PARENT HANDBOOK

Summer camp since 1948 at Candle Lake Sask.

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WWW.CAMPTAPAWINGO.NET

WELCOME MESSAGE:

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Welcome to the Camp Tapawingo Family!

There are many choices of activities to sign children up for these days. Choosing to send your child to summer camp can feel fun and exciting or maybe a bit nerve-racking for a parent, especially these days when we're all so connected digitally to our children.

I have been involved with Camp Tapawingo since the late 70's as a young camper myself, then as a staff member, board member, camper parent and now with my dream job of helping run camp all year round! I can speak from experience when I say that camp is a truly valuable experience for children and youth. I see it every summer. Kids just being kids, playing outside in nature, getting off of screens and devices to swim in the lake, sing camp songs and make genuine and real connections across the table with each other. One day at camp is like a week in the 'real world'. There are so many opportunities each day for children to practice vital social and personal skills.

We are truly honoured that you have chosen Camp Tapawingo to be part of your child's journey. Entrusting us with your camper is a meaningful decision, and we are grateful for the opportunity to create an experience that we hope will be fun, enriching, and unforgettable.

At Camp Tapawingo, we believe camp is more than just a place — it's where friendships are formed, independence is practiced, confidence grows, new skills are discovered, and lifelong memories are made. Maybe not all kids will become Tapa-lifers like me, but, having a summer camp experience is what personal growth is made of.

Our dedicated staff and board are committed to ensuring every camper feels safe, supported, and inspired to try new things and be their very best selves.

Thank you for placing your trust in us. We can't wait to welcome your family and begin what promises to be an impactful and joy-filled camp experience.

Terry Linsley

ABOUT TAPAWINGO

Tapawingo was founded at Candle Lake by a small group of United Church ministers and their young families back in 1948 to provide an experience of fellowship in nature. We are proud to be a United Church camp. The United Church of Canada is a progressive and liberal Christian institution that advocates for social justice issues and environmental advocacy and promotes a more compassionate and inclusive community for all.

MISSON STATEMENT

Our purpose at Camp Tapawingo is to provide campers with the opportunity to know and grow in relationship with God through Jesus Christ and with each other while living in a natural setting.

OUR VALUES

We acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting ground, gathering place and historical regional homeland of the Métis and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Dene and Nakota Sioux.

We are an inclusive and welcoming space for all. While some people at camp are from the United Church, many are not. The United Church and Camp Tapawingo are welcoming to all and allow everyone to be their true selves, regardless of religion, gender, sexual orientation, race, socioeconomic status, or ability.

OUR GOALS

The word Tapawingo means “a place of happiness”. Our goal is to help all experience and take this happiness with them when they spend time at Tapawingo.

We try to achieve this goal in two ways:

1. Provide an opportunity to live in community with peers. Being a part of something bigger than ourselves allows for personal growth and self-reflection.
   - We work to foster an environment where we treat each other how we would want to be treated, have fun together, and make deep friendships while building a camp community.
   - We provide some Christian-based time through Spiritual Care Time, Vesper Service, or Chapel in the woods in a fun "camp way' while being inclusive to all and no pressure to adopt Christian ideology.
   - We choose and train staff who will be good role models to our campers and encourage all to treat others in an inclusive, tolerant and supportive way.
2. Providing an experience in nature. Summer camp has so many opportunities for building deep connections and friendships through common experiences in *real time*.
   - Being in nature is one of the best ways to explore oneself, connect to the world, and become part of something bigger.
   - Valuing time without screens-- camp is an amazing opportunity to have fun and make friends while experiencing the natural world around us, without the pressure of technology.

STAFF

All of our staff have been selected to be part of a team that will provide an amazing experience for your camper. Our program is designed to allow campers to explore, play and connect with each other in nature, with the staff team facilitating, role modelling, and encouraging campers.

BUILDING THE TEAM

At Camp Tapawingo, we're thoughtful and intentional when selecting our staff. We look for individuals who demonstrate the qualities that make them strong team players and positive role models for your children. Many of our staff members return for their second or third summer because they love being part of the Tapawingo community. Many were campers themselves or have participated in our Cabin-Leaders-in-Training program. A large number are university students with a passion for working with children and are pursuing careers in education or related fields. Because our team knows and loves camp, your child will be surrounded by caring, experienced, and enthusiastic role models all summer long.

