

Big Cove YMCA Camp Parent Information Package Summer 2010



“The Experience that Lasts a Lifetime”

Big Cove YMCA Camp Office

Big Cove YMCA Camp
1565 South Park St.
Halifax, N.S. B3J 2L2
Tel: (902) 425-9622 ext. 235
Fax: (902) 422-2469

Summer Address

Big Cove YMCA Camp
RR#1
Thorburn, N.S. B0K 1W0
Tel: (902) 922-2224
Fax: (902) 922-3563

Web Address: www.bigcove.org
Email Address: info@bigcove.org

Parents, Campers and Guardians:

Welcome to Big Cove YMCA Camp!

Thank you for choosing Big Cove YMCA Camp as we celebrate our 121st year. Summer is fast approaching and the Big Cove Staff Team is preparing to provide your son/daughter with the best camping experience possible. This booklet is designed to give you all of the necessary information to prepare for your child's stay at camp.

Talking to your son or daughter about their expectations of camp is an important first step in preparing. While you are doing this, please consider certain aspects of your expectations outlined in the *Evaluations* section of this package. Life at camp is much different than that of home and can involve some transition. While the nature of the camp lifestyle is very busy with action packed days, the routines can be much different. Discussing camp with your child can help enable them to get the most out of everything camp has to offer.

We would like to invite you to attend our **Big Cove YMCA Camp Canada Day Open House on Thursday, July 1st between 10am and 4pm.** It is a great opportunity for first time campers to become familiar with their surroundings and for returning campers to get excited about the upcoming season. It's also a great opportunity for parents to see firsthand what their child will be doing at Big Cove. You may even want to try some of the activities yourself!

We are looking forward to having your son/daughter join us for another memorable summer at Big Cove YMCA Camp. Thank you for entrusting us with their care. We will do our best to provide *"the experience that lasts a lifetime!"*

Sincerely,

Michael LeDuc
Director, Big Cove YMCA Camp

Transportation Information:

Please take careful note of session and times, as they differ from session to session to allow for smooth transitions.

BUS:

South Park YMCA to Camp (Going to Camp):

SESSIONS	Depart YMCA	Arrive at Camp
1, 3, 5 and 7 (1 week)	12:00PM	2:00PM
2, 4, 6 and 8 (1 week)	8:00AM	10:00AM
A, B, C and D (2 week)	12:00PM	2:00PM
Leadership 1 and 2	12:00PM	2:00PM

The Bus leaves from the South Park YMCA at the times noted above, so please have your camper at the Y 30 minutes before departure.

Camp to South Park YMCA (Returning from Camp):

SESSIONS	Depart Camp	Arrive at YMCA
1, 3, 5 and 7 (1 week)	11:00AM	1:00PM
2, 4, 6 and 8 (1 week)	10:00AM	12:00PM
A, B, C and D (2 week)	10:00AM	12:00PM
Leadership 1 and 2	10:00AM	12:00PM

The bus arrives back at the South Park YMCA at the times noted above, so please be there 15 minutes early to meet your child.

CAR: Please drop your child off at camp at the time stated in the first chart above in the “Arrival at Camp” column for the appropriate session on the first day of camp. Pick up times at Big Cove are found in the “Depart Camp” column of the second chart above. The camp is a left hand turn at exit 27A off of the Trans Canada 104, 15 minutes east of New Glasgow. Take your second right turn (about 100m from turnoff) at the Big Cove sign. Follow signs to camp. Please be careful at the railway crossing and drive with caution on the camp road as there will be other vehicles.

FERRY/AIRPLANE: For campers traveling from out of province by Ferry or Plane, please call the Camp Registrar at (902)425-9622 ext. 235 to arrange pick up and drop off times.

Preparing for Camp...

Forms: Please ensure that all forms that were sent in with your child's registration package were accurate and complete. This information is necessary in order to provide your camper with the best care possible. We would also ask that you inform us of any changes, health or otherwise, that arise before the session begins.

RULE #1: LABEL EVERYTHING.....

Label all articles that your child brings to camp. Campers of all ages lose personal belongings, so make sure all items are marked in some way.

