

2024

girl scouts
of northeast texas

Parent/Guardian Guide to Sleepaway Camp at Camp Whispering Cedars



469-998-5484 | 6010 Whispering Cedars Dr | Dallas TX 75236

Camp is an incredible time of friendship, discovery, growth, independence, and fun memories to last a lifetime. Girl Scout camp builds girls of courage, confidence, and character through community life outdoors.¹ We can't wait to welcome your camper to camp this summer!²

Success at camp begins with you, and the information in this guide will help you prepare.

If you have any questions about sleepaway camp, please call us at 214-770-1452 or email us at camp@gsnetx.org.

¹ACA CR.2.1 | ²ACA CR.2.4

Dear Girl Scout Caregiver,

We are so thrilled that your Girl Scout will be joining us at Camp Whispering Cedars this summer! This information will help you and your camper prepare and make the best of their experience.

If you have any questions regarding the information enclosed, please contact the STEM Team at stem@gsnetx.org.

We can't wait to see you soon!

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GIRL SCOUT CAMP
EST. 1926

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BEFORE CAMP

REQUIRED PAPERWORK

☐ **Camper health profile online via CampDoc³**

After registration, you will receive an email from **CampDoc** with a username and instructions for completing the profile. The profile includes:

- Camper information
- Emergency contacts and health insurance
- Health history, dietary needs, allergies, medications, mental health needs, emotional needs, social needs, and special needs (no physical exam form required)
- Immunization records
- Buddy request
- Camper agreement/behavior policy

☐ **Medication form from CampDoc**

After completing the medications section of the camper health profile.

Please print the Medication form and bring with you to camper check-in.

*For assistance with CampDoc, please contact them directly via their website: **CampDoc.com***

☐ **Camper Release Form - gsnetx.org/camperrelease**

Bring this form with you to camper check-in so we know who to release your camper to on closing day.⁴ Please bring an additional copy for subsequent check-ins if your camper is attending multiple sessions.

EXPECTATIONS OF CAMPERS IN THE CAMP SETTING

Camp staff have intentional plans to create a welcoming, positive, and constructive environment for the entire camp community, and this environment is critical to the value of camp. At Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas, we live by the Girl Scout Promise and Law, we value diversity and inclusion, and we are committed to creating a culture of belonging for all.⁵

The following expectations are essential to the particular environment we support. Please discuss these with your camper and ensure that camper and caregivers can commit to meeting the expectations.

1. Camper will abide by the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

On my honor, I will try: To serve God* and my country, To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law. (*Girl Scouts of the USA makes no attempt to define or interpret the word “God” in the Girl Scout Promise. It looks to individual members to establish for themselves the nature of their spiritual beliefs. When making the Girl Scout Promise, individuals may substitute wording appropriate to their own spiritual beliefs for the word “God.”)

I will do my best to be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, and to respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

2. Girl Scouts is an anti-racist organization.

3. Camper will neither participate in nor tolerate bullying of others. Camper will immediately inform camp staff as soon as they become aware of any bullying.

³ACA AD.11.1 | ⁴ACA CR.23.1 | ⁵ACA CR.1.1

4. No electronic devices may be brought to camp, including but not limited to cell phones, Air pods, headphones, laptops, tablets, or smart watches. All electronics must be left with caregiver(s) at camp check-in. If this policy is violated, the device will be held by camp staff until the end of the session, and GSNETX cannot be responsible for lost or damaged electronics.
5. Camper will be responsible for their personal belongings, hygiene, and general wellbeing at camp. This includes adhering to any usual dietary needs and medications.
6. Camp staff work hard to help campers adjust to cooperative camp life and have a successful week, and in most cases challenging behavior can be suitably resolved. Please note: GSNETX reserves the right to dismiss a camper from camp early, at family expense and without refund, if participation is deemed unsafe due to environmental, physical, emotional, or other endangerment to themselves, other campers, or staff.

Camper and caregiver acknowledge these expectations and will meet them.

CAMP COUNSELORS

At GSNETX we work hard to hire a diverse group of staff from our local communities and internationally from around the world. We believe girls greatly benefit from learning and working closely with those who are different from themselves. All camp staff undergo a rigorous application and interview process, must pass a thorough background check, and complete training on camper safety, first aid, mental health, and more.

