



# Camp Helen Brachman

## 2019 Parent & Guardian and Camper Handbook

Dear Parents, Guardians and Campers,

Thank you for choosing Camp Helen Brachman for your summer camp experience. We are committed to providing a high quality experience for each camper that comes to camp through clean and safe facilities, creative, safe and progressive activities, as well as a kind, strong, respectful and responsible community atmosphere. To accomplish our goals, we hire caring, passionate, creative and committed camp staff.

This handbook has been put together to help you prepare (both parents, guardians and campers) for the camp experience. Please take some time to read through the information provided, and don't hesitate to contact us with any questions about camp!

We look forward to serving your camper this summer at Camp Helen Brachman!

In the Spirit of Camping,

Camp Helen Brachman Staff

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We would like to say a huge "thank you" to all of the organizations that help us serve our campers every summer through their generous donations to Camp Helen Brachman: **The Camp Nebagamom Scholarship Fund, Camps For Kids, and the United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County.**

**CAMP NEBAGAMON  
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**



SUMMERS THAT CHANGE LIVES



**COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION, INC.**

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

**CAMPS**

for kids

**LIVE UNITED**



Greater Milwaukee  
& Waukesha County

## Forms We Need Back

Whether it's your camper's first time attending camp or your camper has gone many times, please read through the information provided to be sure the camp experience is positive for both you and your camper.

We have a lot of information to share with you, so let's get started!

There are a few forms we need filled out and returned to us prior to the camp session. Each of these will help us provide the best possible camp experience for your camper!

### **Health History Form -required**

The camper health history form must be completed each time you send your child to camp. This form will give camp staff the most current information about your child and their past, as well as current health. This form will be reviewed by our camp health care staff and used to ensure the best possible care for your child while at camp.

### **Health Exam Form –optional**

In the past, we have required that all campers undergo a physical checkup, and that documentation from that be provided as part of the paperwork package. We no longer require that documentation. If your camper has an ongoing medical issue requiring the regular care of a doctor, we recommend the physical form.

### **Camper Information Form - required**

The camper information form must be completed each year your child goes to camp. The form will be shared with counselors as needed to ensure that we provide the best experience for your camper! The information you provide is helpful for us in knowing your child.

### **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Form - required**

The SFSP Form is required for every camper since we participate in the summer food program.

### **Behavior Expectations Form - required**

The behavior expectations form must be completed each year your camper goes to camp. Please go over these expectations so both you and your camper are clear about what kind of behavior is expected at camp and what will happen if campers choose not to behave accordingly.

### **Parent Pick-up Authorization – required**

Pick-Up Authorization, gives permission for who may pick up your child from the bus upon their return to Milwaukee.

### **Voluntary Self I.D. Form - optional**

The Voluntary Self-Identification of Disability and Limited English Proficiency for Participants form invites you to provide any information that is relevant to you, so that we can better serve participants of our programs across COA Youth & Family Centers.



## Preparing for camp!

### **Preparing you, the parent or guardian for camp**

Sending your child to camp can bring up a sea of emotions and feelings; they will be different with each parent or guardian. These may change with the years in ways you don't expect. Any first time events can be stressful and challenging, especially if it's sending your camper to camp, 2 ½ hours away from home. We truly believe this incredible, life changing opportunity is worth the distance... let's get you all prepared!

### **Preparing your camper for camp**

The more you and your child prepare together for camp, the more likely your camper will be to have an excellent camp experience. Here are some things you need to know:

#### **For younger or first time campers**

Start practicing daily self-care with your camper. This includes doing the following with little or no assistance:

- Brushing teeth, showering (no bathtubs at camp!), picking out clothes and dressing from top to bottom!
- Campers are expected to make their beds each day and clean up their space. This includes folding clothes, putting dirty clothes in the appropriate place and hanging wet clothes out to dry.
- Each evening there will be a cabin quiet down/closing for the day. Each camper will then have some quiet time to read and/or journal before its lights out. Practicing a similar bedtime routine at home is very helpful.
- In addition to practicing these routines, talk about camp and what a camper can do if they are unsure, afraid or just need some extra TLC - let their counselor know!

