

Maine Arts Camp

2010 PARENT/CAMPER HANDBOOK

SESSION 1: Tuesday, July 6 – Monday, July 19, 2010

SESSION 2: Tuesday, July 20 – Monday, August 2, 2010

SPECIALTY WEEK: Mon. Aug. 2 – Mon. Aug. 9, 2010

Summer Address:

Maine Arts Camp
c/o Unity College
90 Quaker Hill Road
Unity, Maine 04988
Phone: *(email us in summer to get)*
Fax: *(email us in summer to get)*

Winter Address:

Maine Arts Camp
P.O. Box 812076
Boca Raton, FL 33481
Phone: (561) 865-4330
Fax: (561) 865-0855

E-mail: info@maineartscamp.com

www.maineartscamp.com

WELCOME!

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Maine Arts Camp. We encourage everyone to read this booklet carefully with your child and keep it for future reference. **Returning families should also review this updated version, which includes a few changes.**

Your child is about to embark on a memorable experience away from home, during which time he or she will have the opportunity to learn and grow, as well as make new friends and have lots of fun. Maine Arts Camp will provide a nurturing and safe environment where your child can explore a variety of interests without the pressures often experienced during the school year.

We understand that it may feel overwhelming to send your child away to overnight camp, especially if it's the first time. This handbook is designed to help you prepare for the summer by answering many of your questions and giving you an overview of the planning we both need to do to prepare for your child's summer at camp.

We invite you to partner with us to help ensure that your child will have an optimal experience at camp. You can help prepare your child, not only by filling out the necessary forms, making travel arrangements and packing; but most importantly by discussing expectations at camp and assuring your child that you are confident that he or she will have a successful experience. Camp might be one of the first extended experiences a child has without his/her parents around, and it tends to be very powerful!

Sometimes, in spite of everyone's best efforts, children may misbehave or misunderstand what is expected of them. Discipline at camp ranges from missing activities to conversations with the Camp Director and/or the camper's parents, to suspension or expulsion from camp—depending on the severity of the offense. There are no refunds when a child's behavior results in being sent home, so it's in everyone's best interest for parents to talk to their children about cooperating with camp staff and other campers prior to bringing them to camp. **This includes not bringing a cell phone**—or at least giving it to us upon arrival to hold until departure.

We are looking forward to an unforgettable summer at Maine Arts Camp and are very excited that your family will be joining us!

Best regards,
Rick Mades, Director
Candy Cohn, Assistant Director

Camp Schedule: Campers alternate between A & B days, taking 5 activities every other day. Activity periods are 1 hour and 10 minutes long. There are no regular days of the week or weekends at camp.

Trip Days: Trip days occur every 5th day, and may include spending the day relaxing and swimming at Pemaquid Beach or Peaks Kenny State Park; or enjoying a 2-hour workshop on campus followed by a trip to Lake St. George Park or to the Harold Alfond YMCA Center in Waterville. All campers participate in our trip days.

Packing: Please use the enclosed clothing and equipment list to make sure you pack everything your child will need during his or her stay at Maine Arts Camp. All clothing should be casual, washable and color fast. Please mark your child's laundry bag and all clothing and equipment with a permanent marker.

*** NO Spending Allowance:** We do NOT request a spending allowance to cover incidentals such as extra stamps, stationery, toiletries, etc. Please be sure to send the items your child will need at camp! Parents will be billed for charges of \$20 or more, especially for lost water bottles, t-shirts, etc. Please DO NOT send any money with your child to camp.

THE FIRST DAY OF CAMP:

Session 1 – Tuesday, July 6th

Session 2 – Tuesday, July 20th

Your child may ask you to tell him/her about what will happen the moment he/she gets to camp. Knowing what to expect when he/she arrives will make him/her more comfortable about going to camp. The following details might help with this discussion.

