



20 Questions to Ask Maine Camp Directors To Find the Best Camp for Your Children

(July 17, 2018 – Portland, ME) – Choosing the right camp for your children is important. Asking the right questions will help prospective camp families learn more about the camps, differentiate the camps from each other, and help determine if the camp is right for their child.

Laurie Kaiden, the director and Campcierge™ of the Maine Camp Experience community of 30+ premier overnight summer camps shares these 20 questions that parents can ask camp directors:

1. What is/are your **session length(s) and dates**? Is it one, seven-week full session or multiple shorter and longer session options? (Some camps will allow shorter in the first year and then longer thereafter.) It's important to think about your child's first summer, AND what you'll want for the ensuing summers.
2. What **type of programming** do you offer for **daily scheduling** – Structured? Elective? Combination? How frequently does the daily schedule rotate? How/Does the schedule change as campers get older? Does the group travel together as a bunk or mixed age based on individual elective choices?
3. What are some of your best **special events**, longstanding camp **traditions**, and out-of-camp **trips**?
4. **Activities** – what do you offer and how often will my child get to do xx (whatever it is that you/your child wants to pursue).
5. **Sports** – what's offered? How competitive? Are there leagues within camp? Are there intercamp games against other camps? Information about specialty clinics or private instruction or specialization?
6. **Medical care** – what is the health center like? Are doctors and nurses onsite? How far and what are the nearest doctor offices and hospital?
7. **Food** – What kind of food is served at meals? Snacks? Do campers eat with their cabin or rotate? Can camp accommodate special needs such as allergies (nuts, gluten), Kosher, vegetarian, etc.

8. Where do the **campers come from**? Counselors? And what is the camper and counselor **retention** from year to year?
9. How does your camp **interact with other camps** for games/tournaments, brother/sister events, socials?
10. Do campers wear a **uniform**?
11. What's the **size** of your camp? How many campers? Staff?
12. How do campers **get to/from camp** (Bus, plane, car)?
13. **Cabins** – How are cabin assignments made? Same or different each year? What are the cabins like (electricity? toilets & showers in or out of cabins?)
14. How do you **integrate new campers**? Do you assign a “big brother” or “big sister” to younger campers?
15. How is **staff hired**? What qualities/certifications do you look for? How are staff **trained**?
16. What is the **background** and experience of the **owners/directors**?
17. How do you handle **homesickness**?
18. **Parent/camper interaction** – How, how often, and when can I **communicate** with my child (letters, emails, phone, packages)? When is **Visiting Day**?
19. Can you provide me with **reference families**?
20. **Cost**? What is the cost of the camp? What about additional costs including transportation, trips, laundry, etc.?

Overnight camp is the place where kids will unplug from technology, connect with nature, have fun, make lifelong friendships, learn new skills, and gain confidence and independence. At camp in Maine, kids enjoy daily waterfront activity, strong traditions and values, and top-notch activities, instruction, facilities, traditions, and out-of-camp trips. Ideally the camp a family chooses will become the campers' summer “home away from home” for several years, as friendships and experiences deepen.

Maine has the greatest number of the oldest, most established camps in the country. Each summer more than 20,000 kids from every US state and more than 30 countries abroad spend time at summer camps in Maine. Maine Camp Experience is a community of premier camps and a comprehensive camp-planning resource.

Maine Camp Experience camps are for children ages 7-17 with sessions from 1-8 weeks in length. Camps typically run from end of June through mid-August. Some Maine camps offer family camp or camp rentals after the traditional camper season.

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