#### **For older or return campers**

- Remind your camper that there is a routine at camp and they will be expected to follow the camp guidelines with regard to lights out, bed times and wake up times.
- We want all of our campers and staff to unplug while at camp. This allows everyone to connect with each other and the larger camp community as well as enjoy the quiet of nature! This means **no cell phones, iPods, or other electronic devices**. In addition to unplugging from electronics, we ask that campers not bring electronics because campers are regularly participating in active, outdoor activities and we do not want their electronics to get wet, broken, or otherwise damaged. Remind your camper of this so it's not a surprise when they get to camp. If they are brought to camp, we will keep them in the office for the duration of the campers stay.
- Helping your camper get used to the camp routine and expectations before camp will help them have a great time while at camp! Remind campers that camp rules, expectations and guidelines may be different from what they are used to at home, but are intentionally set from years of camp experience to help all campers have the best possible experience at camp.

### **Homesickness**

Homesickness is a natural and normal part of being away from home. Our staff members as well as our campers will most likely experience some level of homesickness while at camp. The following suggestions will help to minimize or prevent homesickness:

- Encourage your camper's independence throughout the year. Practice separations, such as sleepovers at a friend's house, can simulate the camp environment.
- Include your camper in the process of choosing a camp. The more involvement they have in making the decision, the more comfortable they'll feel being at camp.

- Discuss what camp will be like before your camper leaves.
- Camp Helen Brachman doesn't allow children to call home. We have found that talking on the phone with a parent or guardian when homesick often causes homesickness to increase. Please do not tell your camper they'll be able to call home if they're homesick.
- Send a note or care package ahead of time to arrive the first day of camp. Acknowledge, in a positive way, that you will miss them. For example, you can say "I am going to miss you, but I know that you will have a good time at camp." (Please make sure not to pack snacks in a care package. Snacks attract pests to the cabins.)
- Don't bribe. Linking a successful stay at camp to a material object sends the wrong message. The reward should be your camper's new found confidence and independence.
- Pack a personal item from home, such as a stuffed animal.
- Don't feel guilty about encouraging your camper to stay at camp. For many children, camp is a first step toward independence and plays an important role in their growth & development.
- In some cases, homesickness is severe enough to warrant a camper going home. If the severe homesickness your camper is experiencing is not improving, or is preventing eating or sleeping and/or not participating in activities, the Camp Director will contact you to discuss the best options for your camper. If they do come home, it doesn't mean that you or they have failed in anyway. It will be important to focus on the positive and encourage them to try camp again next year.

## Departure and Return Details

### Drop off and departure

Drop off will be **Saturday mornings** at the Riverwest Gym located at 909 E. Garfield Avenue. Please plan on arriving between **9:00 and 9:30 a.m.** to allow enough time to check in before the buses depart at **10:00 a.m.** We suggest carpooling or parking in the COA lot off of North Avenue, if possible. If parking on Garfield Ave., please be respectful of the residents, upholding general parking terms & regulations.

### Arriving home from camp

The buses arrive back to a grassy area just east of the Pick 'n Save parking lot located at 1100 E. Garfield Avenue (Humbolt and North Avenue.) The actual intersection is Commerce & Dousman. (For those not familiar with the area, it is only two blocks down the street from COA's gym on Garfield where the departure check-in took place.) The buses are scheduled to arrive at 4:00 p.m. Parents can arrive 25-30 minutes early to sign their child out.

**NOTE:** Campers will stay on the bus and be let off as parents/guardians arrive and present a release ticket to the bus chaperones. We will release campers only to adults named by parents or guardians on the "Pick-Up Authorization Form." Adults may be asked to show I.D. If there are changes or emergencies that will impact the bus times, we will contact parents or guardians by text message to let them know of the changes.