Airport Pickup: (ONLY FOR CAMPERS FLYING TO CAMP) Flights need to arrive between 12:00 noon and 2:00 pm on Tuesday July 6th & Tuesday July 20th. Please ask us about prospective flights before you book them so we can be sure we're on the same page with this. If your child is getting picked up at the Portland or Bangor Airports, he or she will be met just beyond the secure area at the airport (on the way from the gate towards the baggage claim) by a camp staff member who will be wearing a *Maine Arts Camp* shirt. If your child is traveling as an unaccompanied minor, an airline representative will bring him/her to meet us. We will call each of you to discuss these details about 2 weeks before camp, but feel free to contact us if you have any questions. (Return flights need to leave after 3:30 p.m. the last day of camp.)

Parent Drop-Off: Arrival time is scheduled for **1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** on Tuesday July 6th & Tuesday July 20th. There will be signs and staff members will be outside to direct you. After you check in, you can accompany your child to see his/her room and then join us for a brief campus tour. Your child's counselor will then bring him/her back to the room and will assist with unpacking. Your goodbyes will be said before your child departs with the counselor.

Counselors will introduce campers to each other as they arrive and will be happy to answer questions. A variety of activities and games will be going on to get campers involved in camp life right away. After everyone has arrived we will meet in the dining hall, where we will introduce our staff and have our first delicious meal together. After dinner we will give a Maine Arts Camp tour, play icebreaker games and dive into a fun-filled time that is sure to plant the seeds for many friendships and fond memories!

Room Assignments: Dorm room assignments will be given out at check-in, and these are done according to age. There are two dorm buildings for girls and one for boys, with a combination of double and triple

rooms. We try to keep the age range close on each floor. Four-week campers may be required to change rooms for Session 2. Everyone will change rooms for Specialty Week.

You can help your child make the most of his or her camp experience by:

- Encouraging him/her to welcome new campers if they're a returning camper.
- Encouraging him/her to make new friends.
- Encourage him/her not to make a big deal about age differences on the floor.
- Encourage him/her to get to know his/her roommate—ask questions and really listen to the answers, learn something new about each other every day, try to cheer him/her up if he or she's feeling sad, **FIND A WAY TO SHARE A FEW LAUGHS EACH DAY!**

THE LAST DAY OF CAMP FINAL SHOWCASE:

Session 1 – Monday, July 19th

Session 2 – Monday, July 2nd

Specialty Week – Monday, August 9th (*No Final Showcase for Specialty Week*)

Departing from Camp: If you are picking your child up on Monday, July 19th (Session 1) or Monday, August 2nd (Session 2), please arrive at approximately **8:45 a.m.** to attend our **final showcase**, which will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will end at approximately 12:00 noon. If you arrive the night before, please wait till the next day to come on campus, and please do **not try to meet your child in his/her room or the dining hall** before the showcase begins. Departing flights need to leave the Bangor Airport after 3:00 p.m. and Portland Airport after 3:30 p.m.

4-Week Camper Transition Day: For those campers staying 4 weeks, parents have the option to visit on Monday, July 19th for the showcase and then take your child out of camp for the day. You'll need to bring them back by 8:00 p.m. There will be a trip arranged to keep 4-week campers busy that day, but parents do have the option of visiting. **If you'd like to consider visiting, please discuss it with us in advance** so we can share the benefits as well as the challenges that can arise for campers when their families visit. Please contact us by June 5th to let us know whether or not you'll be visiting. That will help us plan for our 4-weeker trip.

SPECIALTY WEEK PICKUP: Please pick up campers Aug. 9th from 9-10:00 a.m. No Final Showcase.

No Gratuities: Please do not tip our staff. We pay our staff members at a most competitive rate to attract the highest quality staff. It is against our regulations for them to accept any gratuities, so please do not put them in that uncomfortable position.

Health Care: We have a health center onsite, staffed by Becky Swan, R.N.C., Maryellen McCone, R.N., M.A., and Cheryl Tardif, R.N. We've also made arrangements with the New Horizons Healthcare in Unity, Maine to provide backup care if needed. Please send your child's medical forms, signed by your physician, as soon as possible—no later than 3 weeks before camp. **Please remember to include a clear photocopy of the front and back of your child's health/prescription insurance card.** Our medical staff and directors review each camper's medical history carefully before his/her arrival at camp. The more we know about your child's medical history, the better we can take care of him/her. Information pertaining to his/her psychological development, including counseling, can also assist us to make this a successful camp experience. Please keep copies for your own records in case any pages get lost in the mail or in case you need to update anything right before camp begins.

