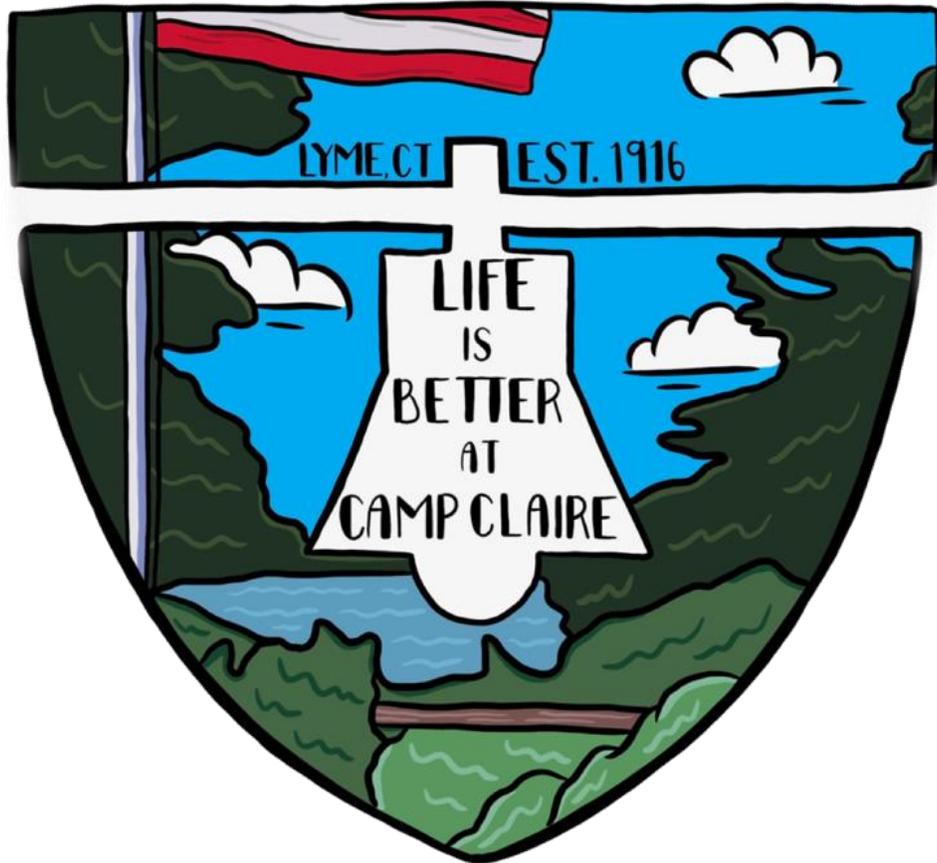


# CAMP CLAIRE



# PARENT HANDBOOK

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## A LITTLE HISTORY

In 1916, members of the First Congregational Church of Meriden began fellowship retreats to a parcel of land in Lyme, CT owned by a local farmer. Years later, the parcel was purchased by a member of First Church and donated to be utilized as a youth camp. Then, in March of 1954, the church sold Camp Claire for one dollar to Camp Claire, Incorporated. Since those early years, campers and staff have come to Camp Claire from all over the world.

For over 100 years, Camp Claire has forged a countless number of friendships that have been maintained and nourished by people who have been a part of the Camp Claire family. We strive to sustain those friendships by keeping contact with Alumni and getting them involved in the years following their camp experience. Every year one or two weekends are dedicated to gathering Alumni for reminiscing and collecting thoughts on how to better preserve Camp Claire's experience for all.

Camp Claire is operated by a Board of Directors; a group of volunteers who have demonstrated a love for Camp Claire. Their main task, (among others) is to oversee finances, hire staff and maintain facilities. In the 1960's, Camp Claire became Camp Claire, Inc., a 501 C-3 not for profit summer camp. It continues to provide a quality camping program for children focusing on group cooperation and community building.



## KNOW OUR "WHY"

### PHILOSOPHY:

Take who we are and what we've got and make it better!

### MISSION STATEMENT:

Camp Claire - Where youth can develop curiosity, creativity, confidence, and self-esteem in a natural inclusive community environment; providing a lifetime of memories and skills that prepare children for an active place in a multicultural society.