When packing for camp, have your child help you in the process. This will make him/her more aware of what they are bringing to camp and where to find things. It will also make packing to go home easier. We suggest packing old clothes that your child will recognize; **avoid packing anything of value.** A list of what the camper brought with them could be included in the packing process to help counselors in ensuring that your camper has packed everything upon leaving camp.

RAIN GEAR is a necessity of camp - programs continue despite the weather, so gear which you can remain active in is necessary. Rain suits consisting of pants, jacket and rubber boots are a must!

LAUNDRY: Camper laundry is not available except in an emergency. A dirty-laundry bag is a good idea to keep your camper organized.

MERCHANDISE

Below is a list of merchandise which can be purchased at Camp. Merchandise is also available to purchase at the South Park YMCA. Please ask the front desk for details.

BIG COVE CLASSIC LINE

Classic T-shirts **\$20**

Classic Crewneck Sweatshirts **\$30**

Classic Ball Caps **\$20**

Classic Toques Now in Red! **\$20**

Classic Porcelain Mugs **\$12**

NEW AND EXCITING!

NEW Toques in Brown and Pink **\$20**

NEW Full-zip Hooded Sweatshirts! **\$52**

Retro T-shirts in 5 Funky Colours **\$20**

Stainless Steel Water Bottle **\$15**

All prices include HST. Supplies and sizes are limited.

While Your Camper is at Big Cove YMCA Camp...

Telephone:

There is no telephone available for campers to make calls from camp. In cases where consultation is required, the Camp Director will assist your son/daughter in making the call. On occasion, we may call you to discuss behaviour or special circumstances. Any emergency calls should be directed to Mike LeDuc the Camp Director, or the Junior and Senior Section Managers.

Mail:

It is requested that parents and other relatives do not visit campers while they are at camp. However, we do encourage parents and friends to send lots of snail mail. Pre-addressed envelopes or postcards will help younger campers remember who to write and will help the post-office in delivering them! A letter sent prior to your camper's arrival at camp will arrive early in the session.

Care Packages and Food:

We ask that if you send care packages that you do not send candy, junk food, or any products containing nuts. Big Cove is a **NUT FREE** facility. We have many campers throughout the summer with nut allergies. Junk food in the cabins attracts animals and creates a lot of litter through our main field, causes disagreements between cabin mates, and interferes with healthy eating habits. We try to promote healthy living at camp, providing three balanced meals a day, with a dessert after lunch and supper, as well as a nutritious evening snack and fruit available throughout the day. Any campers who come to camp with candy will have it taken away. This policy does not apply to campers who need to bring food with them for special dietary reasons. If you would like to send your child a care package consider sending comics, books, magazines, toys, etc... Help us cut back on litter while promoting healthy eating.

Email:

Due to our large session capacity and dial up internet connection, we do not check for camper emails. We encourage parents to send letters and care packages to their campers during their sessions at camp. Snail mail is often a more personable and more reliable form of communication with your campers.

Between Sessions:

For campers attending two consecutive sessions, it is expected that they return home for the 24 hour period between sessions if one exists. This will allow them to take a break from camp life, get their laundry done, visit friends and family, and prepare for a fresh start the next day. If, because of extenuating circumstances, this is NOT possible, please make arrangements with the Camp Director to have a between session stay for a fee of \$75.00 per night.

A TYPICAL DAY AT BIG COVE

- 7:30 Wake-up, Morning Dip
- 8:15 Table Setters
- 8:30 Morning Circle/Breakfast
- 9:20 Cabin Cleanup
- 9:45 Interest Group #1*
- 11:00 Interest Group #2*
- 12:15 Table Setters
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:30 ZAP Time (Zero Action Program)
- 2:00 Afternoon Cabin Programs
- 4:30 Free Swim
- 5:15 Table Setters
- 5:30 Supper
- 6:30 Freebie activity choice**
- 7:30 Evening Program (Cabin or Camp-wide)
- 9:15 Snack
- 10:00 Cabin Time/Lights out

* Interest groups are one hour sessions in any two of the following per week: Swimming, Archery, Drama, Arts and Crafts, Canoeing, Outdoor skills, Earth Rangers, swimming. At the beginning of each week, campers get to choose any two interest groups they would like to participate in.

** Freebies are assorted activities that campers can choose from, and vary each day. They differ from interest groups and cabin programs, but some of the more popular activities are repeated at campers' request.

