

L.G. Cook 4-H Camp



**CAMP INFO
AND
WELCOME GUIDE**

NJ4HCAMP.RUTGERS.EDU | 973.948.3550



JUST THE FACTS

SIX DAY SLEEP-AWAY SESSIONS, MONDAY 10AM-SATURDAY 10AM

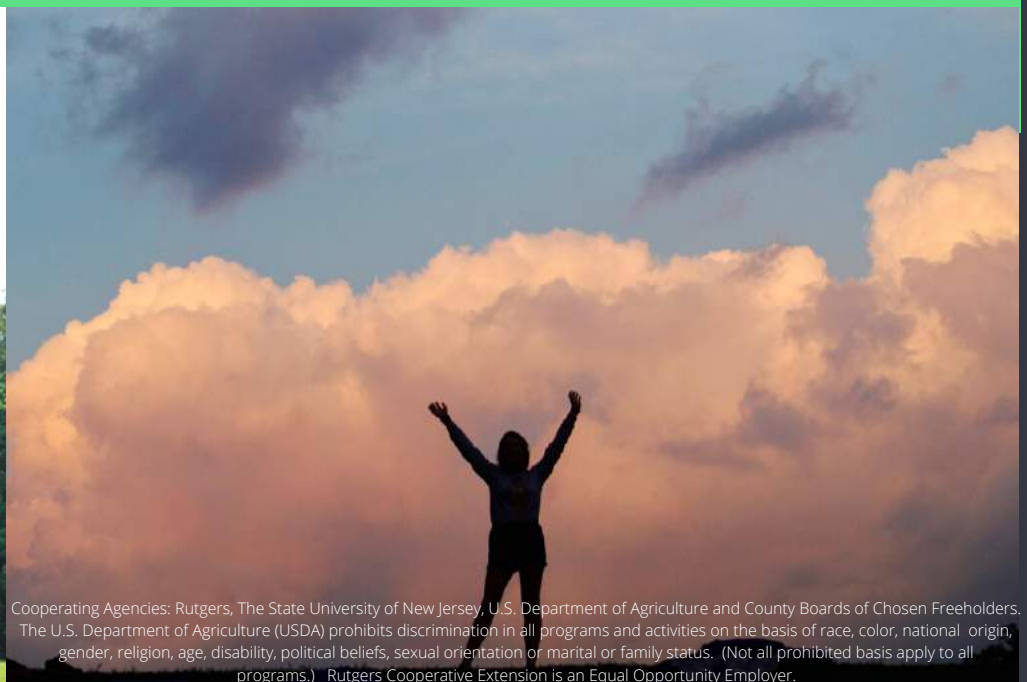
7 SESSIONS, JULY-AUGUST

AGES 8-16

OPEN ENROLLMENT: ALL YOUTH MAY APPLY

A TECH-FREE, RUSTIC SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCE FOCUSED ON MAKING NEW FRIENDS, LAUGHING A LOT, TRYING NEW THINGS AND CREATING A COMMUNITY DEDICATED TO SIMPLY ENJOYING OUR WEEK OUT IN THE WOODS TOGETHER.