### OBJECTIVE:

We believe in freedom, flexibility and individual integrity, and thus we do not regiment our community except where physical and psychological health and safety are concerned. Therefore, there are many choices available to the staff, as well as the campers. We are enriched by all that is natural, so we seek to provide a wholesome environment in an incredibly beautiful setting.

Camp Claire aims to:

1. Provide opportunities for campers to foster and develop personal creativity and self-esteem.
2. Help each camper appreciate the natural surroundings and learn about the environment.
3. Provide situations for campers to develop curiosity while discovering their own skills and abilities.
4. Allow each child to develop skills to participate actively in a multicultural society.



## REGISTRATION

Camp Claire accepts all registrations solely online! We accept registrations on a first come, first serve basis. A 50% deposit per session you are registering your child for is due at the time of registration. There is a non-refundable fee of \$100.00 per registration. The balance on your account will be charged to your card on file on July 1.

Receipt of the confirmation email indicates that your child has a place in the session(s) that you have requested. If there is a question about a session or if the session is filled, we will contact you to verify your child's placement.

If you have a contact information change, such as phone number or address, please make those changes using your registration account accordingly.

All cancellation requests or changes need to be e-mailed to the registrar at [cereg2016@mail.com](mailto:cereg2016@mail.com) and are subject to a \$125 cancellation fee. There will be no refunds for early departure once your child has arrived at Camp however, emergencies and illnesses will be examined on a case-by-case basis. Camp Claire reserves the right to make a decision in these particular instances.

It is important to understand the reasoning behind a policy of non-refund. Because of the limited space during certain sessions, a camper who is registered has been included in the total session number which is crucial to planning for food and programs. In some instances, a camper might have been turned away because a session was filled. Please note that we will NOT reserve space until a registration, deposit and medical forms are received.

## PANDEMIC PROTOCOLS IN PLACE FOR SUMMER 2022

We are looking forward to having you all here at Camp Claire for Summer Camp 2022! To help keep our campers as safe as possible, we require that all families and campers comply with the following protocols:

Camp Claire is requiring all campers and staff to provide a negative PCR Covid-19 test prior to arriving at camp and written proof for negative test results must be uploaded to CampDoc prior to arrival. Camper families will be required to complete the pre-camp health screening document and bring it with them when they check in to camp. Face coverings: Campers will not be required to wear face covering while outdoors. Should activities require large groups to be indoors, campers will be required to wear masks if the activity is occurring prior to the at-camp testing. At-camp testing will occur during each session.

## POTENTIAL CASE OF COVID-19 POLICY

Camper or Staff Presents Fever or Other COVID-19 Symptoms

Individuals who present with a fever will be isolated immediately in our separate COVID-19 cabin and evaluated for symptoms and provided a rapid- antigen self test. Pending positive results, the parents will be contacted immediately and asked to pick up

the child and take them home as soon as possible, but no later than 8 hours following the initial phone call. Camp will provide an N95 mask for the camper to wear home and one for the parent, should they not have access to an N95 mask. If a camper must be sent home due to COVID-19, refunds will be given for all days missed.

Should a camper in the cabin group test positive, it is our policy to notify all parents and staff who are a part of the group and provide all cabin-mates with a rapid- antigen self test.

## RESIDENTIAL CAMP CHECK-IN

- Each camper family will be assigned a check-in time for Sunday between 2:00pm and 4:00pm.
- You will receive this time the week prior to your camper's session. It is very important that you arrive at camp at this time.
- The gate will be closed to all guests unless it is your time to check-in.
- When you arrive, staff will guide your vehicle to the designated drop-off area.
- Upon arrival, we ask you and your camper(s) to check in with the Director and Registrar at the Check-in Table where you will be greeted and directed to go with your camper to the nurses station.
- Once you have checked in with the nurse, please say goodbye to your camper and a Counselor will be at the designated drop off area to meet your camper.

NOTE: Please pack your camper's under-the-bed tubs in the trunk of the car, as staff will assist your camper in the removal. Please make sure to take all phones and electronics home with you. Possession of phones or electronics is immediate grounds for dismissal without a refund.

## PICK-UP

Session 1 and 3 (1-Week Residential): Pick-up will be scheduled for between 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM on Saturday mornings.