BIG COVE'S PROGRAM - SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

~ Canoeing ~ Kayaking ~ Archery ~ Arts and Crafts ~
~ Swimming ~ Earth Walks ~ Night Walks ~
~ Snorkeling ~ Clay Pits ~ Early Morning Swim ~
~ Drama ~ Skit Nights ~ Campfires ~ Sports ~
~ Low Ropes ~ Bouldering Wall ~ High Ropes ~
~ Zip Line ~ Climbing Tree ~ Initiative Tasks ~
~ Camp-wide Games ~ Theme Days ~ Section Programs ~
~ Gardening ~
~ Wilderness Ethics ~ Canoe Trips ~ Hiking Trips ~

AFTER CAMP...

Evaluations:

Your feedback is very important! At the end of each summer session, we will be conducting a parent/camper evaluation. Below is a brief outline of the criteria that will be evaluated in the survey. It is our hope that you will take note of how we met, exceeded, or neglected to meet your expectations as they relate to these criteria. Your input helps us plan how we can better serve you in future summers. We thank you for your participation as we continue to grow and improve the “*experience that lasts a lifetime*” at Big Cove YMCA Camp.

The following criteria will be included on the survey:

1. **Facilities** (cabins, washhouse, dining hall, health centre, equipment)
2. **Programs** (theme days, camp-wide games, campfires, interest groups, cabin programs, outtrips)
3. **Counselling Staff** (interaction with cabin group, interaction with individual campers, teaching skills, overall staff quality)
4. **Food Services and Healthcare** (nutrition, food quality, healthcare)
5. **Camp Safety** (staff supervision, waterfront safety, outtrip safety, overall program safety)
6. **Registration Process** (payment options, early bird special, sibling discount, free t-shirt)
7. **Communications** (parent information package, brochure, website, communications with Director and Registrar)

In addition to the session surveys, we have a submissions page online for your input at any time:

www.bigcove.org/feedback

Lost and Found:

Lost and Found articles are sorted and laundered at the end of each session. Labeled articles will be returned to the appropriate campers. All unlabelled articles will be kept for two weeks following the end of the session, after which point they will be sent to a local charity. If you are missing a specific article please call the camp at (902) 922-2224 as soon as possible so that we can do our best to find it and return it.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

At Big Cove, we have two Registered Nurses to meet the health needs and requirements of our campers. All other staff members are required to have certifications in CPR, Lifesaving and First Aid. Campers with minor injuries or illnesses will be treated in our health centre. If the ailment persists or becomes more serious, parents will be called and updated on their child's condition.

If a trip to the hospital is necessary, your child will be accompanied by a staff member to the Aberdeen Hospital in New Glasgow and the Camp Nurse, Camp Director or designate will contact you regarding the visit. If any prescription drugs are necessary as a result of consultation with a doctor, the YMCA will initially cover the cost and you will be billed after camp for the appropriate amount.

We ask that you attach a copy of your camper's Health Card if you do not live in Nova Scotia. If you are from outside Canada, we ask that you attach a copy of your child's health care coverage.

Please keep us updated on any changing medical conditions or medicines that may arise prior to camp, to ensure that we have all the necessary information related to your child's health and wellbeing.

If a camper is forced to leave camp for medical reasons, a refund will be issued for the **missed time** at camp once an appropriate doctor's note is provided.

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT CAMPER MEDICATION

All medications need to be in their **original bottles, labeled in English**. All medication must also be **accompanied with a note and instructions on how parents would like them administered**. Our Registered Nurse cannot administer any over the counter (OTC) medications without specific instructions from the parent.

HOMESICKNESS

While the camp environment is very busy and active, the transition from a camper's home life can sometimes be difficult. Homesickness can often be a very natural reaction for children of any age who are lucky enough to have a family and home life to which they feel attached.

Homesickness is quite often something a maturing child will go through on the way to becoming a self-reliant confident young adult. There is an emphasis put upon preparing camp staff for homesickness, so they are equipped to detect the early signs and deal with them as each child requires. Quite often, those campers who experience homesickness during their stay at camp are those that leave with the best feeling of achievement and attachment to the camp environment.

We suggest that you discuss the feelings of homesickness with your child prior to camp and recognize these feelings as natural and an important part of growing up. In situations where homesickness persists or is particularly severe, we will contact parents to seek advice to help your child through the event.