### To prepare your camper for the bus:

- Make sure they use the bathroom before boarding the bus; it's about a 2 ½ hour trip, with 1 rest area stop halfway to camp.
- Bring a water bottle and something to read.

- Please ensure that they **do not have any food to bring on the bus**. We can no longer allow food on buses due to litter and increasing food allergies.

**Please review the Bus Rules with your camper(s):**

- Campers sit facing forward while the bus is moving
- Quiet inside voices only on the bus
- Water bottles are allowed
- No food allowed on the bus
- Keep all body parts inside the bus
- If you need something, let the bus chaperone/camp staff person know
- Pick up everything you brought with you on the bus

**Drop Off and Check In Details**

- The first stop will be to drop off your luggage outside the Riverwest Gym. We will have staff on hand to help load luggage.
- The second stop will be inside the gym to check in at the registration table. Here we will confirm that all paperwork is complete and turned in to us. We will have extra copies of all paperwork in case you've forgotten something.
- You will then have the opportunity to meet one of our Head Counselors. Here we will talk about the behavior expectations that we have at camp.
- The last stop will be to check in with our camp health care staff. They will do a quick review of the health history form with you as well as collect and confirm all medications, dosages, administration times, allergies, etc. We want to ensure that we've got everything covered and understand all about your child, so please be patient if this check in station takes a bit longer!
- And finally, we ask that parents and guardians stay with children until we are ready to load the buses. We'll do that as soon as a majority of our campers are checked in and ready to go. Each bus will be chaperoned by camp staff. Buses will arrive at camp about 12:30 p.m.

**What happens at camp?**

Once at camp, your campers will be met by their counselors who will start getting to know them at lunch. Then cabin groups will collect luggage and head off to their cabins, settle in a bit, and then jump in to camp orientation.

**First Day**

The first day at camp will include tours of camp, unpacking, playing games to get to know each other and rotating through a number of key areas at camp. This will include spending time at the waterfront completing a swim assessment to determine their swim ability and level, a tip check in a canoe and a kayak, as well as creating cabin rules and learning about **KSRR** – **K**indness, **S**trength, **R**espect and **R**esponsibility – the key behavior focuses at camp. The day will end with an opening campfire to welcome everyone, introduce all the staff and sing some fun camp songs!



**Swim Lessons**

After the swim assessment, campers will participate in swim lessons. Swimming in a new environment can make some campers nervous, so we encourage you to help your camper understand that they will be safe at our waterfront and that they will gain positive skills when they participate in swim lessons. Each level as determined

from swim assessments will work on different skills appropriate to their level. For example, novices may be at the end of the water on the beach, just wiggling their toes in the water, or they may venture in a bit and learn to put their face in the water and blow bubbles! Others might be working on perfecting swim strokes they already know or learning new strokes! **The waterfront is ALWAYS supervised by the Waterfront Director and certified lifeguards.**

## **K.S.R.R.**

### **Kindness, Strength, Respect and Responsibility**

These 4 words are the pillars of CHB, teaching and guiding how we live positively together in our camp community.

**We at CHB are committed to being  
Kind, Strong, Respectful, and Responsible  
with our words and actions  
to ourselves, others and the environment  
(even when no one is looking)**

### **What does KSRR look like at CHB?**

- **KINDNESS** - being nice to ourselves and others. It looks like showing appreciation, being a good friend, and helping others in our community.
- **STRENGTH** - both mental-and physical. Mentally it looks like asking for help when needed, being brave and trying new things, and doing the right thing even when our peers aren't. Physically it looks like eating camp's balanced meals, staying hydrated and getting sleep to keep your body healthy and strong.
- **RESPECT** - ourselves, others, and the environment. It looks like listening to the camp staff and doing what they ask of us, being a positive member in the CHB community and taking care of environment.
- **RESPONSIBILITY** - being accountable, accepting outcomes for our own actions, being trustworthy, and behaving in a positive way. It looks like admitting when we make a mistake and learning from it.