Session 2 and 4 (2-Week Residential): Pick-up will be scheduled for between 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM on Friday mornings.

Campers will have their luggage with them at the front gate for pick-up. We will ask that family members stay in their vehicles during this time. Staff will help with the loading of the under-the-bed boxes into your trunk.

## DIRECTIONS

From I-95 Exit 70 Follow CT 156 West (approx. 4.5 mi)

Take the FIRST LEFT after the Lyme Volunteer Fire Department

Then take a LEFT onto Cove Rd.

Take a RIGHT at top of the hill and

**Welcome To Camp Claire!**

## Our In-Season address is:

15 Oakland Ave.

Lyme, CT 06371

Phone: 860-434-0368

## CAMP STORE

The drive-by camp store will be open on check-in and check-out days for your family to purchase a variety of Camp Claire themed clothing and accessories such as T-shirts, sweatshirts, shorts and hats. Please, do not send any cash. Campers do not need any money during their stay at camp.

## SWIM TEST

Each camper is required to take a swim test upon arrival at Camp Claire. Our Pool Director will place campers in an appropriate level to accommodate their swimming ability. This helps ensure their safety at camp when participating in programs and classes that include water activities.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Many photographs are taken during the week, including an all camp picture and individual cabin photos. A link will be provided to parents at the time of check-in where all photographs can be viewed at the end of each session.

## BUNKING ASSIGNMENTS

One of the goals at Camp Claire is to create a loving community which is inclusive of all. Some campers are new, and some have been coming for years. We encourage making new friends as part of this experience of community.

We limit a bunking request to one person, recognizing that for some newcomers, it will mean comfort in a new situation. Please make bunkmate requests at the time of online registration. We will try to honor a request but cannot guarantee it can be filled.

As a small, positive community, we encourage inclusiveness. Cliques can often be a form of segregation, and we try as best we can to discourage an atmosphere of negative behavior. Consequently, we reserve the right to move campers if we feel a serious problem has arisen, regardless of bunkmate requests.

## LOST AND FOUND

Please label all clothing, towels, and personal items with the child's name. Please, **NO initials!** Unclaimed clothing will be held until the end of the season. Items will be washed and donated to shelters or other groups in need. Please call as soon as an item is discovered missing and we will do our best to locate it. **Camp Claire is not responsible for any clothing items lost, stolen, or damaged.**

## WHAT TO PACK

The following is a packing list for one week:

- 3 Beach towels
- 2 Bath towels
- 1 Washcloth
- 1 Pillow
- 2 Pillow cases
- Sleeping bag or: flat sheet and blanket (Recommended)
- Fitted sheet (to cover mattress)
- Laundry bag
- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Hairbrush or comb (please pack any hair care products your camper would use at home)
- 7 T-Shirts
- 6 Shorts
- 1 pair of jeans or long pants
- 1 Sweatshirt/hoodie
- 2 Sleepwear
- 10 Pair of underwear
- 10 Pairs of socks
- Raincoat or poncho
- Lightweight jacket
- Extra pair of sturdy shoes/sneakers
- Sandals/water shoes
- Dressy outfit for dance/programming
- 2 Swimsuits
- Flashlight & extra batteries
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Water Bottle labeled with your child's name
- Optional: disposable camera, costumes, hats, book, deck of cards

## LUGGAGE

A Rubbermaid tote or a trunk is a great way to bring your clothes to camp.

## VALUABLES

Do not bring valuables to Camp! Camp Claire is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.

## MEDICAL FORMS AND ISSUES

By law, we cannot admit your child unless we have a current health form signed by a physician which includes a full immunization record with dates.

All prescriptions are mandated by law to be properly labeled in their original containers with only the number of pills needed for the length of the session. This applies to over-the-counter medications for your child.

All forms of medication, including over-the-counter drugs and supplements must be noted on the health form with authorization and a signature from a physician. If you have a question about a particular medication, please consult the camp nurse.

Please remember to list all emergency contacts and all allergies.

## MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of a medical emergency we will follow the following protocols:

- If the emergency does not require transportation in an ambulance, the parent/ guardian will be contacted, and the parent will take the child to the hospital or their primary physician.
- If the emergency requires transportation in an ambulance, then one of the camp staff will accompany the child in the ambulance and the director will contact the parents/guardians. The parent or emergency contact person will be expected to meet the ambulance at the hospital as soon as possible.
- In all circumstances, the child's health insurance is used as the primary insurance.