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY'S SUMMER CAMP



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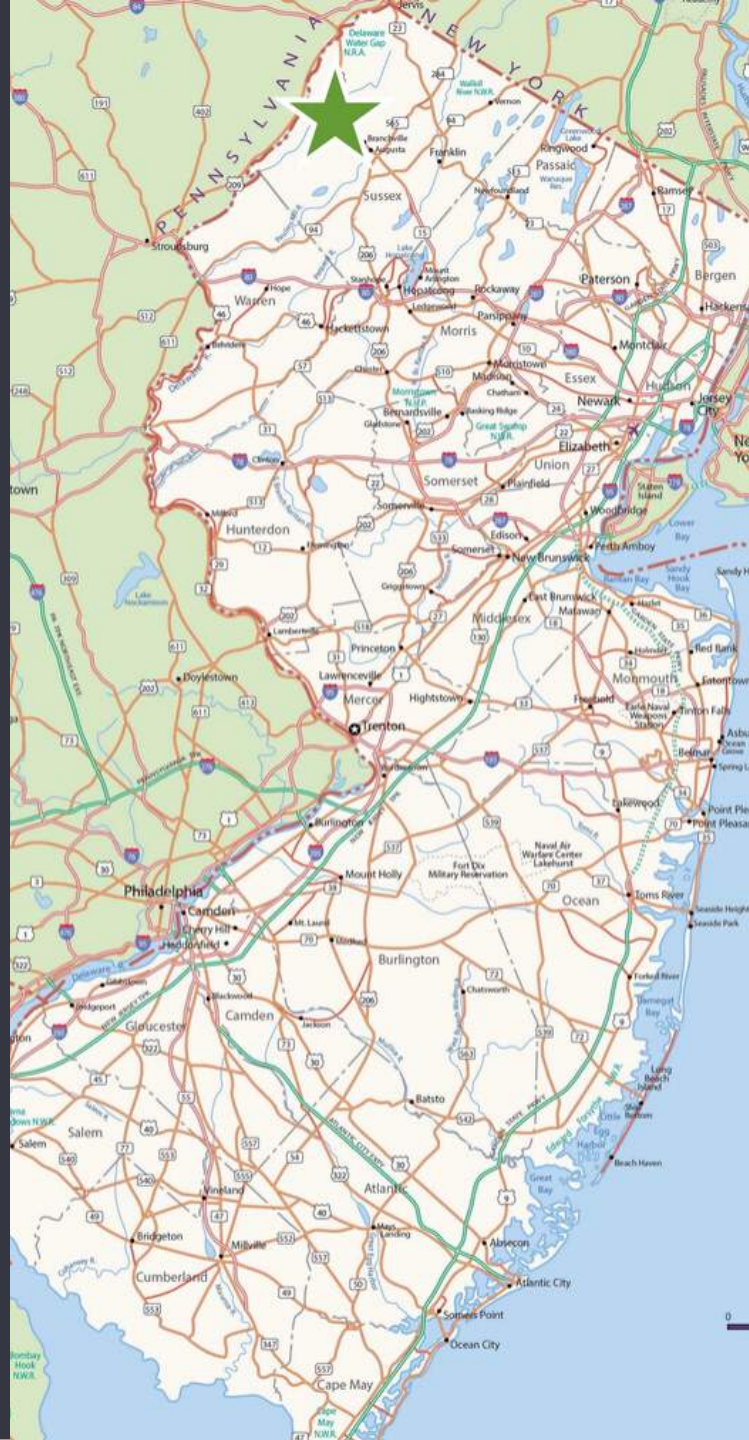
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NEW JERSEY'S 4-H CAMP

We are the state 4-H camp and have been running weeklong, residential summer camp sessions every summer since we opened in 1951. We're an open enrollment camp, open to all youth ages 8-16. The majority of our campers are from New Jersey and the surrounding tri-state area, but each summer we welcome campers from all over the country, and all around the world.





Stokes State Forest, Northwest New Jersey

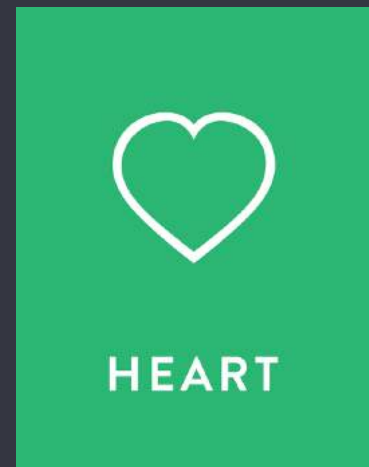
Our facility sits on 108 acres lined with hiking trails beside our own beautiful little lake, [Lake Shawanni](#). In addition to our collection of original and rustic camp buildings, 4-H Camp has archery ranges, recreation fields, campfire rings, and a ton of other areas dedicated to playing outside and enjoying the great outdoors. Though we have a giant stretch of forest to ourselves, Camp Central is quite consolidated, and all of our campers' cabins and main buildings are just a short walk from one another.



4-H CAMP IS OWNED, OPERATED AND MANAGED BY RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION. THE FOUR H'S ARE THE CENTRAL PILLARS TO THE COMMUNITY WE BUILD HERE TOGETHER EACH WEEK OF THE SUMMER.



Head is for our thoughtful and intentional interactions, clear thinking, and responsible decision-making.



Heart is for our open, welcoming environment where campers practice empathy, live together with all sorts of different people, and establish long-lasting friendships.



HANDS

Hands is for the fact that 4-H Camp is a home for all of us, and we all take care of it together. Each camper and counselor strive to be a support to their whole camp family as they work to both maintain our community and keep it moving forward, always searching for ways to be of service to one another.