*\* Putting these words into action is recognized with colorful paperclips that earn special/extra activities or prizes.*

### **KSRR in Action through Program & Play:**

#### **Health & Wellness**

Healthy eating, activity and stress reduction, such as daily stretching/yoga, meditation and journaling.

#### **Reading**

We have a small library that allows campers to borrow books to read during rest time and before bed, if they're interested.

#### **Appreciating our Community**

Learning from each other, appreciating what makes us different, our similarities and respecting the contributions we can all make to CHB.

#### **Learning, Growing, Thriving**

CHB's program areas open campers' eyes to a variety of new experiences. Each area teaches something special while developing skills that strengthen campers and our communities – both at CHB & in Milwaukee.





## Connecting to Nature

Getting outside - learning, exploring and realizing the wonders and gifts of nature... like where your food comes from, or simply enjoying and connecting with the natural world.

### What if your camper makes poor behavior choices?

CHB sets clear guidelines and behavior expectations for living in our camp community to ensure a safe, fun and positive experience for everyone. If campers struggle with following these guidelines our counselors work with them to improve their behavior. Camp has a **Behavior Management Plan (4C's)** that encourages and guides campers to make positive choices, while giving them time to reflect, learn, and gain skills to self-regulate. Campers are supported throughout these steps to correct negative behaviors before they become unmanageable and potentially ending their camp experience.

#### 4 C's:

1. **CHOICES:** Campers are offered structured alternatives/choices that are acceptable choices, rather than the poor behavior choice they have made/are making.
2. **CONSEQUENCES (Logical):** Campers take time away from activities to discuss and practice the behavior we need to see and make amends with camp community members, as needed.
3. **CONTRACT & CALL HOME:**
  - If poor behavior choices continue, campers will write a contract that includes:**
    - Behavior to change... "I will" statements
    - Consequence for additional offense (going home)
    - During the call home, the camper reads contract (they wrote) to parent/guardian**
    - Camper, counselor and Camp Director signs the contract
4. **CHECK OUT:** Camper will be sent home if the behavior does not improve. Campers can also be sent home even if they didn't complete a contract if the behavior is so severe that the safety of your camper or other campers is a concern.

#### **The following behaviors will result in a camper being sent home:**

- Hurting self or others
- Physical or verbal aggression including threats
- Continuously walking/running away from staff or the group (safety issue)
- Inappropriate relationships, sexual or harassing behavior

\*Our Head Counselors will meet with each cabin group to review expectations while at camp and ensure that all campers know what their behavior means for them personally, for their cabin group, and as a part of the whole camp community!



## UWCHB – Fun Classes

UWCHB is a time that campers individually choose which class they'd like to do. Classes are 1 hour per day and run for 3 days allowing campers to truly grow and learn in each area. Each camper experiences 2 UWCHB classes during a 12 day session or 1 during the 6 day session. Choices depend on staff talents; some choices may include:

- Biking
- Pottery
- Meditation
- Archery
- Sports
- Creative Writing
- Swim Lessons
- Gardening
- Fishing
- Ping Pong
- Singing
- Dance

***\*There will be other activity choices based on staff skills and expertise.***



## Cabin Clean Up & ACS (All Camp Service)

Each day, every cabin group is expected to spend some time cleaning up their cabin. We have a special award given to the cleanest cabin of the day! Also, each group is given a Camp Service Project (All Camp Service) to do. This might be watering the garden, picking up litter, feeding our camp pets, or sweeping the dining hall.