## MAIL

Mail is distributed each day (with the exception of Sundays). If you feel that your child may become homesick, please do not mail more than one letter each day.

It is helpful in these instances that the following phrases NOT be used:

- "I miss you s-o-o much!"
- "I hope you aren't homesick"
- "I feel sad that you are away from home"
- "I cried when I saw your empty room"
- "The dog/cat misses you"

Emphasize what fun things you imagine must be happening at camp. Encourage your child with questions asking them to write home about their favorite things or new friends. Draw pictures, send cartoons. Enclose favorite magazines, comic books, or other interesting publications which may help illustrate their experience at camp.

If you have any questions about news or world events that might impact your child while at camp, please call and speak with the Director.

### Helpful tips for writing home:

- Send your child to camp with pre-addressed and pre-stamped postcards and envelopes.
- Pack paper, pencils, pens, crayons.
- Campers will have time each day during Rest Period/Siesta to write home.

## CARE PACKAGES

We do allow care-packages to be mailed to camp, however be creative in what you send. We would be grateful if you would help us to prevent the visitation from skunks, raccoons, mice, ants and all the other critters roaming at night in search of food by NOT sending yummy treats. Food is not allowed in cabins at all.

## PROGRAMS & CLASSES

Daily classes (such as Arts & Crafts, Sports, Kayaking, Archery, etc.) are offered to campers as well as other creative classes which our staff may be trained in. Campers experience wonderful ingenuity, while learning a new craft.

Swimming lessons are also presented to campers to teach those who either have little or no swimming experience, or to those who want to refine the skills they already possess. Our Pool Director is supported by a team of lifeguards and Water Safety Instructors who oversee and help guide campers in their swimming abilities.

Theme-oriented programs are presented which often involve our staff of counselors leading campers in memorable activities. Programs such as: Penny Carnival, Camp Dance, Camp Claire Clue, Around the World, Froccer, Color Wars, Capture the Flag, Gold Rush are some classic and well-loved examples.



## DAILY SCHEDULE

- ★ 8:00AM Wake-Up Bell
- ★ 8:15AM Wash up/ Waiters
- ★ 8:30AM Flagpole & Breakfast
- ★ 9:15AM Animal Duties
- ★ 9:45AM First Activity Period
- ★ 10:45AM Second Activity Period
- ★ 11:45AM Third Activity Period
- ★ 12:45PM Wash up/ Waiters
- ★ 1:00PM Lunch
- ★ 1:45PM Siesta
- ★ 2:45PM Snack & Free Time
- ★ 3:45PM Afternoon Program
- ★ 5:15PM Wash up/ Waiters
- ★ 5:30PM Dinner
- ★ 6:30PM Evening Program
- ★ 8:30PM Vespers & Flagpole

★ 9:30PM Lights Out

## VESPERS

Vespers is a time when we gather as a community and reflect on the day's memories, thoughts, and learning experiences. Some may consist of skits, songs, stories, and poems which are conducted by both staff and campers.

## REST PERIOD

Each day after lunch, campers are given some personal time to sleep, read, write letters, draw, or converse quietly with their new friends. This time of day is especially important to small children who may exert high levels of energy during the day.

## OUTINGS & OVERNIGHTS

We only take day trips, canoeing along the Connecticut River. The CITs and LITs will also be given the option of spending an overnight on Selden Island.

## MISCONDUCT

Any camper who engages in illegal drugs, alcohol, abusive language, inappropriate sexual behavior/misconduct, or aggressive/violent behavior will be asked to leave camp, and parents will be contacted immediately. For other issues related to behavior, parent contact will be made, and behavioral strategies will be implemented. If, after intervention, the behavior issue is not resolved, the camper may be sent home at the discretion of the Camp Director. **THERE ARE NO REFUNDS IN THESE CASES.**

Camp Claire also reserves the right to refuse registrations as a result of a previous season's misconduct. Parents are expected

to set an example of respect. If any parent engages in verbal and/or physical abuse toward staff, the camper will be sent home. **NO REFUND WILL BE AVAILABLE.**

## CAMPER NEEDS

### ★ Food Needs:

- Be sure to include any campers allergies or dietary restrictions in registration forms. We can accommodate all dietary needs, but we must know this in advance to ensure we plan accordingly.
- For picky eaters: If they do not like the food, or are refusing to eat, they have access to our salad bar and peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Everyone needs to eat at each meal and eating 3 meals a day is part of camp safety.