HEALTH

Health is for the camp lifestyle: days chock-full of running, playing, exploring, eating good food, breathing in the fresh mountain air, and getting a good night's sleep surrounded by the sounds of the forest. Health is also the culmination of all the H's here at Camp, a healthy community we all benefit from and all have ownership of.



THE "1951" EXPERIENCE

"Classic" Camp

We've been running summer camp for 70 years, and endeavor to keep all the things that make camp great the same as they've always been. Simultaneously, each summer we look for ways to improve by adding new programs and searching to discover ways to better serve today's youth and our current population of campers.

TECH FREE

4-H Camp is a 100% tech-free environment (no phones, no screens, the works) for both campers and staff. In what is likely their only truly tech-free week each year, our campers are able to be present in each moment and focus on getting to know the people they're with. Our campers champion our tech-free approach, with our oldest campers citing their time away from social media as one of their favorite aspects of camp.

Beauty of the Six-Day Session

Campers arrive on Monday morning and depart on Saturday morning. In between, we cram in a full summer of fun. Six days is short enough to keep up our energetic pace, but long enough that we can never quite believe how much can fit into a single camp week.



There are 176 campers in a full week of summer camp. This community size is large enough that there's always new friends to meet throughout a session, yet small enough that by the end of the week we've formed one Camp Family.

 Social Education 

THE CAMP COMMUNITY



While campers spend the week meeting new people in a new place, our staff work hard to support them as they face and overcome challenges, build self-confidence, and gain the tools to treat each other well and interact positively. Campers with diverse identities, backgrounds, and experiences come together in our little home in the woods and discover what we all have in common.

Home Away from Home

4-H Camp's cardinal rules are kindness and respect. These tenets shape how we treat each other, our environment, and our community as a whole.





L.G. COOK 4-H CAMP

DAILY SCHEDULE



No two 4-H Camp days are ever exactly the same! But this schedule sums up what most include.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

A JAM-PACKED SCHEDULE

Our campers love that we go-go-GO at Camp! From our optional **Early-Bird Activities** first thing in the morning to our evening **Lights Out Programs** in each cabin, there's never a dull moment in the Camp day. **Meals, Cabin Hour**, and our many laid-back activity options offer plenty of changes of pace, but there's always more to do and discover every time the bell rings and sends us off to what's next.

ALL-CAMP ACTIVITIES

Each night (and a few other times throughout the week), we get together for a big All-Camp game or program. Many of these vary depending on theme of the week -- find out more in the **Theme** section of this guide!!

VESPERS

There are a few exceptions to all the loud, wild, running around at 4-H Camp, like **Vespers**. Each evening, we take a quiet hike out to Vespers Island, and sit in silence for a few moments taking in the natural scenery. Then, a staff member will share a story, sing a song, or start a discussion. It's a great moment of community introspection in a busy summer camp day.

7:00 - WAKE UP/OPTIONAL MORNING ACTIVITIES

We have several optional morning activities that campers can choose to participate in that include Rooster Run, Polar Bear Swim, Golden Eagle Yoga, and Groundhog Gardening.

8:00 - FLAG RAISING/BREAKFAST

8:30 - CAMP CLEAN UP

Fostering independence is an essential component to Camp, and part of that is helping to take responsibility for Camp. So, we take some time in the morning to help keep Camp clean.

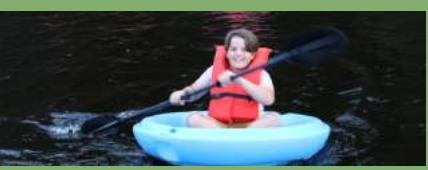
9:15 - FIRST ACTIVITY PERIOD



ACTIVITY PERIODS

Campers choose three activities to do during the week. Our classes meet three times throughout the week. For a list of classes, please see our course area section.

10:45 - SECOND ACTIVITY PERIOD



BATTLE FOR THE ISLAND

On Wednesdays, we play our all-camp game, Battle for the Island, in place of first and second period classes. This capture-the-flag game is given our own Camp twist and has become a favorite of our campers throughout the years.

12:15 - LUNCH

1:00 - CABIN HOUR

After a healthy and delicious lunch, we like to relax in our cabins. This is a time when campers can nap, read, play some games with their cabinmates, and prepare for activities and programs later in the week.