STAFF TRAINIING

At Camp Tapawingo, staff training is designed to ensure every camper experiences a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment. Our training program prepares staff with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to support campers of all ages and abilities. Staff attend training sessions starting in April through June on topics such as emotional and social development by age, age-appropriate communication techniques, and how to support independence and build campers' confidence. We build teamwork and positive peer relationships among staff and between campers. Staff receive training on understanding neurodivergent campers, supporting campers with ADHD, autism, anxiety, and learning differences. We train to recognize sensory needs and emotional regulation challenges and how to adapt activities to support participation for all campers. Staff also receive 4 days of on-site training before camp starts. We focus on safety procedures and emergency response protocols, supervision standards, and health and wellness procedures.

ON GOING STAFF SUPPORT

Training continues throughout the summer through daily check-ins and briefings, mentorship from senior staff, our camp chaplain, executive director and board members who give performance feedback and coaching and who facilitate problem-solving and scenario discussions. Our staff are also supported in their own mental and physical health by encouraging healthy routines and self-care during the busy summer, which helps them provide the best care for the campers.

HOW TO GET TO CAMP

From the Candle Lake Village site, turn right on the East Candle Lake Road as indicated by the Tapawingo road sign.

Further down the road, just past the Candle Lake Golf Resort, another Tapawingo sign will indicate the left turn into our camp site.

Distance to Candle Lake town site:

Meath Park	41 km
Prince Albert	81 km
Choiceland	97 km
Birch Hills	120 km
Nipawin	138 km
Melfort	176 km
Saskatoon	225 km

Camp #1 PRIMARY 1
Wed. - Fri.
7-9 year olds

Camp #2 JUNIOR 1
Sun. - Thurs.
10-11 year olds

Camp #3 INTERMEDIATE 1
Sun - Thurs
11-12 years old

Camp #4 TEEN CAMP
Sun - Fri
13-14 year olds

Camp #5 PRIMARY 2
Wed to Fri
7-9 year olds

Camp#6 JUNIOR 2
Sun - Thurs
10-11 year olds

Camp #7 INTERMEDIATE 2
Sun - Thurs
12-13 year olds

Camp #8 SENIOR BLAST!
Sun - Sat (10 am pickup)
15-16 year olds only

1 WHAT TO BRING:

- Bedding (sheets and blanket for a single bed, or a sleeping bag; pillow)
- Towels, 2 beach towels and a shower towel for older groups, washcloth
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Warm pyjamas, cool pyjamas
- Bathing suit or two **please make sure your camper has an appropriate bathing suit for water games and activities with good coverage and modesty to avoid those 'wardrobe malfunctions'
- Suitable clothes for warm, cool, and wet weather
- rubber boots and a water repellent jacket in case of rain
- Closed-toed shoes/runners (our site has lots of roots and rocks.)
- Beach shoes (sandals, flip flops, etc.)
- Hat for sun protection
- Bug spray and sunblock or spf clothing or mosquito protection clothing
- Water bottle
- Bible, notebook, and pencil (if you'd like, not a firm requirement)
- Optional: nice outfit for banquet on last night of camp (intermediate age and up)

Do not bring:

- Jewelry
- Money
- Musical equipment
- Cell phones/electronics
- Snacks (food is not permitted in the cabins; snacks are provided)

2 DROP OFF / PICK UP

Drop off:

Wednesday at 1 pm is drop off for primary only

Sunday afternoon at 4 pm is the drop-off time for all other camps.

We know you're excited to get to camp, but please don't arrive early. Gates will open at the drop-off time. (*Camp Tapawingo can not be responsible for campers who are at camp outside of camp drop-off and pick-up times)

When you arrive, you will check in with the director and get your cabin assignment, where you can help your camper get settled in, meet their cabin leader, and share any tips about your child with them.
You will then check in with the medic if you have any medications or special instructions.