Please complete all dental and orthodontic work before camp begins. If your child has a dental problem that arises at camp, we will call you.

Glasses/Contact Lenses: If your child wears either, please send a second pair to camp.

Medications: Please send all medications in their original containers with the pharmacy label attached. These will be given to the nurses upon arrival and dispensed only by them—in the health center before each meal. No camper will be permitted to keep any medications in a dorm room. (WE MAY BE REQUESTING THAT YOU GET YOUR MEDICATIONS THROUGH A SPECIAL PHARMACY THAT WORKS WITH CAMPS. WE WILL NOTIFY YOU ABOUT THIS SOON.)

Inhalers/Epi-Pens: Children with a history of asthma who use an inhaler will be permitted to keep it on them at all times, and children with anaphylactic allergies can keep an Epi-Pen with them for emergency use as well. These children will need to have permission forms filled out. Please let us know if you require these forms.

Food Allergies/Dietary Needs: Please be sure to list all allergies and dietary needs on the health form. The food service staff will be given a list of campers with food allergies and special dietary needs. Our foods are not cooked in peanut oil, and we are always alerted when any foods have nuts in them. There is a separate station for peanut butter (with disposable knives).

Health Status: If your child has been ill 24 hours prior to attending camp, it is imperative you notify us so we can make an appropriate decision as to where the camper should stay.

Personal Property: Please do not send your child to camp with valuable items. Dorm rooms are not locked, and we cannot be responsible for your child's personal property. Please do not send money with your child. If they must have money for traveling, we will collect it upon arrival and return it at the end of camp.

Electronic items: The only electronic items that we allow are inexpensive personal music players (*no video capability*) such as an IPOD SHUFFLE, early version of IPOD Nano, or something similar. These will be used during rest times only. **No IPODS (with video), Gameboys, cell phones, or other electronics.** These items are incompatible with the environment of camp and impede the building of positive social relations. That is why we ask that you do not allow your children to bring them to camp. **Please partner with us in this effort to enhance your child's social skills!**

Other forbidden objects: Dangerous objects are also not permitted at camp. No drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, matches, fireworks, or other contraband may be brought to camp. If you choose to bring reading materials—which we highly encourage—please be sure that they are appropriate for a camp setting. If inappropriate or dangerous items are found at camp, the staff will confiscate them and disciplinary action will be taken. Camp cannot guarantee the safekeeping or return of confiscated items.

Laundry: Your child's laundry will be taken to a professional laundry service at the end of the first week. Please be sure the laundry bag and clothing are labeled in permanent marker with your child's name. Clean clothes will be brought back to camp the following day.

Linens: All campers will change their bed linens (with counselor help if needed) at the end of the first week, as well. As indicated on the enclosed packing list, your child will need to bring the following:

- a) 1 pillow (For campers flying to camp, we can provide if necessary.)
- b) 2 pillow cases
- c) 2 sets twin bed sheets (2 fitted, 2 flat)
- d) 1 or 2 heavy single blankets or a sleeping bag (to use on top of sheets)
- e) 1 laundry bag(washable) marked with name

- f) 3 bath towels
- g) 2 wash cloths

Communication – With Camp Staff & Campers

Communication is the key to successful relationships. It is important that you share with us any information pertinent to your child’s physical and emotional well being, which might affect his/her camp experience. Please let us know if your child is taking any special medication, has begun menstruating recently, if there have been any changes in your family (divorce, deaths, a move), any illness that may be upsetting your child, etc. Please do not keep any information from us that may help us take better care of your child. Such information will be kept private—shared only with pertinent staff members. We will not be judging; we will be taking care of your child for you!

Phone calls—for 4-week campers only: We feel that it’s important for campers to spend their time at camp getting used to being away from home and adapting to camp life. Because phone calls have proven to be disruptive—even to the most content campers—we’ll only be scheduling phone calls for 4-week campers. We’ll contact 4-week parents during Session 1 to schedule a time to call in on the transition day if you’re not visiting.