2:00 - THIRD ACTIVITY PERIOD

CHOICE REC PERIODS

In the afternoons, we let our campers choose what they want to do! During one rec, they go to the waterfront to swim, canoe, kayak or just relax on the shore. The other rec is on land, and our counselors offer a variety of activities that range from games in our rec fields to crafts in the craft shop to archery to fishing to just about anything!

3:30 - FIRST CHOICE REC

4:45 - SECOND CHOICE REC

FRIDAY AFTERNOON ACTIVITY

On Friday afternoons, instead of our third period activity and rec periods, we have an all-camp game that goes with our theme of the week. This is the culmination of what the campers have been working towards all week.

6:00 - DINNER

7:00 - FLAG LOWERING/VESPERS

7:30 - EVENING ACTIVITY

Our evening activity changes day to day. Monday is our opening campfire where the campers get to learn about our camp, our staff and their color groups. Tuesday is Cabin Night when the campers get to choose what they want to do as a cabin. Wednesday is a theme-based all-camp activity. Thursday is for our Talent Show. And Friday is our closing campfire, honor ceremony, and Camp Schmance (our version of a dance)!



9:15 - SHOWER TIME

10:00 - TAPS

CAMP CLASSES

At the time of registration, campers will sign up for **THREE** of more than 30 classes offered. (Our course areas are Environmental Education, Creative Arts, Recreation, Waterfront, and Community.) Classes meet three times throughout the camp week, for a total lesson plan time of under four hours. If you do 1000 things in your Camp week, classes are 3 of them!

Check out this summer's class selection in our Course Offerings Guide!



WATER REC

Whether campers sign up for a waterfront class or not, they'll get to spend an hour each day at the lake. This is a free choice time, where campers can swim in the shallow or deep end, go down the water slide, canoe, kayak, or all of the above! Relaxing on shore is always an option as well. (Campers must take a swim evaluation to determine ability to swim in the deep end.)



Our classes are enthusiastically "non-academic." They focus on creativity, exploration, trying new things, bulding new friendships, and simply having fun outside!

LAND REC

Land Rec is free choice galore! Campers get to select exactly what they'd like to do from a wide array of counselor offerings. From some classic camp choices (fishing or archery), laid-back pastimes (book clubs or cloud watching) and wacky today-only inventions (karaoke kickball or a search for Bigfoot) to camper requests, what Land Rec brings is a daily surprise.



Cabins and Bunkmates

Our Camp Community is spread out over 11 cabins. Each cabin houses 16 campers and a couple of counselors.



Cabins are divided by both age and gender, as indicated on the camper's registration form. Campers in a cabin together are all within about a year of the same age.



Campers are never in the cabin without counselor supervision. Check out our [Packing List](#) to learn what to bring (and not to bring) to ensure success in our communal living spaces.



Cabins are **rustic** - they've got bunks, shelves, windows, walls, doors and **no plumbing!** Our central bathhouse is just a short walk from the cabins.



Bunkmate Requests

Campers may request the name of one friend they'd like to bunk with. Requests are guaranteed if they are **mutual**, and both campers are **within a year of the same age**.





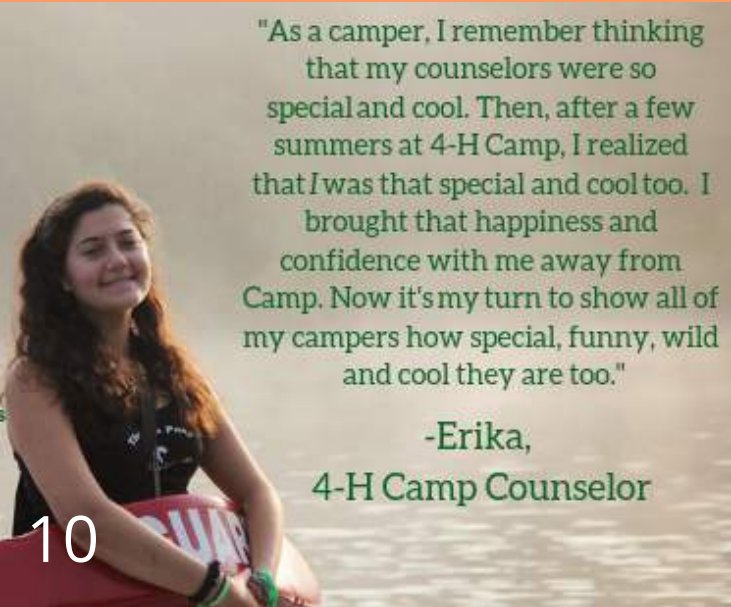
Our Staff is Our Heart

On average, over 70% of our summer staff attended 4-H Camp as campers and have come back summer after summer, progressing through our CIT and Junior Counselor programs. Our counselors strive to create the same transformative experience that meant so much to them when they were kids.

