If a camper is found to be in possession of these items, it can result in dismissal from camp, without a refund. To see a full list of what not to pack for camp, see the packing list.

**Tent assignments:** Campers live together by age groups and share most meals together. Tent assignments for campers and counselors are determined just before camp begins. We consider requests, however, we cannot guarantee that your son will be in a certain tent with specific people. In fact, we encourage hometown friends and relatives to branch out whenever possible. Camp provides endless opportunities for friends – new and old – to be together and have fun.

**Daily schedule:** While each day at Netop can bring something new, here's the flow of a typical camper day.

7:30 a.m.	Reveille/Exercises/Flag raising
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:40 a.m.	Tent clean up
9:00 a.m.	Instructional activity 1
10:00 a.m.	Instructional activity 2
11:00 a.m.	Instructional activity 3
12:30 p.m.	Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Rest hour
2:30 p.m.	Afternoon activities/special events/team sports
4:00 p.m.	Open waterfront/free swim
5:30 p.m.	Free time
6:00 p.m.	Dinner
7:00 p.m.	Evening activities & programs
9:00 p.m.	Reflection time
9:15 p.m.	Taps/bedtime (seniors have late privileges until 10:00 p.m. most nights)

Note: Campers sign-up for morning activity periods in four-day blocks. Campers will be encouraged to try new things, but they may also decide to repeat activities to build skill.

### Morning Activities:

We offer a variety of activities giving our campers lots of choice to pick and choose things they like, that they want to try, and that they want to get better at. A Bradley Cooper, Michael Phelps or a Cristiano Ronaldo might *attend* Netop, but it is not our goal to find them and develop them. We want to make our activities interesting, with a chance for our campers to remain interested throughout their Netop life. To that end, certain activities are 'reserved' for older campers, giving the younger campers something to look forward to and to keep them wanting to



come back to reach the next level of activities they can do. On the other side, we have activities that are offered to every camper at every age, and we make sure that the skill or challenge level keeps building so that year after year they don't just repeat what they did; they learn more or improve. Broadly speaking, our activities fall under 4 general categories:

- Land Sports – soccer, volleyball, conditioning/weight training, basketball, badminton, tennis, lacrosse, rugby
- Water Sports – swimming & water games, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, Lifeguard
- Creative Arts – woodshop, leathercraft, woodburning, drama games, photography, painting, origami, Dungeons & Dragons, rockband, guitar
- Adventure/Outdoor Pursuits – archery, bouldering, mountain biking, woodsmen

### **Trips**

This is one of the best bonding experiences for our campers. Trips are offered for all age groups and each trip depends on what is appropriate for that age group. For our Juniors and Intermediate Is, everyone in the age group goes, including the counselors. For the Intermediate IIs and Seniors, it is highly encouraged for all campers to attend the trip being offered. Below are the kinds of trips that we do with each age group in a typical season:

- Juniors – Day trip to a local state park. Return to camp and camp out either on the beach or at our Three Rocks Campsite. Dinner is a camping cookout.
- Intermediate I – Day hike in the area. Return to camp and camp out at our Three Rocks Campsite. Dinner is a camping cookout.
- Intermediate II – Potentially a more advanced day hike that includes a campout off-site. 8<sup>th</sup> graders are offered a fishing trip as well.
- Senior I – The Island trip is offered to Senior Is during first session. An advanced day hike is offered during second session.
- Senior II – Katahdin/Rafting trip is offered to Senior IIs during first session. Mount Washington (or similar) is offered during second session.
- Senior III – A trip to North Conway, NH is offered during first session and Acadia National Park is offered during second session.

There are also a handful of day trips such as the Senior Beach Trip, a mountain biking trip, and a climbing trip offered throughout the summer.

## Missing Home

Dr. Christopher Thurber defines missing home as the distress or impairment caused by an actual or anticipated separation from home. These feelings relate to fears of the unknown, fears of failure, fears of loss of loved ones, and overall anxiety. Missing home is common and it usually manifests in stomachaches, headaches, misbehaving and statements of “disliking camp and missing home”. Generally, it lasts for a short period of time and the camper adjusts to camp by feeling familiar with his surroundings, schedule, friends and counselors. The key to dealing with missing home is to try and prevent it by preparing your child before camp. Here are a few tips and suggestions:

- Discuss the camp schedule and what camp will be like and give him a chance to voice any concerns he might have.
- Plan sleepovers with friends and relatives to help him get used to being away from home.
- Please do not tell your child that you will “rescue” him from camp if he doesn’t like camp. He will hold onto this thought into his camp session and it could prolong his feelings of missing home.
- Try not to mention how much you will miss your son. Instead, emphasize how proud you are of him and how excited you are about his camp opportunity.
- Send a letter to your child before camp so that he has a letter waiting for him at camp.
- Let your child bring a favorite stuffed animal or family photo so he can feel comfortable in his new surroundings.

If your son sends you the dreaded “I hate camp and I want to come home” letter, please consider the following when writing a letter in return:

- First, don’t panic. Your child may simply have expressed those feelings when he wrote the letter several days earlier. By the time you receive the letter, chances are he is already having fun and adjusting well.
- Since camp is an opportunity for your child to grow, mature and gain independence, tell him you love him very much and you have confidence in his ability to cope with his feelings and overcome any anxiety. It is important to be calm, reassuring and consistent.
- Acknowledge your child’s feelings by writing him, for example, “you seem scared (or lonely or sad). Have you talked with your counselor about how you are feeling?” Encourage your son to take advantage of all the activities at camp and focus on simple goals he can attain. Design your letter to acknowledge his feelings but move on to questions about what he can accomplish and achieve at camp. Please avoid ending your letters by saying you miss him or what he may be missing at home.
- Do not make promises like, “I’ll pick you up from camp next week if you’re still unhappy”, or, “I’ll call you on Tuesday at 4:00 p.m.”. These statements will only prolong his feelings of missing home, not reassure him of your love.

Research has shown that 95% of all children miss something about home while away at camp and missing home is a sign that your child comes from a place of love and good feelings. Even though homesick feelings are common, most kids enjoy themselves tremendously at overnight summer camp. Missing home, and working through it, is a normal process that helps children develop independence and self-confidence.

### Recommended Readings

Please think of us as a parenting partner. We have a common interest – the growth, safety, and happiness of your son(s). Good communication between campers, counselors, parents and directors is essential. There are many excellent books on parenting and child development. Here are a few books that you may want to read:

- How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk, by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish
- The Blessing of a Skinned Knee, by Wendy Mogel, Ph.D.
- Raising Cain, by Michael Thompson, Ph.D. and Dan Kindlon, Ph.D.
- The Summer Camp Handbook, by Christopher Thurber, Ph.D. and Jon Malinowski, Ph.D.
- The Childhood Roots of Adult Happiness, by Edward M. Hallowell, M.D.
- Get Out of My Life, by Anthony E. Wolf, Ph.D.
- Positive Discipline, by Jane Nelson, Ed.D.
- Homesick & Happy, by Michael Thompson, Ph.D.
- Last Child in the Woods, Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder, by Richard Louv
- Bob Ditter articles – [www.bobditter.com](http://www.bobditter.com)