All parents: Please feel free to contact us by phone or e-mail if you have concerns about your child during camp. The best time to call us is between 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. A staff member will be in the office at that time. If that person can’t address your concerns, the director or assistant director will call you back as soon as they’re available. If you call at other times, please leave a voice message, and we’ll return your call as soon as we can.

Beginning June 20th:

SUMMER PHONE NUMBER: TBD (we will email this number to camper families once it has been established)

CAMP OFFICE E-MAIL: info@maineartscamp.com

If you call our winter number after we’re on the road to Maine, we’ll return your call when we check voice mail: **(561) 865-4330**. You can always e-mail us. We will check that at least once a day, even while we’re on the road.

Mail: If you’d like to write to your child at camp—and we hope you will—please address your mail as follows:

**(Child’s Name)
Maine Arts Camp
c/o Unity College
90 Quaker Hill Road
Unity, Maine 04988**

Preaddressed Envelopes: Campers will be required to write letters to their families 3 times during each 2-week session. Please provide at least **4 pre-addressed** (to family), **stamped** envelopes & writing materials (pencils, pens, paper, & extra envelopes & stamps). This way your child can write to you easily. Otherwise, we often have to waste A LOT of time fixing incorrectly addressed envelopes, or those with stamps in the wrong place. The easiest way is to **use your own return address labels for the address.** No return address is really needed for these letters. **PLEASE SEND THE CORRECT AMOUNT OF POSTAGE!** Current rate: 44 cents first class for a regular envelope.

E-Mail to campers: We accept e-mails to our campers, which we will print and deliver. Please limit these messages to one per day. Campers will not have access to e-mail or faxing, so they will not be replying to these messages. E-mails from the previous day are printed each morning. For example, on a Tuesday morning we print all e-mails that came in on Monday.

BEFORE CAMP BEGINS, YOU WILL BE SENT (VIA E-MAIL) A SECURE LINK WITH A UNIQUE CODE. THIS WILL BE HOW YOU WILL SEND E-MAILS TO YOUR CHILD.

Please write to your child at least a few times a week. You might want to mail a letter before they leave for camp so it arrives by their first full day. Whether it's by e-mail or mail—even if it's a postcard or short note—all kids like to know you're thinking of them. While we encourage campers to write home, please don't pressure them to write home every day. They're busy having fun and exploring so many things. It's a time to give them some freedom and let them be a little independent!

How to communicate with your child in a positive manner while at camp:

Christopher Thurber, PhD, a psychotherapist who is an expert in dealing with camp issues, gives the following advice for communicating with your child at camp:

“A good letter from home is newsy, upbeat and encouraging. Your goal is to say a cheerful hello and give a positive report about what's been going on. You want to instill confidence and support your child's growing independence. Avoid mentioning sad things that your child can't do anything about. Save bad news until you can talk to your child face to face. Obviously, if there is a major piece of bad news to report, and you need to tell your son or daughter immediately, you wouldn't put that in a letter either. Instead, you'd call camp and talk to the director first. In a quality letter, it's fine to say that you miss your child, but don't say that you're miserable. Hearing bad news they can't do anything about makes kids feel helpless. Helplessness leads to homesickness, depression, and anxiety.”

An excerpt from, *The Summer Camp Handbook*, by Christopher Thurber, PhD and Jon Malinowski, PhD.

PACKAGES - One per 2-week session & NO FOOD: Packages are not necessary, but permitted as long as they do not contain food. Campers are given an adequate amount of food, and we don't want them overindulging on treats. Also, food can not be stored in the rooms as it will attract bugs. Campers are asked to open packages in front of a staff member. **Please limit to one package per camper for a 2-week session.** It's not that long, and campers shouldn't need extra stuff. If they forgot something important, please contact us.

When it comes to receiving packages at camp, it's best if you can use the US Postal Service to assure prompt delivery. You can use FedEx, but there is no Saturday delivery. PLEASE DO NOT USE UPS. UPS delivers to a building at Unity College that is sometimes locked in the summer. This means your child may not get it quickly at all.

Camp Policies Regarding Cell Phones and Other Technologies

(Reprinted with permission from renowned camp expert, Bob Ditter, M.Ed., LCSW.)