We maintain at least a 1:8 staff to camper ratio. However, when Camp is fully assembled in one place and we're all together, it's closer to 1:4.



The only thing that makes an exceptional summer camp is an exceptional summer camp staff.



"As a camper, I remember thinking that my counselors were so special and cool. Then, after a few summers at 4-H Camp, I realized that I was that special and cool too. I brought that happiness and confidence with me away from Camp. Now it's my turn to show all of my campers how special, funny, wild and cool they are too."

-Erika,
4-H Camp Counselor

Hiring is competitive, and we look for the most enthusiastic, responsible, funny, empathetic, and caring young role models we can find to join our team. All staff must be at least 18 years old and complete a Rutgers University Background check and protection of minors training. All staff are certified in First Aid and CPR and go through an intensive, weeklong pre-summer 4-H Camp staff training and orientation.

3 Square Meals A Day

Meals are served family style, and campers assigned as KPs (Kitchen Patrol) bring the food to the table. Each meal features an entree and several side dishes. A fully stocked salad bar (or breakfast bar) is also available for every meal, as well as a few "picky eater" options. Check out a [sample menu](#) on our website.



Our Camp Kitchen is entirely nut-free.

Every meal we offer vegetarian, vegan, milk-free and gluten-free options.



Fresh fruit is available each afternoon, and we have an evening snack as well. (And our campers would surely want us to mention our signature desserts served after dinner every night.)

Campers get to pick their own seat in our Dining Hall each meal. The way campers mix and match, the same table never sits together twice. We also enjoy a few scenic outdoor meals on the shores of Lake Shawanni.

CAMP NURSE AND THE INFIRMARY

Our Infirmary is staffed by our Camp Nurses, who are certified EMTs or First Responders. They are on hand 24 hours a day to help our campers through any bumps, bruises, or bug bites.

For campers with medication needs, we have Med Call in mornings, evenings, and at all meals (or as needed). All medications must be in the original prescription bottle or packaging and will be given to our Camp Nurse at check-in.





CAMP GOES ON IN THE RAIN!

We do our best to make every single day at Camp as close to a perfect summer day as we can get it, and we're sure not going to let weather stand in the way!

If it's just drizzling and it's more fun to stay outside - that's exactly what we do! In a little shower, we stick to the schedule as usual.



In case of a more significant downpour, we stay in the cabins for some extended bonding time, or utilize some rainday lesson plans in our Rec Hall, Craftshop, or Nature Center. For a severe thunderstorm, we all gather in our Dining Hall for a Boardgame Bonanza or other All-Camp Rainday activities.



Our tools to beat the heat are simple: the lake, the shade of the trees, plenty of hydrating - and repeat!





THEMES!

Every session has a theme, which is just a little spice added to make each week different from all the others. The theme dictates our Wednesday and Friday All-Camp Games, the zany costumes the counselors wear, and the overall story line of the week.

HOW MANY SESSIONS?

Most of our campers attend one session of 4-H Camp. Camp is designed for one session to give each camper everything they need from their summer camp experience. About 25% of our campers attend for multiple sessions. We like to say that each week of Camp is like a book - with a beginning, middle and end. Attending multiple sessions is like reading a *series* of books. (All campers go home on the weekends! Also, our campers always seem to end up enjoying all of our themes pretty much equally - so pick your Camp session(s) based on what fits your family's schedule the best.)



Groups

Every camper is assigned to one of our four groups before their session. At the Opening Campfire the campers decide which animal from Stokes Forest will represent their group, and throughout the week the groups will compete in All-Camp Games (including the legendary Battle for the Island). Groups are another opportunity for every camper to make new friends from all corners of our Camp Community.