Girls are facing lots of challenges, and our camp counselors are trained to create a positive group environment, facilitate teambuilding, foster inclusion, and support independence. At least two un-related female counselors will reside in each cabin at Camp Whispering Cedars. This aligns with GSNETX Volunteer Policies and Procedures.

INCLUSION

While the world is rapidly changing around us, girls often process their emotions, experiences, and identities in the camp environment. Girl Scouts strives to foster an inclusive environment – we recognize that campers may come to Girl Scout camp (especially at the middle school level) and express their identities differently than they do at home. It is not our policy to educate campers on gender identity – but it is our practice to support the use of the Girl Scout's preferred name and pronoun. While we do not ask campers to identify their pronouns, we will respect our Girl Scouts' requests. Parallel to the school environment, our staff will affirm their identity and maintain focus on a positive camp experience.

PREPARING FOR A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE

Why Sleepaway Camp

Camp is a magical place where we build girls of courage, confidence, and character. You're sending your child to us and their camp experience is important to us.

Here is what you and your camper can expect during sleep away camp:

Our Summer Camp Philosophy: All activities foster courage, confidence, and character in girls to help them discover their full potential, connect with others, and take action to improve their lives and uplift their communities. At Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas, we live by the Girl Scout Promise and Law, we value diversity and inclusion, and we are committed to creating a culture of belonging for all.⁶

⁶ACA AD.32.1

Summer Camp Mission: Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.⁷

Summer Camp Goal: Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas (GSNETX) is committed to helping girls find their personal paths into adulthood as well as equipping them with the necessary tools to meet obstacles and pressure head on.

Summer Camp Outcomes: As a participant in summer camp at Camp Whispering Cedars home of the STEM Center of Excellence, sleep away campers achieve the following^{8,9}:

- Feel like they belong and develop a strong sense of self,
- Improve healthy relationships by communicating ideas with others,
- Increase in STEM value through use of science, technology, engineering, or math to do something that matters to them,
- Outdoor environmental stewardship, and
- Seek challenges and keep trying when things are hard.

Our staff is trained on our philosophy, safety, mission, goals and outcomes and are ready to provide a physically and emotionally safe space for girls to be their authentic selves.

Success at camp starts with you! Knowing what to expect and encouraging your camper to adapt to challenges she may experience can help her get the most out of her time at camp. You are encouraged to consider the following expectations prior to camp:

Is your camper ready for Summer Camp?

Now is the best time to start practicing these things to ensure your camper is a pro by the time she comes to camp. Review this list to ensure camp readiness¹⁰

- Camper wants to come to camp.
- Camper is willing to camp in rustic outdoor environment. (Sounds, weather, darkness, wildlife)
- Camper has successfully spent nights away from home and can get herself to sleep at night.
- Camper wants to eat, sleep, and play in a diverse group environment that offers limited opportunities for time alone.
- Camper can manage her own belongings and hygiene, including bathing, toothbrushing, hair care, and dressing in activity-appropriate attire (swimsuit, for example).
- Camper and caregiver(s) are committed to girl remaining at camp the entire week and working through any feelings of missing home that arise – our staff are ready to help your girl succeed.
- Please consider how you can help build your camper's readiness for camp over the coming months.

Camping progression

- Camp activities progress by age they will have choices of activities to participate in throughout the day.¹¹
- Girls going into 6th grade and up will welcome the independence of cabin camping in Cedar Lodge and Glen Oaks Lodge. This Girl Scouts experience fosters camper independence, responsibility, and bonding with peers as their authentic selves.
- The lodge cabins have metal bed frames, blinds for windows, and AC units to make it cozy.

Independence means no direct communication during camp

- This is a chance for girls to have independent adventures, to keep in touch through mail, and to reconnect with family at the end of the week. Girl(s) and caregiver(s) must be comfortable forgoing all direct contact for the week (no phone calls, email responses, or other direct updates).
- Please do NOT tell your camper they can call home during camp, even if they begin missing home.

