



Tip Sheet for Parents of Staff

Congratulations! Your young adult has a fantastic job for the summer, guaranteed to grow amazing life skills, build resumes, offer incredible friendships, and deliver lifelong memories. Summer work in camp has been proven to make young adults more career-ready and successful. Here's how **you** can help!

Before summer starts:

- ★ Ask if your child needs any information from you for the forms they need to submit

Don't volunteer to do the forms yourself! Onboarding paperwork is a normal task of getting a new job, and gives the camp an understanding of your child's organization and ability to meet deadlines.

- ★ Schedule family time - vacations, celebrations - around your child's work schedule

- ★ Encourage them to be at each day of training and work for the full day, rather than suggesting they miss work.

Learning a great work ethic begins with accommodating your work schedule rather than asking work to accommodate yours.

- ★ Send them packing.

Even if you're in the habit of getting your child ready for camp... give them a sense of ownership over their summer by letting your counselor shop, label, and organize themselves.

- ★ Listen.

Your child may have some nerves or second thoughts about doing this work. Be a sounding board, and remind your child of the skills they bring and the opportunity they have. If your child sees obstacles, encourage them to get in touch with camp themselves and start a conversation. Communicating for themselves is a crucial skill for employees.

- ★ Be proud!

You and your young adult have a lot to brag about - not everyone can get a camp job.



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During the Summer:

- ★ Write but don't be surprised if you don't get an answer.

If your child was ever a camper, you might expect them to write you as often as they did growing up. Counselors have even less time for letter-writing, and also don't have anyone telling them they have to write a letter home! Your counselor will love mail, probably as much as when they were younger, but is a lot less likely to write you back. Don't worry, that means the same thing now that it did when they were young - camp is keeping them busy and they're doing fine!

- ★ Consider what you write or tell.

Counselors do still miss home, and also need to focus on the work they're at camp to do. If you are thinking of sharing news from home - about anything from a loved one's illness to a happy event your child is missing - think about the impact. You're an expert in your child, you know if this is something that they'd love (or need) to hear, or if it will distract them and make it harder to be successful at their job. For bad news that can't wait, consider reaching out to let camp leadership know as well. This way they can support your child in person.

- ★ Be a mentor not a manager.

When you do hear from your child, you may hear about frustrations or fatigue or feelings that you want to fix. Hold that thought! Part of handling a job is learning what to do when it's challenging. Give your young adult the space he or she needs to express those emotions, without jumping in with solutions right away. Ask what they've already tried, ask what they're considering doing next. Ask them to let you know how it goes. Figuring it out on their own is so much better for them... and so much harder for parents!

- ★ Give empathy without intervening.

If your child is at a loss for how to handle a situation and reaches out to you, reach back. Give empathy, and (if none of the asking from the last tip worked) give some suggestions. If you offer more than one, your child still has the opportunity to pick one and try it - a valuable part of the problem-solving cycle.

- ★ Reach out to camp directly if your child is at risk.

You are always an expert in your child. If you fear they are in a bad situation, physically or mentally, please do reach out to camp leadership and let them know.