DATES AND RATES

SUMMER 2020

Session #1: Winter Carnival (July 6th-11th)

Session #2: Epic Tales...of Mythic Legends (July 13th-18th)

Session #3: CamPaNdeMoNiuM (July 20th-25th)

Session #4: Pirates of Lake Shawanni (July 27th-August 1st)

Session #5: Camper vs. Counselor Olympics (August 3rd-8th)

Session #6: Broken Time Machine (August 10th-15th)

Session #7: S'moregasbord (August 17th-22nd)

Polar Bear Early Registration Pricing (11/15-12/31): \$625

Standard Summer Camp Pricing: \$700

Early Sunday Night Drop Off (Limited Space Available): \$100

4-H/Rutgers Discount: -\$25

All registration is online, at our website.

Payment in full is required for one session at the time of registration.

Payment plans available for campers attending multiple sessions.

We believe every child should have the chance to go to sleepaway camp. If your family is facing financial hardship or difficulties, please call the Camp Office at 973-948-3550 to discuss the details of applying for an L.G. Cook 4-H Camp Campership.



Now That You've Decided To Join Us...

The next few pages contain some helpful details and things to keep in mind as you prepare for your summer with us at 4-H Camp!



First Time Camper Tips

Summer Camp is a weeklong adventure away from home. We encourage parents to let their campers know it might not always be easy being away, and that it's entirely normal to miss home. We also encourage parents in turn to **encourage their camper's own resiliency** and let them know that they can do it, and at the end of the week they'll have an accomplishment they can be proud of. We do not recommend telling your camper that they can end their week early and come home/call home whenever they'd like; instead we find it is best to positively prepare for the whole week and frame it as something they can achieve. If a camper is having sustained difficulty acclimating as the week goes on, the Camp Office will be in touch. **If you would like to discuss more strategies to prepare for you child's week away, please contact the Camp Office. We'd be happy to chat!**



The counselors are here to help! Camper's should know they can go to their counselors (and any counselor on Camp) with absolutely anything they need, 24 hours a day. Often, if there's any persistent issue at Camp, it's because the counselors are not aware of it – **campers should feel confident and comfortable going to their counselors for any support they require.**



How to Sign Up



Registration is entirely online. Campers select three classes at the time of registration. All pertinent information in regards to medical details and how we can make your camper's time as successful as possible is also gathered at this point. Once registration is complete, you're all done with paperwork and ready to show up on the first day of Camp!



DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP



Drop-Off is Monday morning at 10 am. (The main gate at Camp is closed before then. A small line of cars will most likely be waiting - but it moves quickly once the gate is open.) Staff will then show you where to park and send you up to the Dining Hall for Check-In. At this time you will sign in, have the opportunity to talk with the Infirmary and Kitchen staff, and your camper will have a quick health check. Then it's off to the cabin to help pick and set up your camper's bunk and meet their cabinmates and counselor. We then say goodbye to the parents and our week at summer camp begins! **Check-in usually takes under an hour.**



YOU'LL RECEIVE PRE-SESSION EMAILS WITH PLENTY MORE DETAILS AND INSTRUCTIONS!



Pick-up is Saturday morning at 10 am. We'll all gather together for our **Nothing Ceremony**, where the Camp Staff will attempt the impossible and try to quickly summarize all that happened this week at Camp. Then it's sign-out, off to the cabins to collect luggage and very dirty laundry, some tearful goodbyes to new friends and counselors, and **see you next summer!**



Sunday Night Early Drop-Off



If the Monday drop-off doesn't match your family's schedule, we do have an **Early Drop-Off option on Sunday at 7 pm.** It includes an introductory evening activity, snack, and a night stay in our Early Drop-Off cabin. Monday they'll have breakfast and move into the cabins they'll be staying in for the rest of their camp week. Early Drop-Off spots are limited! If this option is needed for your family, we recommend registering as early as possible.



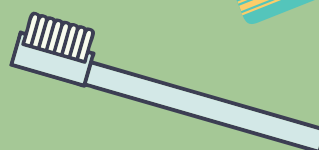
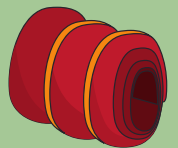
PACKING LIST

-TO KEEP IN MIND-







- You'll need less than you think! We keep our camp days jam-packed and super active. The bare necessities will get you through a week of summer camp just fine.
- Please don't bring anything you're not willing to have come home muddy, dirty, and smelling like Camp.
- Pack for six whole days and various weather conditions. Extra clothes to change into are always a good idea.
- Please use luggage that is small enough to fit under a bed, or at the foot of a bunk.
- We want 4-H Camp to be comfortable for all campers. Clothing should be appropriate for our kind, respectful, active, youth-friendly environment.