Pick up:
Join us on the last afternoon of each camp session at 1:30 pm in the mess hall for parent time. We will recap our week, do some acknowlegments and have a slide show of your camper's week. This is a great time for all of us to connect as a Tapa-family! The tuck shop will also be open if you would like to purchase some Tapa-merch.

All campers must be signed out at their cabin by their cabin leader after the slide show to transfer care back to the parent or guardian.

HEALTH AND MEDICATIONS

At camp Tapawingo, our Lifeguard / Medic is certified in first aid and CPR in accordance with the Sask. Camps Association Accreditation standards and trained in minor first aid administration and documentation. In the case of any serious illness or injury, Parents and the Candle Lake First Responders or Lake Land Ambulance would be called.

MEDIC CHECK-IN POLICY:

- Any campers who are coming with any medications, prescription or over-the-counter (even Advil and Tylenol), will be directed to the mess hall to check in with the medic. Camper's can not keep any medications of any kind in the cabins. All medications must be in the original packaging, and prescription medications must have the label with the camper's name and dosage. Please do not send loose pills in a ziplock bag or pill box.
- If your child has more than one regular medication, consider having your pharmacy bubble pack them to bring to camp.
- If you have any special concerns, conditions or behavioural needs you want us to be aware of, it is important to fill them in on your registration form, and visit the medic and help us to understand your child's needs in order to set them up for success at camp. The camp medic will have a one on one disscussion with your child's cabin leader to make them aware of any needs or tips you have shared for your child's care at camp.
- If your child has severe food allergies or is celiac, please provide alternative food items and check in with the cook. This way you know your camper is getting the food items they tolerate well and that they are used to. Contact the camp office for a copy of the menu.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION RECORD:

- All medications will be kept in a locked cabinet in the Med-Shed with the camp medic. Parents with a camper with any type of medication (over the counter as needed *or* prescription) are required to fill in a MAR (medication administration record). The camp medic will use this form to document any time medication is dispensed. The camp medic will discreetly give your child the medication, but they must take it themselves, including inhalers and giving themselves an epi pen injection if required.
- We stock medications such as tylonol, advil, gravol, tums and will dispense as needed to campers, all will be recorded on a MAR sheet.
- All minor injuries are kept track of on a first aid log sheet. We endeavour to keep all campers physically safe, but also acknowledge that bumps and scrapes are a normal part of outdoor childhood play.

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

- Every camper who attends Camp Tapawingo needs to have a primary contact person who is available during their child's time at camp in case of an emergency or any other situation needing a phone call. We also require a secondary contact in case the primary contact can not be reached. When you check in with the director at drop off, we will confirm these contacts using the information from your registration form. Your child's cabin leader will have you sign your camper in and confirm that you are the one picking up. If you have an alternate person picking up, please write that person on the sign-in /out sheet. If the pick-up person changes during the week, please let us know.
- In the case of a medical emergency or serious injury beyond our camp Medic's basic first aid training, every attempt will be made to contact the primary contact person. The first priority will be contacting Emergency services to support the care of the injured party.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD TO BE A CAMPER

Our goal at camp is to provide an opportunity for all children who spend time with us to have a meaningful, fun-filled experience. While we strive to be accepting and understanding of the differences in our campers, we are also realistic in our awareness that summer camp may not be quite the right fit for some. All guardians are required to read and sign our camper code of conduct for enrollment at camp as part of your registration form. We encourage you to discuss the expectations for campers with your child before they come to camp, as this helps us be able to provide the welcoming and inclusive environment that we strive for at Camp Tapawingo.

Conditions of Enrollment:

- Abusive and/or inappropriate language and actions, harming campers or staff, and destruction of camp property are not tolerated. If, in the opinion of the Summer Director, a camper has displayed unacceptable behaviour and/or has not complied with the rules of the camp and can not be reasonably managed by the staff and is therefore detrimental to the spiritual and mental well-being of other campers and staff, the parent/guardian will be contacted for immediate pick-up and the camper will be sent home with no refund and potentially billed for damage caused to property.
- There is a no cell phone/electronics policy at camp for privacy reasons, as campers live in cabins together, and to help campers unplug and have a genuine experience. Please do not to send these things to camp and understand that promising campers contact is not possible. If these items are brought to camp, they will be held in safekeeping in the safe until pick-up day.