### ★ Health Needs:

- Campers should practice daily hygiene (shower time, washing hands, changing clothes and underwear, wearing deodorant and sunscreen). Staff will facilitate this and it is part of cabin codes of conduct.
  - Reminder: please send campers to camp with all personal care products they typically use at home.

### ★ Emotional Needs:

- If campers typically see a mental health professional outside of camp, we will accommodate ensuring this continues while at camp. Virtual sessions can be held and camp can provide technology for this. Please contact the Director if you would like to discuss camper mental health needs further.
- Camp Claire has an on-call social worker. If we feel that a camper may benefit from discussing something with the social worker, the Director will contact you to discuss the situation and to receive your consent.



## SPECIAL NEEDS

It is our mission to provide each camper with the environment that will nurture them and allow them to share in the riches of their gifts, and the gifts of others. This builds a wonderfully supportive community celebrating diversity. We have staff trained in many different areas to ensure a positive experience for all.

We encourage parent input to make sure that the programs and facilities meet the needs of your child. Camp Claire is a small camp in a beautiful location. Many of its buildings and locations of buildings were fixed years ago. We do our best, but also acknowledge that steep hills, stairs and roots do limit some campers.

If your child has a physical, mental, developmental, or dietary disability that requires special support, please contact the Director prior to registration. We will make every reasonable effort to meet your child's needs. We are more than happy to schedule a tour so you may determine if we will be a good fit for your child.

It is also important to let the Director know of any events in your child's life which may affect his/her stay away from home. Also, important, please notify us if your child has had a recent change in any medications. This information can only help us in providing a supportive staff. We have dealt with a number of family and life issues.

**Each is treated with respect and confidentiality.**

## HOMESICKNESS

Our staff is highly trained in helping campers overcome homesickness. Homesickness can be a very natural reaction to new experiences away from home but is manageable and an excellent opportunity for growth.

We know from our past experience that not all campers will use the words "I'm homesick." Sometimes it manifests itself as misbehavior or a camper withdrawing to the outskirts of activities. For most campers, the times of day which are most difficult are unstructured times such as Siesta or bedtime.

Counselors have been trained in opening a dialogue with campers and to refer to the Director, Assistant Director when extra support is needed. We have been so proud of the staff in past years in their patience, empathy and dedication to achieve camper happiness. We let the campers know that it's okay to miss their families and give them strategies to foster independence and resilience. As a small camp we are able to provide campers with personal experiences, so no one feels left out. Counselors also communicate what happens each day. Most fears can be alleviated if campers know what to expect.

The issue for parents to address in the case of homesickness (since many will experience it) is not to deny it. As parents, it is most helpful to encourage your child to have fun and not panic if they mention feeling homesick. The best way to fight homesickness is to engage in camp activities.

## PARENT / GUARDIAN VISITS

Camping fosters a certain level of independence for each child. Visits from parents disturb the flow of programs and alter their experience. Approval from the Director must be arranged to prevent possible distractions. Parent visits can trigger homesickness not only for your child but for other campers as well. Therefore, we ask that you first contact the Director via e-mail or phone if you wish to visit Camp Claire during your child's stay.

## CALLING HOME

Camp Claire does not allow campers to have cell phones in their possession during their stay. This is a liability issue and is necessary for the safety of our campers. If a child is found with a cell phone they will be sent home with no refund. In an emergency the Director will contact home. Campers are not allowed to use the phone unless there are extenuating circumstances. In such an instance, calls will be overseen by the Director. In respect to Camp Claire's quiet environmental surroundings, no camper cell phones or other electronic devices are permitted.

## COUNSELORS

We have worked very hard to hire a staff that reflects our mission and have the campers as their main focus. Our senior counselors are 18 and older. Many are in the field of education. Junior counselors are 16 or 17 years of age and are under the mentorship of the senior staff. Each cabin is staffed with a senior and junior counselor. We maintain a ratio of 1 counselor per 8 residential campers at all times.