-THE "WHAT TO BRING" LIST-

- Bedding (i.e. sleeping bag, pillow, twin sized sheets, blankets)
- Socks and underwear (extra is always good too!)
- Sandals with heel straps (no flip flops)
- Sneakers or boots
- T-shirts
- Shorts
- Long pants/sweatshirts (mornings and evenings can get a bit chilly)
- 2 swim suits (so one can dry)
- 2 towels (bath and beach)
- Night wear
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Sanitary needs (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, deodorant, etc.)



-THE "WHAT ELSE TO MAYBE BRING" LIST-

- Flashlight** 
- Laundry Bag and Shower Caddy**  
- Sunscreen/bug repellent (label and give to cabin counselor)**
- Books/journals/reading materials** 
- Camera** 
- Water bottle** 
- Stationery, postcards, stamps (if you plan on sending a letter home)**
- We have a Dinner Extravaganza on Friday night, so feel free to pack some "nicer" clothes. (But not too much nicer; it's still Camp!)**

-THE "WHAT NOT TO BRING" LIST-



- Cell phones**
- Laptops / Tablets**
- Screens of Any Other Type**
- Fireworks**
- Large Fans**
- Hair dryers / curling irons**
- Food / candy / snacks / gum**
- Cash**



ANY AND ALL MEDICATION MUST BE TURNED IN TO THE INFIRMARY AT CHECK-IN. CAMPER POSSESSION OF ANY PRESCRIPTION OR OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATION, (INCLUDING VITAMINS) IS PROHIBITED.

Possession of the following items will be grounds for dismissal from 4-H Camp: Intoxicants, illegal drugs, cigarettes, vape products, matches, lighters, knives, weapons, cell phones

PACKING LIST



THE "AWAY-NESS" OF 4-H SUMMER CAMP

One of the biggest components of a week of summer camp is getting away from it all: away from the routine, away from what's normal, away from technology, away from home and yes...even away from your parents!

To create this sense of "away-ness" and adventure, we do not allow any camper contact home during the week. If provided a stamped envelope, campers can certainly send letters home (though anything mailed later than Wednesday will arrive home AFTER your camper) and we certainly encourage campers to keep a journal of their Camp time as well. Please don't tell your campers they can call home during the week if they'd like, because this won't be the case. (However, don't worry! If a camper is having trouble acclimating to Camp or is facing any out-of-the-ordinary issues, we will certainly be in touch!)

Parents can email their campers (maximum once a day), and we'll print out and deliver that email at our lunch-time mail call. Parents can also call our main office and health department to check-in for a report on their campers.

Thanks! If there's anything that occurs during the Camp week that we feel you should know about, we'll certainly reach out! Otherwise both your camper and yourself can enjoy the challenge of being "away" for the week, and can look forward to the joy of catching up and hearing a whole host of wild summer stories on Saturday morning.

WHAT TO EXPECT (AND NOT TO EXPECT)

FROM OUR CAMP BLOG

- Our Camp Blog IS a little journal we update a few times during the week to help document the wacky occurrence that is 4-H Camp. It is designed for all members of our Camp community, including 4-H Camp alumni, former staff, campers who aren't currently in session with us, and parents. The goal is to just give everyone in the world outside of L.G. Cook a glimpse at what's going on this season at Summer Camp.

- Our Camp Blog IS NOT a comprehensive photo service. It is our opinion that constant photography distracts from the pure "awayness" of the Camp experience, so we'll only snap pictures a few select times during the week. We'll feature a few dozen of these photos on the blog, but certainly nowhere near enough to feature every camper we have. The full focus of all of our staff is to create a safe and immersive summer camp experience for your camper - the Camp Blog is a nice little extra we're happy to offer on the side.

So please DO visit the Camp Blog to get a general idea as to some of the many goofy and exciting ways we're passing the summer hours- please DON'T visit expecting to definitely, positively, no-matter-what see a photo of your camper in every single post.

Thanks! We're looking forward to sharing some updates, telling some stories, and keeping you in the loop as to whats going on this summer at 4-H Camp!



See you next summer!

COME VISIT!

WE OFFER CAMP TOURS BY REQUEST SEPTEMBER-MAY.

L.G. Cook 4-H Camp
100 Struble Rd
Branchville, NJ 07826
nj4hcamp.rutgers.edu

gobacktothemountains.blogspot.com

973.948.3550



RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station