Most often, camp staff and parents are able to work through the homesick feelings and create a supportive environment at camp similar to the feeling campers have at home. Unfortunately, in situations where campers leave camp because of homesickness, there are **no refunds** issued.

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Why Have a Behaviour Policy?

At Big Cove YMCA Camp we are committed to providing a safe, supportive environment for all of our participants. It is our belief that this type of environment enables us to provide a quality experience.

This policy handbook is designed as a basis for maintaining behaviour and to provide a standard for what is acceptable at Big Cove YMCA Camp. As each situation that arises is different, it is up to the discretion of the Camp Director and the Big Cove YMCA Camp staff in dealing with each specific situation.

We ask that this standard be reviewed with all campers by the parents prior to the beginning of the session.

What is Acceptable Behaviour?

In order to ensure safety at camp, the following list of unacceptable behaviour by campers has been developed. It is designed as a standard which will enable the staff and Camp Director to appropriately deal with any situations that may arise. It is not meant to describe every possible unacceptable behaviour, but to give a composite standard which can be used.

BEHAVIOUR STANDARDS

Listed below are disruptive behaviours that will not be tolerated at camp.

- Any act that may create an unsafe or dangerous situation for campers or staff.
- Stealing, vandalism or other damaging or illegal acts.
- Physical violence towards campers or staff.
- Physical or verbal abuse towards campers or staff.
- The use of a weapon.
- Leaving the camp property without supervision or permission.

- Racial intolerance.
- Sexual activity or misconduct.
- Possession or use of tobacco or alcohol products.
- Possession or use of any illegal drugs.
- Any behaviour that does not comply with the mission and values of the YMCA or negatively affects another camper's experience at camp.

What will be Done?

If any camper exhibits any of these behaviours while at camp, they will be spoken to by the Camp Director and/or Section Managers. Depending on the nature of the situation and possible concern over recurrence the following actions could take place:

- *Parent/Guardian will be contacted and asked to arrange for the removal of their camper from site.
- *The Camp Director or Section Director will contact the parent/guardian and inform them of the situation. At this point they will seek help in avoiding future problems and the parent will be made aware that if the behaviour persists the camper will be removed.

If a camper is removed from site for behaviour reasons, they will not be permitted to return to camp the following summer(s) unless the Camp Director is satisfied that the unacceptable behaviour has been dealt with and will not recur.

***No refunds will be issued for children sent home because of behaviour problems.**

CAMPER CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST (Use this List)

Personal Items:

- Sleeping Bag
- Blanket (If sleeping bag is not warm)
- Pillow
- Toiletries (toothpaste/brush etc...)
- Sunscreen & Sunglasses
- Prescription Medications (if any)
- 4 Towels
- Laundry Bag

Clothing:

- 7 Pair Underwear (1 week)
- 14 Pair Underwear (2 week)
- 3-5 Pair Socks (1 week)
- 6-10 Pair Socks (2 week)
- 2-3 Pair Shorts (1 week)
- 4 Pairs Shorts (2 week)
- 2 Pair Pants (1 week)
- 3 Pairs Pants (2 week)
- 5 T-Shirts (1 week)
- 8 T-Shirts (2 week)
- 2 Warm Sweaters (1 week)
- 3-4 Warm Sweaters (2 week)
- Jacket/Fleece
- Waterproof Raingear (test to ensure waterproof)
- Rubber Boots
- 2 Pair running shoes (water sandals count as one)
- 2 Pair Pajamas (1 week)
- 3 Pair Pajamas (2 week)
- 2 Bathing Suits (no string bikinis please)
- Ball Cap or Sun Hat

Outtripping Equipment:

- Hiking Pack (camping style)
- Water Bottle or Canteen (empty pop bottle will do)
- Flashlight (+ extra batteries)
- 2 Garbage Bags (for waterproofing)

Optional:

- Writing Paper, Envelopes, Stamps and Pens
- Camera (disposable preferable)
- Books or Comics
- Insect Repellent (no aerosol please)

UNDESIRABLES:

Please do not bring: knives, radios, mp3 players, money, junk food, tobacco, electronic games, watches or any other valuables.

❖ **Packing to return home is easier if you know what you came with!**