⁷ACA AD.11.1 | ^{8,9}ACA CR.23.1 | ¹⁰ACA CR.1.1 | ¹¹ACA CR.1.1

New friends and old friends

- Most girls attend camp for the first time without a friend they already know, and counselors work to foster friendships in camper groups.
- We are fortunate to host a diverse community at camp, and campers can expect the opportunity to live and play with girls and leaders who are different from one another. Differences may include geography, family structure, race and ethnicity, culture, appearance, ability, interests, and more.
- For girls attending with a favorite buddy, the buddy request can be made in CampDoc and we make an effort to accommodate ONE mutual buddy request in the same grade level where possible, but buddy requests will not be guaranteed. Housing assignments are carefully made to support a healthy camp living environment for the group. You can help your girl by encouraging her to make new friends in their unit, and please do NOT assure your girl that she will be housed with a particular person. If a girl is only willing to attend camp on the condition that her housing assignment is guaranteed, we would like to suggest family or troop camp at Camp Gambill instead, where camping groups determine their own housing assignments.
- All campers have opportunities to see their favorite campers of different ages throughout the week.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention, and the development of self-discipline.

The Girl Scout Promise and Law serve as our code of conduct. Sleep Away Camp rules and policies are established for safety and to ensure that we have a common standard of behavior. We ask that you do not contradict the established sleep away camp rules and policies.

Corrective discipline will be a creative, caring effort on the part of the counselor. Staff will suggest positive alternatives to unacceptable behavior before it gets out of control.

Problem-solving techniques:

1. Discuss rules and policies with camper(s) setting both personal and/or physical boundaries and identify infraction(s).
2. The possible consequences of breaking any camp rule and/or policy include:
 - a. Verbal redirections by Camp Counselor.
 - b. Restriction from activity as deemed appropriate by Camp Director.
 - c. Conference with Camp Director.
 - d. Removal from the camp without refund of any fees.
 - e. A combination of the above

Camp staff retain the discretion as to which consequence(s) will be administered, regardless of whether it is a first offense or whether other disciplinary consequence(s) are available.

Enforcement of all sleep away camp rules and policies will be without malice and consistent in application.

At no time will discipline deprive a camper of sleep, food, or restroom privileges; place a camper alone without supervision; or subject a camper to ridicule, shame, threat, corporal punishment (striking, biting, kicking, pushing, squeezing); or excessive physical exercise; or physical restraint beyond what's necessary to remedy a situation.

Regular evaluation of camper groups will be done to ensure that the camp environment is not contributing to behavior problems.

Bullying policy

Bullying and harassment of any kind, including, but not limited to social, emotional, or physical harassment will NOT be tolerated at Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas camps and WILL result in a camper being sent home without a refund of any fees.

If I learn that my camper is/was involved or affected by any incident of harassment or bullying of any kind while attending camp, I will immediately notify GSNETX of the details of such incident(s) in writing so that those incidents may be addressed appropriately.

BULLYING INVOLVES AN IMBALANCE OF POWER AND CONTROL, AND IS A PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR, REPEATED OVER TIME AND CAN INCLUDE:

- A pattern of aggressive, intentional behavior meant to hurt or humiliate someone else.
- Pushing, shoving, kicking or otherwise physically attacking another person.
- Purposely excluding or ostracizing someone repeatedly.
- Repeatedly spreading rumors or gossiping.
- Swearing at another camper, camp counselor or STEM staff member.
- Throwing items (food or camp materials) purposefully at another camper, camp counselor or STEM staff member with malice or the intent to harm.
- Repeatedly using words or actions to intimidate someone.
- Teasing another person about her body, intelligence, race, religion, or other characteristic that upsets the person.
- A pattern of name-calling.
- Any of the above conduct that occurs electronically via texts, emails, social media or the internet.

Bullying or teasing?

Teasing is unfortunately a part of growing up, almost everyone experiences it.

Teasing becomes bullying when it is repetitive or when there is a conscious intent to hurt another individual.

Teasing that is directed at another person based on her race, national origin, religion, disability, or other lawfully protected characteristics can be considered unlawful harassment and will not be tolerated.