We have always taken the safety and well-being of our campers—your children—very seriously. After all, giving your children over to the care of other people is perhaps the greatest act of trust you as a parent can engage in. We aim to do everything we humanly can to earn and keep that trust. We also know we cannot do this without your help. With more and more children using the Internet, cell phones and other technologies at younger ages, we appeal to you as parents to partner with us to ensure that your children continue to have the safest, most wholesome experience with us at camp as possible.

Please read this policy carefully. It will help you understand the challenges some technologies pose to the continued health and safety of our camp community. As always we invite you to call us if you have any questions or concerns about any of these issues.

Cell Phones: As you know we have a “no-cell phone” policy at camp. Aside from the fact that cell phones are expensive and can get lost or stolen and that the physical camp environment is not kind to such items, **there is a fundamental problem with campers having cell phones at camp, and that is “TRUST.”** When children come to camp they—and you—are making a leap of faith, temporarily transferring their primary care from you as their parents to us and their counselors. This is one of the growth-producing, yet challenging aspects of camp. As children learn to trust other caring adults, they grow and learn, little by little, to solve some of their own challenges. We believe this emerging independence is one of the greatest benefits of camp. It is one important way your child develops greater resilience. Contacting you by phone essentially means they have not made this transition. It prevents us from getting to problems that may arise and addressing them quickly. **Sending a cell phone to camp is like saying to your child that you as the parent haven’t truly come to peace with the notion of them being away from you and in our care. And of course, asking them to be untruthful about it, or anything else, is just plain unethical.**

We agree to tell you if your child is experiencing a challenge in their adjustment to camp. *You can help* by talking with you child *before they leave for camp* and telling them that there is always someone they can reach out to, whether it be their counselor, a trusted activity leader, the Head Counselor, the Director or camp nurse or health care provider. We are all here to help, but if *you* don’t trust us, your children certainly won’t. If we suspect there are cell phones or other forbidden electronics, we reserve the right to search a camper’s room.

Digital Photographs: Another drawback of having cell phones at camp is many of them have built-in cameras. It has happened at some camps around the country that children have secretly taken photographs of other campers or staff during changing or showering times and later uploaded those images onto the Internet. (If you belong to a health club, chances are it has “no cell phone” policy). To lessen the possibility of this happening ***we ban all digital cameras and suggest that if your child wants pictures from camp, that they bring a disposable film camera.*** We take photographs during the summer, which will be available for viewing on Facebook a little while after camp (by September). Please help us maintain a safe environment by explaining this to your child. You should know that any camper that takes a compromising photograph of another camper or staff member and uploads it on the Internet or makes it public in any way may be subject to dismissal from camp or may not be allowed to return. If the law is broken, the appropriate authorities will be notified.

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How We Deal with Sexuality at Camp

Our Philosophy: Campers are told that Maine Arts Camp is a place for them to grow and learn to explore their own capabilities and relationships with others. However, camp is not a place to be sexually active.

When we talk about this at camp, it is within the context of creating an emotionally safe environment. We want kids to get a break from the sexual pressures they are exposed to in movies, school, TV, music and billboards. We are trying to give them a chance to be kids in a way that is responsible and not prematurely adult. Almost all kids are relieved to be given this clear, enforceable limit. We teach campers to show

respect in the way they talk to each other and about each other. We do not tolerate children harassing one another with sexual innuendo or engaging in public displays of affection (PDAs).

Behavior & Discipline

Discipline:

The staff at Maine Arts Camp is dedicated to ensuring every camper has a positive summer experience. We make a concerted effort to address issues promptly and to follow up regularly. Our staff structure allows for ongoing discussions between counselors, dorm heads and the directors so we can make decisions on how to deal with each case most effectively. In the event that rules are broken, we utilize several disciplinary procedures, often beginning with suspending a camper from an activity. If follow-up measures are required, we will call the parents to keep you abreast of the situation.

Violent behavior and disobedience that endangers and/or disrupts camp will result in immediate expulsion from camp. There are no refunds for any camper that is expelled from camp.