SAMPLE OF A TYPICAL DAY

7:45 am rise and shine bell
8:00 flag up/ morning watch
8:15 breakfast
9:00 daily duties/cabin cleanup
9:30 walk/camp-wide activity
10:00 spiritual care time
11:00 activity swim
12:00 lunch
1:00 rest
2:00 activity group time
3:45 tuck
4:00 free swim
5:00 supper
6:00 cabin group time
6:30 wide games
7:30 Vespers
8:00 snack/campfire
9:00 flag down/ get ready for bed
9:30 quiet time
10:00 lights out / sleep

*primary camp is adjusted after supper to have a 9pm bed time

ACTIVITY GROUP SKILLS

Activity time is an opportunity for campers to spend a session trying something new! These sessions give campers a chance to meet other children outside of their cabin groups and work as a team as they participate together. We keep things simple and true to Tapawingo. We do not offer motorized water sports, intense climbing courses or zip lines. Our goal is to keep things fun and interactive and give campers a chance to try things out and get a taste of something new.

- canoeing/ paddle boarding
- nature exploration
- outdoor cooking and fire building
- disc golf
- gaga ball
- craft and creativity
- archery
- drama/improv

PRE-CAMP WORKSHEETS FOR SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL PREPARDNESS

Camp	
Camp Dates	

Part 1 - Planning with my kid/teen

Pre-Camp worries & how to deal with them	Kid Preparation	Communication Plan	Handling Separation Anxiety
☐ Write out my worries (get a separate paper if needed) ☐ Tour the camp ☐ Go to a camp meet & greet ☐ Watch the camp videos ☐ Read the website Sharing concerns: ☐ Share worries with a family that has already been to camp ☐ Call the Director ☐ Make sure the camp knows my main concerns	☐ Organize some sleep-overs ☐ Can they make their bed? ☐ Can they fold their clothes? ☐ Can they clean up their trash? ☐ Can they brush their teeth? ☐ Can they rinse shampoo out of their hair? ☐ Do they know how to ask for help? ☐ Am I reminding them they are resilient? ☐ Are we practicing methods to soothe ourselves (breathing, hug, etc...)	☐ Leave a note in my kid's luggage? ☐ Write letters? ☐ Send care packages? ☐ Email? ☐ Check camp pictures? ☐ What is the plan to have time together to catch up upon return from camp: Plan:	☐ Do we need a transition object? (Share a sweater with each other to have while we are apart?) ☐ What has helped in the past to handle separation anxiety? Child/ Teen: Caregiver:

Part 2 - Parent/Caregiver Planning

List of worries

Camp-specific support strategies for anxiety	What actions soothe my anxiety?	Making the best of my kid-free time	Gratitude & Journaling
☐ Who is my sleep-away-camp parent buddy (a friend who you can be supported by) ☐ Re-read the website ☐ Re-watch the camp videos Sharing concerns: ☐ Share worries with a family that has already been to camp ☐ Call the Director ☐ Make sure the camp knows my main concerns	☐ Make a list of the specific things that make my anxiety better. (Sports, relaxation activities, sleep, art, spirituality, meditation, etc?) ☐ Plan a few activities in my calendar for when my child is away. ☐ Make a list of the people that help when I am anxious. ☐ Make a plan to call or visit at least 2 of them the first week. ☐ Remind myself that my worries are not truths.	☐ Write a list of things that were fun before I had kids (hobbies, activities, sports, events, outings) ☐ Plan one fun activity per day to look forward to ☐ Is this an opportunity to go on a quick vacation? ☐ If I have other kids at home - can we plan something special to do together? ☐ What restful activities could I do with this extra time? Make a list.	☐ Every day, write 5 good things that happened during the day. ☐ Write a list of all the reasons you wanted to send them to camp (or they wanted to go to camp). Post this list in a place you can see them. ☐ In moments of high anxiety or sadness, write in a journal. Let the feelings flow through you. Keep writing until you feel better.