Cyber bullying

Making threatening phone calls, text messages or emails. Posting cruel pictures or messages about someone online (*including post camp*).

OVERCOMING MISSING HOME

- It is not uncommon to experience missing home in a new environment, and campers can successfully work through challenging feelings to enjoy camp to the fullest.
- If your girl is nervous about missing home, you may want to brainstorm how she can tackle any feelings about missing home that arise during camp, such as by:
 - Asking a friend or counselor for a hug, high-five, or holding hands
 - Focusing on the things at camp she is excited about
 - Writing feelings in a journal or a letter
 - Practice communicating needs with a trusted adult
 - Saying a favorite poem or song
 - Remembering that she is courageous and strong and recalling times she has used courage and strength to overcome challenges
 - Please remind your girl that she will stay the entire week, and do NOT tell her she can leave early.

No technology at camp

- Camp is a chance to disconnect from technology and connect with community and the great outdoors.
- Cell phones, Air pods, headphones, tablets, computers, e-readers, smart watches, or similar electronic devices are not permitted at camp.

No visitors during camp

- Family and friends do NOT visit camp while the camp program is in session.

Summer camp in Texas is hot

- Camp days are typically sunny and hot, and we still have lots of fun even when we are hot.
- We make use of sunscreen, shade, and having a rest in cabins during the hottest part of the day.

DIETARY NEEDS

Dietary specifications are included in the health profile completed via **CampDoc**. Our camp kitchen staff can accommodate general dietary needs such as vegetarian, gluten free, nut free, or dairy free. Please be advised that food is prepared in shared processing space. If your camper has more sensitive dietary needs, please contact us at camp@gsnetx.org prior to June 1 to see how we can accommodate her.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

If religious accommodations are needed at camp, please contact us at camp@gsnetx.org to make plans before your camper arrives.

CAMPER MAIL

Mail time is a favorite each day! Families are encouraged to send letters to their camper throughout the week, and planning ahead makes this possible. Mail can be sent in these ways:

- Drop off mail in the designated bin at camper check-in (when leaving camp property), marked with camper name and delivery day. Mail is not distributed on the first or last day of camp. Refer to camp attendance date when identifying delivery dates.
- Send mail via USPS, marked with camper name and camp address (found on cover of this booklet). Consider mailing early to ensure timely delivery.
- Send email via Bunk1 (send Sunday through Wednesday for timely delivery Monday through Thursday.) Bunk1 details are shared at camp check-in.

The best mail is newsy, encouraging, and dwells on the fun things your camper is doing at camp. Please avoid sharing information that may be disruptive to a camper's adjustment at camp, such as any bad news or language about the house being too quiet, the dog not eating while camper is gone, etc.

All mail should fit into envelopes – please do NOT send packages, food, gifts, or money. Save the gifts and treats to enjoy after camper pick-up!

CAMPER PACKING LIST

*(*print out the list and check off items as you pack. Campers manage their own belongings at camp. Please include your camper in the packing process.)*

- **Camp lasts 2 - 6 days, modify based on the length of your session and don't forget to pack extras!**
- Please bring comfortable, modest clothing that can withstand getting dirty outdoors.
- When planning hairstyles for camp, please be aware that safety helmets, worn for some activities, must fit snugly onto the head. Ensure camper hairstyle allows a helmet to fit properly onto the head.
- All belongings should be clearly marked with full camper name.

Clothing

- ☐ 7 t-shirts (must cover shoulders)
- ☐ 7 pairs shorts (with inseam at least 3")
- ☐ Long sleeve shirt
- ☐ 1-2 pairs of pajamas
- ☐ 7 pairs of underwear
- ☐ Swimsuit/swim outfit (one-piece or modest two-piece that covers the stomach)
- ☐ Swim shirt, swim shorts, optional
- ☐ 7 pairs of socks (plus 1-2 pairs tall socks, optional, to wear with boots)
- ☐ 1-2 pairs of tennis shoes with closed toes and heels
- ☐ Sandals that strap onto your feet (like Chaco or Teva) or aqua socks (optional)
- ☐ Flip flops to wear in showers only, or use sandals
- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Raincoat or poncho
- ☐ Headscarf, if desired