Keeping Camp Emotionally and Physically Safe:

In our commitment to providing children with an environment that is free from threat of harm, we have a zero tolerance policy for weapons of any kind in camp. All potentially harmful items, such as knives, must be turned in to a counselor at the beginning of the session. Also, verbal and physical abuse (e.g., hitting, teasing) towards other campers or a staff member will not be tolerated. We believe every child has the right to feel safe and respected. Campers who do not adhere to these rules will be expelled from camp.

Alcohol and Other Drugs:

Alcohol, drugs and cigarettes are prohibited at camp. The use or possession of these substances will result in immediate expulsion from camp—no refunds.

Homesickness

Most children need a few days to adjust to life at camp and being away from home. We expect that every child will experience some form of missing home during the first week of camp by thinking of their family, home, pets or friends. This is certainly not a “sickness” as the word homesickness implies. Usually the thoughts of home occur during down time. With help from our staff and other campers, we are confident that your child will get involved and become a full participant in the exciting camp activities we have planned for him/her.

What can you do to prepare for the feelings of missing home that your child may experience at camp? Here’s a helpful list:

- a) Let your child know that it is very normal and even expected that children experience some feelings of missing home. Talk about how he/she may feel the first few days of camp. Talking about missing home does not cause homesickness.
- b) Help him/her to understand that missing home is a sporadic feeling and that most of the time, he/she will be active and having lots of fun.
- c) Reassure him/her that you will be writing letters and sending e-mails and letting her know about what is happening at home.
- d) Communicate your confidence in your child’s ability to handle being away from home.

- e) Try to prepare him/her for this new experience by learning as much as possible about camp beforehand.
- f) Include your child in camp planning.
- g) Your child might want to bring a stuffed animal, special blanket, photos of home, or anything that will be comforting.
- h) Let your child know that he/she can always talk with his/her counselor if he/she is missing you. Our counselors are trained to recognize and handle homesickness. They are very caring and will be there to comfort your child.
- i) Pack a special letter in your child's suitcase so it will be waiting for him/her when he/she arrives at camp.
- j) If there is something stressful going on at home, be open and honest with your child. Let him/her know that if anything changes, for better or worse, you will let him/her know about it. And if things do change dramatically, call us at camp so we can discuss how to handle the situation with your child's best interest in mind.

And, of course, there are things NOT to say, which would make it harder for your child to adjust to camp:

- a) **DO NOT** TELL YOUR CHILD THAT HE/SHE CAN COME HOME IF HE/SHE IS NOT HAPPY. AVOID MAKING DEALS SUCH AS, "IF YOU ARE STILL UNHAPPY IN FOUR DAYS, YOU CAN COME HOME."
NO PICK-UP DEALS, PLEASE!
- b) Please avoid telling your child about ALL the exciting things that are happening at home. Include in your letters and e-mails some of the mundane activities that you do every day. (For example, "Today I sorted through the pile of papers on the kitchen counter....")

Be prepared that the first letter you receive may have been written when your child was feeling homesick, which typically lasts 2 or 3 days. **Please don't panic!** We will contact you by the first Wednesday of the session if your child is having an overwhelming sense of homesickness. Together, we will work on a plan to help him/her adjust. In the end, your child will grow from this experience!

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP:

FROM THE SOUTH: I-95 North to exit 113 (Augusta-Belfast). Route 3 East merges with routes 202/9. Follow 202/9 North to Unity, approximately 35 miles. Be aware that 202/9 will make 2 major turns in route to Unity—14 miles beyond the Augusta exit, the first major turn is a left in S. China, and 7 miles beyond that is a right, just up a hill beyond Lakeside Country Store (heading in the direction of Bangor). Follow Route 202/9 for 14 miles into Unity. Turn right at the Unity College sign.

FROM THE NORTH: I-95 South to exit 174. Take a left at the end of the exit ramp. Follow Route 69 East 1.5 miles. Turn right at the blinking light on to Routes 202/9. Follow Routes 202/9 South for 22 miles to Unity. In the center of town travel straight through the blinking yellow light, proceed another 1/3 of a mile. Turn left at the Unity College sign (Quaker Hill Road) and proceed up the hill, take the first right onto campus. The Allison M. Hall Welcome Center is the first building on the left.

FOR LODGING IN THE AREA, PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE: www.maineartscamp.com.