***Camp Community + KSRR = Community Participation***

## Cabin Activity Time

Each day, in the morning, cabin groups go to 2 different program areas, 1 hour each. All cabins will rotate through the program areas 1-2 times during a 12 day session, 1 time for the 6 day session. Not only do the campers get to experience new and fun activities together, they will also learn decision making, communication, leadership and team work skills! Program areas include:

**NATURE**  
**OUTDOOR LIVING SKILLS (OLS)**

**FIELD SPORTS**

**ARTS & CRAFTS**  
**ARCHERY**

**SWIMMING**

**VANANI (GHANA CULTURAL EXCHANGE)**

**BOATING**

## Meals and Snacks

We always serve 3 meals a day plus a snack! All of our meals and snacks meet federal food guidelines for healthy meals. Water is always out and available to campers. We strive to have kid friendly, home cooked meals that are low fat, filled with whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables and low in salt and sugar. Every lunch and dinner includes a salad bar. We can accommodate gluten free, vegetarian, vegan or other special diets. Just let us know in advance so we can be prepared.



## Bedtime and Lights Out

This is staggered for the different ages of campers, starting around 9:15 with the youngest campers and going up until 10 pm for the older campers. We adjust bedtime earlier or later depending on special activities happening in camp or the behavior of the group (tired groups = cranky and quarrelling campers... if we see this, we'll try to get some extra sleep).

## Camp's Daily Schedule

7:15	Rise & Shine/Cabin Clean-up	3:45	Snack
8:00	Morning Meditation and/or Stretches	4:00	Choice Time (individual choice)
8:15	Flagpole & Appreciations	5:10	ACS/Camp Clean-up/Cabin Time (after ACS)
8:30	Breakfast	5:45	Flagpole & Appreciations
9:30	1 <sup>st</sup> Cabin Activity	6:00	Dinner
10:45	2 <sup>nd</sup> Cabin Activity	6:45	All About Us
11:50	Change Clothes/Prepare for UWCHB	7:30	All Camp Evening Activity
12:15	Song Circle	8:30	Bedtime Routines begin with youngest
12:30	Lunch	9:15	Beginning of Lights Out (youngest)
1:30	UWCHB (individual choice)	10:00	All Camp Lights Out and....shhhhh.....zzzzz...
3:00	Rest Time		

## Mid-Session Outdoor Activities

### The middle of the session brings fun and new adventures!

TEEN CAMPERS- will head out for a 3 day, 2 night camping & hiking adventure. All trips will be led by trained staff members, at least one staff member on the trip will have a cell phone to communicate with CHB and other emergency services should the need arise. All teen participants will receive trip training prior to their adventure. EVERYONE ELSE -will either do a cook out (youngest) or an overnight campout on camp property... s'mores for everyone!!

## Campfire and Dance

We begin our camp sessions with a special campfire and end not only with a memorable closing campfire on Day 10 but then our grand finale - CHB Dance on the last night!! Campers are welcome to bring a special outfit or shirt for the dance.

## Cabin Groups

Cabin group assignments are based on age and gender. Each cabin has a bathroom with a toilet and sink. Some cabins also have showers. We also have a centrally located shower house. Our goal is that campers will shower at least every other day. Cabins have bunk beds and storage areas for belongings. Each cabin group is staffed with 2 counselors.



## Our Staff

Our staff members are people from around the world! Some of our staff members are previous campers from Milwaukee! Some come from local areas around camp and others come from different parts of the country or world. We have had staff from as far away as England, Ireland, Poland, Mexico, Columbia and the Ukraine.

All staff members go through a rigorous application and interview process as well as a background check.

In addition, we have an intensive all-staff training prior to our campers arriving. The majority of our staff members are First Aid and CPR certified.

The one thing each of our staff members has in common is their passion and desire to work with youth!!



## **Health and Safety**

In the event that a camper becomes ill or is injured, the Health staff will administer first aid. If needed, additional treatment will be provided by the physician at a local hospital or urgent care clinic. Parents/guardians will be notified of any condition that requires a stay in the health center of 4 hours or more or off site care.

ALL medications are dispensed by the Health Director.

**Prescription medications, along with a completed Health History form, must come to camp in the original pharmacy containers, clearly labeled with the camper's name, type of medication, and current dosage.**

***Please make sure to send a quantity of prescription medication which will last the entire session.***

The Health Center has everyday type medications; they are dispensed by the Camp Health Officer in accordance with the physician's treatment procedures and the parent signed health history form.