## COUNSELOR IN TRAINING and LEADER IN TRAINING PROGRAMS

Camp Claire offers Counselor in Training and Leader in Training programs as an excellent learning opportunity for 14-16-year olds. Both groups are involved in all aspects of camp and are encouraged to bring their enthusiastic, creative spirit to Camp Claire. Quality applicants should have previous leadership experience, have worked with children, and be of sound moral character. CIT and LIT campers go home on Saturdays between sessions.

### Program Descriptions:

**LITs:** (14-15 yr. olds) attend three weeks of camp. LIT campers go home on Saturdays between sessions. This program is a general introduction to camp counseling; focusing on team building and developing the skills necessary to be a camp counselor.

**CITs:** (15-16 yr. olds) attend 4 weeks of camp with the possibility of being asked back for the final 2 weeks of camp. CIT campers go home on Saturdays between sessions. The CITs will also learn team building, but the focus is on program development. They will become certified in Lifesaving, CPR and First Aid. CITs learn more about the needs of campers of various ages and the responsibilities of the camp counselor.

At the time of your online registration you will be required to read and sign the following:

## PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT/ WAIVER OF LIABILITY

I hereby certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of the camp participant, a minor child under the age of 18. In consideration for my child being allowed to participate in Camp Claire's summer Program, I acknowledge and agree to the following:

1. This Program affords my child the opportunity to participate in activities, including, but not limited to: swimming, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, stand-up paddleboard, other waterfront activities, nature walks, local field trips, fishing, team play, indoor and outdoor sports, activities in the classroom, low ropes courses, and crafts. Safety is a priority in all Camp Claire activities. Nevertheless, there are inherent risks involved with these and similar activities, including, but not limited to, risk of bumps, scrapes, lacerations & sprains, insect bites, food allergies, more serious injury or even death. I choose to voluntarily allow my child to participate in this Program. I voluntarily assume full responsibility for any risk of loss, property damage or personal injury, including death, which may be sustained by my child as a result of his/her participation. I, the undersigned, on behalf of my child, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, waive, release, hold harmless, defend, indemnify and forever discharge Camp Claire, Incorporated and its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, successors and assigns of and from all rights and claims for damages, injury or loss to property or person (including injury to one's body, mind or emotions), or wrongful death, all manner of liability, claims, actions, causes of action, suits, judgments, executions, or claims for economic loss (collectively Losses) which may be sustained or occur during participation in Program activities or while at Camp, whether or not Losses are due to negligence.

2. I certify that my child is covered by adequate health insurance necessary to provide for and pay for any medical costs that may directly or indirectly result from my child's participation in this Program. I agree to pay for any insurance deductibles or other uncovered medical costs.

3. I understand that this Program involves physical activities and, except as otherwise communicated in writing to Camp Claire in advance of the Program, I know of no medical reason why my child should not participate.

4. I agree to indemnify and hold harmless Camp Claire for any loss, liability, damage or costs, including court costs and reasonable attorney's fees that may occur as a result of my or my child's negligent or intentional act or omission while participating in the Program. I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS PERMISSION AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND HAVE HAD SUFFICIENT TIME TO SEEK EXPLANATION OF THE PROVISIONS CONTAINED ABOVE. AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, I SIGN THIS DOCUMENT VOLUNTARILY AND WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT.

## ABUSE & NEGLECT POLICY OF CAMP CLAIRE, INC., LYME, CT

You have entrusted your child's care to the staff of Camp Claire. We are committed to providing the best and most appropriate learning experiences possible for your child. Occasionally, there are factors in a child's appearance and behavior that lead to suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Connecticut law requires that all childcare professionals report suspected abuse or neglect to the authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and that the family be helped.

Our policy supports Connecticut laws in this regard and requires that all staff report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Children and Families' Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline. At all times, the intent is to protect children from harm and to provide services to strengthen families.

All parents are required to read and sign the Abuse and Neglect form during the registration process online.

**Camp Claire prioritizes the safety and well-being of its campers and staff. Thank you for reading this document and for helping to ensure your camper is prepared to have an amazing camping experience!**

Please reach out to [info@campclaire.org](mailto:info@campclaire.org) or call us at 860-434-0368 if you have any questions.