** Some younger campers benefit from having each day's clothing packed in a zip top bag labeled with the day.*

Linens

- ☐ Swim towel
- ☐ Bath towel
- ☐ Laundry bag
- ☐ Pillow with pillowcase
- ☐ Twin-size sheet set
- ☐ Blanket or sleeping bag

Toiletries

- ☐ Medications (in ziptop bag with camper name and medication form, turned in at check-in)
- ☐ Ziptop bag or small toiletry bag for carrying items to the latrine
- ☐ Toothbrush and toothpaste
- ☐ Comb or brush
- ☐ Ponytail holders as needed
- ☐ Soap
- ☐ Shampoo and conditioner (travel-size)
- ☐ Shower cap, if desired
- ☐ Sleeping bonnet for haircare, if desired
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Menstrual supplies as needed
- ☐ Sunscreen and insect repellent (in ziptop bag with camper name)

Other items

Required:

- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Flashlight or headlamp and extra batteries
- ☐ Mess kit (spoon, bowl, plate, and cup in mesh bag)

Optional:

- ☐ Swim goggles, swim cap
- ☐ Stationery (stamped/addressed envelopes, paper, pen)
- ☐ Small comfort object (such as a stuffed animal, book, card game)
- ☐ Religious items if needed (please see note about religious accommodations on pg. 8)
- ☐ Printed family photo to remind you of home
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Bandana (for a variety of uses)

** Please limit your packing to the items included on this list.*

Luggage to bring and how to pack

- ☐ Backpack (used to carry belongings around camp) with water bottle and other personal items
- ☐ Duffle bag with all clothing and toiletries
- ☐ Laundry bag with all linens

** Campers carry their luggage over rough terrain to their cabins or tents, so rolling suitcases and trunks are not manageable.*

Do not send¹²

- Money – no place to spend it
- Snacks, candy, or drinks – all food during camp is provided
- Mosquito netting – beds are in an enclosed cabin
- Jewelry – risk of loss
- Clothing related to alcohol or drugs or that contributes to an exclusive environment for other campers/staff
- Technology (cell phones, tablets, computers, iPods, e-readers, cell phone watches, or similar electronic devices) - strictly prohibited

¹²ACA AD.16.1

CAMP ARRIVAL

THINGS TO BRING TO CAMPER CHECK-IN

- Camper luggage (backpack, duffel bag, and laundry bag)
- Any mail you are dropping off (please see details on camper mail)

Camper Release Form - gsnetx.org/camperrelease

MEDICATIONS

Medications (*including inhaler or Epi-Pen*) with medication form from CampDoc Camper medications must be:

- Clearly marked with camper name
- Stored in the original container
- Prescriptions must be labeled and prescribed for person taking
- Unexpired
- Placed in a zip-top bag labeled with camper name
- Accompanied by medication form (printed from CampDoc)

Please do not bring occasional over-the-counter medications to camp, except for daily allergy or similar medications.

Medications will be kept with the camp health supervisor and administered as specified, except rescue medications which will be kept by your camper or your camper's counselor.

HOW TO FIND CAMP

Camp Whispering Cedars

If searching on GPS, search for *STEM Center of Excellence at Camp Whispering Cedars*. The following address should pop up: *6010 Whispering Cedars Dr Dallas, TX 75236*.

When you begin to approach camp, you will either make a left or right onto Whispering Cedars Drive and will drive by a field and two houses. The curve will go off to the left, and from there you should be able to see the black gate and a Camp Whispering Cedars sign.

CHECK-IN FOR CAMPERS

Camp Whispering Cedars

469-998-5484

6010 Whispering Cedars Dr
Dallas TX 75236

Check in for campers will be assigned by Program Grade Level. Be on the lookout for an email with assigned time slots.

Campers arrive after lunch, so please ensure your camper has eaten lunch before arriving for check-in. Please be prepared to be directed by our staff to allow for a smooth check-in process.

The check-in process includes:

- Brief camper health screening for temperature and head lice
- Submitting medication form and medications, if applicable
- Submitting camper release form
- Dropping off camper and luggage
- Dropping off any mail you have brought

In order to prevent head lice transmission at camp, campers are screened for lice during the check-in process. If lice or nits are present, check-in for that camper is delayed for treatment off property by parent/guardian, and they can return to camp in 24 hours with successful resolution.