Please do not send a camper to camp that is ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease. Please check your camper for lice before they come to camp, as any child with lice or a communicable disease cannot stay at camp. For more information, contact the National Pediculosis Association at 617-449-NITS or [www.headlice.org](http://www.headlice.org). Please do not send your child to camp with items that may have been in contact with bed bugs. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/bedbugs/faqs.html>.

### **Emergency Contacts**

Please ensure that you've listed emergency contacts that will be available while your camper is at camp. Reasons we would contact you, or the emergency contacts if we can't get a hold of you, include the following:

- Homesickness that is getting worse, not better
- Conduct by your camper that is inappropriate for camp or doesn't follow our behavior expectations
- Illness or injury to your child that requires a stay in the health center overnight or more than 4 hours
- Illness or injury that requires off site attention at a clinic or hospital

### **Bedwetting and Sleepwalking**

Please let us know if your camper has trouble with or a history of bed wetting or sleepwalking on the health history and/or camper information form. This will alert us and we will be able to discreetly discuss this with your camper as well as letting them know it is okay and nothing to be ashamed of if it happens. We will discreetly change and wash all bedding and clothing if bedwetting happens at camp.

### **Weather Emergencies and Preparedness**

Weather at camp is constantly monitored via weather radios and the internet. Should severe weather threaten or happen at camp, all activities will be moved indoors and/or all campers and staff will seek shelter in our emergency weather shelters.

### **Bugs at Camp**

CHB is a beautiful wooded camp! With that comes bugs ☺ - mosquitoes and ticks are the most common. Please do not send aerosol repellants to camp. Instead, send lotions that can be applied to exposed skin. We'll talk to campers about checking for ticks each day. We'll let you know if your camper is bitten by a tick. If your camper experiences any flu like symptoms after returning from camp, do let your health care provider know that they were at camp in Central Wisconsin.



## Mail

Kids love to receive mail from home! Please send at least one card or letter at the beginning of the session, more if possible! Address all mail to:

**Your Child's Name**  
**Camp Helen Brachman**  
**9341 Asbury Drive**  
**Almond, WI 54909**

## Cell Phones

We do not allow campers to have or use cell phones while attending camp. Any cell phones brought to camp will be confiscated and kept in the office. Campers may not receive or make phone calls. We have limited phone lines for camp business and emergencies. If you have a concern about your campers, please feel free to call the Camp Director at (715) 366-2234.

## Cancellations

We have waiting lists for many of our sessions. Please notify us as soon as possible if your child will not be able to attend. This will allow us to fill the slot with a child on the waiting list! Refunds will be given for cancellations made two weeks or more prior to the camper's stay at CHB.

## Sending Children Home Early

CHB reserves the right to send home campers who may be a danger to themselves or others or who are not following established behavior guidelines. If we must send your child home, for any reason, including illness, accident or behavior problems, **you are responsible for arranging transportation for them to get home.** You or an approved adult must be available to get your child if they need to come home; camp is not the time for you to plan a vacation with no one able to get your child if they are sick or otherwise need to come home.

## Evaluation

Your camper will either fill out an evaluation form at camp or bring an evaluation form home. If they bring it home, please take a few minutes to fill out this form with your camper. Your comments and suggestions help us to provide safe and enjoyable summer camp experiences!

## Lost and Found

Each day at camp we try to connect any lost and found item with the person it belongs to! Items that have names on them are easy to get back to the camper. Please label everything you send to camp with your camper's name. At the end of each session any lost and found items not claimed will be sent down to our Milwaukee office and kept there until August 30. Any items not claimed by August 30 will be donated to charity.

## Camp Helen Brachman Facebook Page

We do post pictures on our Facebook page! Like us and check in on what campers and staff are doing!

**Non-discrimination Statement:** The U.S Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.