

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

CONGRATULATIONS – your child has just been accepted to an incredible leadership camp because a teacher recognized their strong leadership potential. Participating in an overnight camp is a wonderful experience with so many lasting benefits, including the building of self-esteem and confidence ... along with great fun and lasting friendships.

Should you have any questions at all about our program, please do not hesitate to contact us.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR BEING AWAY FROM HOME - In most cases, children easily integrate into camp and very quickly make new friends without any problem. Our students are coming from schools all over Nova Scotia and it is rare that they already know someone. And so - immediately on arrival, every one of them is looking to make a new friend. The first couple of hours are spent meeting roommates, unpacking and exploring campus on supervised tours. Our first session on arrival day is packed with lots of fun activities designed for all of us to get to know each other to begin our incredible week together.

HOMESICKNESS - For some, Catapult is the first time away from home, which can lead to some anxiety. If you receive a call from your child expressing strong feelings of missing home, let them know that you understand their feelings - but communicate your confidence in their ability to cope with being away. Then call us to discuss the situation. If your child is taking time to adjust, their counselor will already be paying special attention and providing loads of positive encouragement. Our staff are well trained to recognize the signs of homesickness and are prepared to teach coping methods. With support from camp and home, the majority of homesick students end up enjoying the week immensely and they proudly feel a huge sense of achievement. In very rare cases, a shortened stay may be considered. Never suggest this to your child until a decision has been made with us - or they may more easily give up trying and will miss out on an opportunity of a lifetime.

SAFE ARRIVAL NOTIFICATION – Students are encouraged to call home on arrival or before

bedtime on our first day. If they don't have a cell phone, another phone will be made available to them. Of course – please feel free to call us yourself should you be experiencing your own anxiety!

CELL PHONE POLICY – Our student agreement requires all students to hand in their cell phone on arrival. They are kept in the Camp Director's office. Students will have 3 opportunities to sign out their phone during the week (ARRIVAL day, MONDAY and THURSDAY). They can access a counselor phone to call home if absolutely necessary. Although students don't enjoy handing over their phones at first, our prior Catapulters admit they are glad we enforced it as they felt it strongly enhanced their camp experience and decreased homesickness. Our purpose is to provide the experience of being unplugged for a week – away from friend's "drama" back at home, away from the endless interruptions of texting, and away from the isolating effects of the device. Instead, the students devote all their attention to the program, to the variety of experiences offered, and to each other. The bonds they form as a result are very strong and truly meaningful.

FREE TIME - Every day at camp is well-structured and very busy, with a wide variety of fun and relevant activities. Each day also has scheduled 'free time' during which there are always optional activities to choose from. Counselors are assigned to supervise our accommodation area as well as the activities. Students may also choose to walk into the town of Wolfville (only a few minutes from campus) where they will find a few shops and convenience stores. All town visits **MUST** be done in groups of at least 3 students and must be confirmed/approved by a Counselor.

ACCOMMODATIONS - Catapult has the exclusive use of Dennis House for the week, which is adjacent to Wheelock Dining Hall where we eat our meals. The ground floor of Dennis has plenty of common area space where the students can play cards, board games or ping pong, jam with their musical instruments, and "hang out". The Camp Directors and Nurse live on the 2nd Floor and are accessible to students at all times. Male-identified

students and counselors occupy the 3rd floor, with female-identified students/counselors on the 4th floor. Students are asked to remain on their assigned floor. Each floor has several washrooms with showers as well as a laundry room. Each floor also has a small kitchen area (stocked with healthy snacks) and private lounging area. Access to the building is controlled by security key-cards. Wheelock dining hall is cafeteria style with lots of healthy choices. It has been extremely popular among our students and is a beautiful facility.

HEALTHCARE and MEDICATIONS – Catapult’s Nurse is with us and on duty 24/7. All medications are presented to her upon arrival at camp and normally kept and dispensed by her. If your child requires any medication (prescription or non-prescription), please ensure that it is clearly labeled with the student’s name as well as clear written instructions as to how it must be dispensed. Should your child be required to keep any medication on them (e.g. an asthma inhaler), please provide instructions on our health form. Should any health concern arise during camp, our Nurse will contact you as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION DURING CAMP - Phone calls to your child can interrupt our busy program and homesick children usually do not benefit because hearing parents’ voices can make the situation worse. Therefore, we discourage telephone calls to the students unless urgent.

If you want to check in, you can reach us any time, at (902) 830-5704 or (902) 233-0014. You may go direct to voicemail during scheduled sessions in order that we do not disturb our speakers and/or facilitators; however, your call will be returned during a break period. Alternatively, you can send a text or email your inquiry to 902-830-5704 or lori@catapultcamp.com. Please note - our email will typically only be checked once per day. Also, we can only offer an incoming e-mail service - students will not be able to reply directly.

You should not be surprised if you don’t receive a phone call home. Generally this means your child is having so much fun with their new friends and enjoying a whole range of exciting activities that there is no time to call! Phone check out is scheduled for Friday, Sunday Monday and Thursday evenings; however, special access can be granted any day if deemed absolutely necessary to call home.

ALCOHOL, SMOKING, DRUGS - We maintain a very strict policy that students are not allowed to smoke or drink alcohol at any time. This policy applies to all staff as well, and is reiterated very clearly on the first evening of camp. Should your child possess or use any drugs at camp, other than those prescribed for medical reasons, the police (and you) will be notified immediately.

COMPLIMENTARY TRANSPORTATION – Camp transportation is provided using licensed carriers. A large Coach bus originates in Sydney, stopping at various points along the way to pick up students. A bus originating in Halifax/Dartmouth, meets the Sydney bus in Lower Sackville. Large vans cover the “valley route” from Yarmouth and the “south shore route” from Shelburne. You can choose to bring your child yourself (either one way or both ways). Our transportation schedule is prepared after all registrations are received. You may expect to receive written instructions by mail in early July. On travel day, we do our best to stay on schedule but if traffic conditions create delays, we will do our best to notify you.

Acadia University’s front lawn



Dennis House - our residence

Cape Blomidon, our view from dining hall