Families unload their camper and luggage and then say goodbye at the center of camp, and families depart camp from there. Camp starts immediately as campers join their group and move into cabins and tents. Families do NOT visit camper living spaces or tour camp.

DURING CAMP

Campers will be busy with camp life as soon as they arrive. The first day, they get to know the other girls and counselors in their cabin, tour camp, get their camp t-shirts, sing songs, become familiar with our dining hall routine at dinner, and enjoy camp traditions at opening campfire. The week goes by quickly!

TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP

- Morning wake up
- Flag ceremony and breakfast
- Morning activities
- Lunch
- Afternoon activity
- Dinner
- Sunset time
- Evening activity
- Showers, flashlight time, and lights out

Girls experience independence in our safe and supportive camp environment. The week at camp is centered around the theme of camp that all incorporates a component of STEM. Campers can also swim, shoot archery and slingshots, join in a ropes course challenge, try their hand at science, technology, and more.¹³ The camp activities progress by age and as girls grow through the program they get fun new opportunities.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Low Ropes Information

Girls in grades K-12 are invited to join our Low Ropes experience!

The Low Ropes elements are low-to-the-ground structured activities. They are purposefully geared towards team building and communication skills. Safety and spotting techniques are utilized by all participants.

To make this the best experience possible consider the following:

Clothing should be:

- Loose (but not baggy)
- Comfortable
- Casual
- Durable
- In very hot weather, shorts with shoes and socks may be preferred
- Layered (layers suitable to the season will allow you to be comfortable all day)

Shoes should be:

- Close-toed and low heeled
- Comfortable, such as running shoes or sneakers
- Suitable for the weather conditions (consider mud, rain, cold, etc.)

Who May Participate? Anyone from ages 5-100 with the ability to maintain their balance using both arms and legs. Unfortunately, our Low Ropes Elements are not ADA compliant.

¹³ACA AD.33.1

High Ropes Challenge Course information

Girls in grades 4-12, who fit into a safety harness & helmet, will have the opportunity to participate in the High Ropes Challenge Course on either/both of the following:

- Climbing Tower to Zip Line, (participants must climb the tower before being able to Zip Line)
- Giant Swing

Clothing should be:

- Loose (but not baggy)
- Comfortable
- Casual
- Durable
- In very hot weather, shorts with shoes and socks may be preferred
- Layered (layers suitable to the season will allow you to be comfortable all day)

Shoes should be:

- Close-toed and low heeled
- Comfortable, such as running shoes or sneakers
- Suitable for the weather conditions (consider mud, rain, cold, etc.)

Other accessories:

- Jewelry (rings, bracelets, necklaces, dangly earrings, pins, large hair bows, etc.) should be removed and stored in their backpack. Preferably, they should be left at home.
- Glasses and contact lens wearers- take any precautions that you would normally take when participating in outdoor activities to protect your eyes and eyewear.
- Hair must be styled in a manner that can safely secure a helmet. Hair that is styled too high (such as high buns and braids) on top of the head may prevent a helmet from fitting appropriately. For the safety of the participant, if a participant cannot remove the impeding style, they may not be able to participate.

Who May Participate? Anyone who can climb using both arms and legs and is age 9 and above may participate. If your Girl Scout has physical conditions that concern you or if she has a physical limitation, contact our Outdoor Activities Manager. Our rules on the course are “Honor your Body” & “Challenge by Choice.” The activities are designed to be played by those of varying levels of physical fitness, and our qualified staff will assist you in taking the next step in learning and growth.

BATHING SUITS

Bathing suits can be tricky, especially when they are new, and you are not there to help! For the protection of STEM staff members, camp counselors and our Girl Scouts, STEM staff members and camp counselors are unable to help your Girl Scout with their bathing suit.

Campers **MUST** be able to take off their bathing suit without the help of an adult. Campers who are unable to remove the bathing suit will be instructed to dry off as best as they can, keep the bathing suit on, and put their camp clothes back on over the bathing suit.

Here are some tips and tricks to try before camp to ensure your camper is set up for success at the Aquatic Center:

1. Send them to camp in a bathing suit with which they are familiar and comfortable getting on and off.
2. If they are in a new bathing suit, have them practice putting it on and taking it off at home.
3. Have them try taking off their bathing suit when wet.
4. More than 4 straps are just tricky- although trendy, we suggest avoiding bathing suits with more than 4 straps- arms get stuck and we are unable to help them get out!

STEM CENTER SWIM TEST PROCEDURE

The STEM Center pool prioritizes the safety of Girl Scouts through preventative strategies such as the swim test and dividing the pool into zones. Swim tests will only be administered once on the first day of your Girl Scout's camp session. If time in the camp session permits, campers can test again later in their camp session. If your Girl Scout does not participate in the swim test procedure or if she wears a lifejacket, she will automatically be permitted to stay in the shallow section of the pool and given a red wristband.

The STEM Center Pool has three-color zones, red, yellow, and blue. The zones represent the color wristband given to a camper after completing the swim test. The pool zones have different features and require different competencies:

Red Zone (Shallow): A camper uncomfortable in the water will receive a red wristband. This includes the camper stopping during the swim test by standing, reaching, or holding onto the side of the wall, the camper panics and/or struggles to maintain their head above the water, the camper cannot perform the freestyle or breaststroke, and the camper opts to not take the swim test. In each of these situations, the camper will receive a red wrist band.

Yellow Zone (Middle): A camper who is comfortable in the water and performs freestyle and breaststroke adequately will be given a yellow wristband. Lifeguard staff will grant a competent swimmer with a yellow wristband if they can stand with feet flat on the pool floor in 4ft of water and show control of movement within the water.

Blue Zone (Deep): A camper that proficiently performs the freestyle or breaststroke with accuracy, and they do not exhibit signs of stress or discomfort in the water will receive a blue wristband. A camper can tread water in the deep end for 20 seconds while keeping their head above the water and showing proper techniques without the usage of their hands. The proper treading techniques are flutter kicks (freestyle), frog kicks (breaststroke), or moving legs in a circular motion. As the camper demonstrates proper competent treading, he or she must maintain their head above water while having their hands above the water or across their chest.

The swim test includes the following procedure:

- The participant must enter the pool in the middle yellow section with a lifeguard. The yellow section ranges from 3.5ft to 5ft of water.
- The swimmer must swim from the wall to the rope of the diving section; the length is around 40ft. While swimming, the participant can place their head in or above the water and use any safe swimming skills (flutter or frog kick; front crawl or breaststroke).
- Once the swimmer has completed the swim test for the middle yellow section, they will then proceed to the diving section where a guard will continue to administer the swim test.
- The blue diving section test will require the participant to tread water for at least 20 seconds with their hands above the water or across their chest. Sculling is not permitted.

Notes about the swim test procedure:

- Throughout the entire swim test procedure, two to three lifeguards will be in the water, and the remaining guards will be on deck.
- Participants with lifejackets do not qualify for the swim test, and they will automatically be given a red wristband.
- If a participant refuses to take the swim test, they will automatically be given a red wristband.
- 2-4 campers will swim test in the water at once.
- While waiting for the swim test, campers will be permitted to wait on the deck or in the Red Zone.

***GSNETX/STEM Center of Excellence Lifeguards reserves the right to place campers in a specific zone based on their swimming capabilities demonstrated in their swim test. Even if your camper "passes", but struggles to do so, they may be placed in one zone lower.*

Tips and Tricks to Get Pool-Ready:

- Practice treading water by themselves – without reaching for side of pool or using their hands.
- Dip head underwater and submerge ears without struggling or issue.
- Basic swim across a pool unassisted using appropriate techniques.
- Feel comfortable in the water, and practice different kicks and arm strokes. Build up kicking strength and arm strength.
- 1 or 2 weeks prior to camp, test your Girl Scout's swimming ability and assess your comfort level.

KAPERS

Kapers are chores or jobs that are an essential part of camp. Kaper charts in main areas indicate which chores Girl Scouts are responsible for. Girl Scouts leave a place better than they found it!

Some kapers at Camp Whispering Cedars can include:

- Flag up
- Flag down
- Table hoppers
- Dining hall clean up

SENDING EMAILS AND VIEWING PHOTOS WITH BUNK1

We work with Bunk1 for email delivery to campers and to share camp photos with families. Information about Bunk1 will be provided at camper check-in.

Emails - For a small fee, family members can send emails to campers to be distributed during daily mail call Monday through Thursday. Please be aware that campers do NOT have access to respond to emails.

Photos - We take photos during the week to provide families with a glimpse of camp life, and these can be viewed for free. We know you are eager to see a glimpse of your camper enjoying camp life! We will make every effort to provide three photos of each camper, including a group photo of their unit. We aim to begin posting photos Monday evening, but sometimes photos are delayed. Please be assured our staff's time is focused on your camper rather than on the camera.

If you do not want your camper's photo taken at camp, you must email camp@gsnetx.org at least one week prior to the start date of the session to inform camp staff. Please include your camper's full name and dates of attendance.

MISSING HOME

Missing home is a natural part of adjusting to a new environment, and our camp staff are here to help campers succeed through any feelings of missing home that arise. We support feelings of missing home from campers in the following ways:

- Comforting her feelings
- Teaching strategies for self-soothing and adapting to challenges
- Engaging her with friendships and fun
- Addressing any problems that are upsetting the camper

Missing home is generally resolved within the first 1-2 days of camp.

ILLNESS OR INJURY

Routine minor complaints, such as headaches, stomachaches, scrapes, and bruises, are handled by our camp health supervisor, and caregivers will NOT be notified. In the event of major illness or injury, you will be contacted. Examples of health situations that result in caregivers being contacted include:¹⁴

- Symptoms of COVID-19
- Fever over 100°F for more than four hours
- Any injury or illness requiring transport to a medical facility
- Any injury or illness involving a stay of more than four hours in health care
- Any specific symptoms that concern staff, such as ongoing vomiting
- Menstruation that begins for the first time at camp

In limited cases, a camper must be picked up early due to significant illness or injury.

LOST AND FOUND

Each Camper is responsible for the care and safekeeping of their own belongings. This will be easier for the Camper if they know what they have and has helped pack it themselves. Every item should be marked with the Camper's name. Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas is NOT responsible for damage or loss of personal possessions. These items will remain at the camp until August 15 of the current year. Items will be donated/disposed of by August 31.

Contact us at stem@gsnetx.org or during regular business hours at 469-899-8754 to inquire about lost and found items. When inquiring please tell us the name, dates, PGL and session theme and date. We do try to return any found items at check out. Take a moment to glance at these items before heading home.

CAMP SAFETY

Safety of our campers is a top priority and camp staff are trained in emergency procedures.

- Access to camp properties is limited to campers, staff, certified program providers, volunteers, and delivery vehicles.
- GSNETX camp properties are equipped with a security gate that will remain closed.
- In the event of an emergency affecting a camper, camp directors will notify the camper's emergency contact on file.

FAMILY EMERGENCY

If you have an emergency and need to reach camp, please contact the Camp Director at (469)-998-5484.

¹⁴ACA HW.8.1

CAMP DEPARTURE

PICK-UP OF CAMPERS

Camp Whispering Cedars

6010 Whispering Cedars Dr Dallas TX
75236

**Pick up for Brownies will be from
2pm – 3pm on closing day.**

**Pick up for Juniors and older will be from
11am – 12pm on closing day.**

BRING TO CAMPER PICK-UP

A government issued photo identification matching the camper release submitted at camp check-in. Please communicate this to any relatives picking up your camper. We cannot release your camper without photo identification matching the camper release form.

Families will stay in cars for the duration of pick up. Families do NOT visit camper units or tour camp at the end of camp. Camp staff will assist campers with loading luggage into vehicles.

Please be prepared to be directed by our staff to allow for a smooth check-in process.

The check-out process includes:

- Checking of government issued photo identification
- Retrieval of medication form and medications, if applicable
- Pick up of any take home items
- Pick up camper and luggage
- Drive by collection of any last minute lost and found items