



CAMPER & BUDDY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- A-Camp currently has two programs: Action Camp and Adventure Camp. Action Camp serves elementary-aged children who have completed Kindergarten through 5th Grades (and are not older than 13 at the start of camp). Adventure Camp serves children who have completed 6th-8th grades (and are not older than 16 at the start of camp). Campers must have an Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis to qualify.
- A-Camp is a non-discriminatory camp in that we accept ALL autism challenges, and acceptance to A-camp is purely based on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- Campers are required to pay and encouraged to participate in all weeks of A-Camp.
- Buddies can be family members, children of staff, friends and neighbors and can participate on a week-by-week basis as it best fits their summer schedule. We strongly encourage buddies to sign up for two weeks of A-camp (consecutive weeks even better) to help minimize weekly change for our campers and to better cultivate lasting relationships between our campers, buddies, and staff.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

- Alumni campers and buddies will be allowed two weeks advance registration starting on February 14th of each year. Siblings of alumni campers and buddies will also be allowed to register early.
- Open Registration for new campers and buddies will begin March 1st at 9:00am each year via our website (www.acamp4kids.com) or link emailed to prospective families and organizations associated with autism. Once again, new slots will strictly be filled on a first-come, first-serve basis and will be time stamped as they are received online.
- Families will be notified of their acceptance as slots are filled or if they will be put on our summer waiting list.
- A welcome pack including the A-Camp Handbook, profile questionnaire, release forms, and t-shirt order form will be mailed out April 1st and must be completed and returned prior to May 1st for adequate staff training and camp preparation.

FEES, TUITION, & PAYMENTS:

Camper Registration Fees

- A nonrefundable registration fee will be due March 15th by 5:00pm each year to maintain a camper's registration slot. If a registration fee is not received by this time, A-Camp will immediately notify the next family on our waiting list of availability.
- If a child has Medicaid Wavier, families should have their agency case manager contact the Director for supportive living/respice reimbursement.



Camper Tuition

A-Camp's tuition represents only a portion of the actual cost per camper. A-Camp continually strives to keep our tuition at a price point that our already struggling families can afford. While tuition may initially seem expensive, families should be pleased to know their campers are engaged in a safe, fun, and stimulating environment while parents' and guardians receive 15.5 hours of respite care each week.

Camper tuition will be due in full on May 1st by 5:00pm of each year unless written arrangements have been made of a pending payment. If tuition is not received by May 1st, A-Camp will immediately notify the next person on the A-Camp waiting list of their acceptance so that preparation & training can be made for camper and staff.

Buddy Fees

As a thank you for encouraging typically developing children to participate as buddies at A-Camp, we only charge our buddies a supply and activity fee of \$50 per week they participate at A-Camp.

Buddy fees are due in full on May 1st by 5:00pm of each year.

OPEN HOUSE:

Open House is normally held the week before camp is in session. Open House is a great time for you and your child to get familiar with our surroundings and staff. T-shirts, backpacks, and other important information are handed out at this time too.

Space and time prohibit bringing siblings, so please bring only campers and buddies who will be attending A-Camp to help us support a great first experience for everyone.

CAMP HOURS/ ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE PROCEDURES:

Camp hours are:

Action Camp

8:30am - 12:00pm Mondays - Wednesdays

8:30am - 1:30pm Thursdays

Adventure Camp

8:30am – 1:30pm Mondays-Thursdays

We ask that you arrive and pick up your child in a timely manner to avoid any distraction to the other campers and to maintain our daily routine.

A carpool line has been established upon entering the main Camp Aldersgate entrance. As you enter Camp Aldersgate, stay to the RIGHT and the carpool line will circle the parking lot. An A-Camp staff member will alternate accompanying children out of your car and to their appropriate starting cabin for their Kota pack.

Please do not exit your car during drop off and pick up times.



CARPOOL TAGS:

- * You will be given 2 car tags with your child's name and Kota pack color. Whoever is picking up your child needs to have the car tag with them to keep the carpool line flowing. If someone does not have one, we will verify that the person is on the pick up list before putting your child in the car. If someone is picking up your child that is not on your list, please send in a hand written note with the person's name and a statement giving him/her permission to pick up your child.

DRESS CODE:

Campers are required to wear the A-Camp t-shirts daily for safety purposes. (Action Camp- orange, Adventure Camp- green)

Campers should wear comfortable shoes and pants. Tennis shoes are preferable, as we will be hiking and participating in lots of adventures during A-Camp. No flip-flops please, except when changing to walk to the pool on swim days.

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP:

ACTION CAMP

Every Day of Camp

Please provide a snack in a labeled Ziploc bag daily in their backpack. Water will be provided; however, you are welcome to include a drink if your child would prefer one.

Sunscreen and/or bug spray should be applied to your child prior to camp drop off so we can immediately get started with our daily camp activities.

Thursday's Swim Day

On Thursdays please bring your child's swimsuit, swim shoes or flip-flops, goggles, and any special flotation devices your child may need. Please include sunscreen. We will reapply sunscreen when they are going to the pool.

No swim toys should be brought from home as they are already provided at the pool

Towels will be provided.

In addition to a snack in a Ziploc bag, please bring a lunch in a labeled lunch bag/box.

ADVENTURE CAMP

Every Day of Camp

Please provide a snack and a lunch in a labeled bag daily in their backpack. Water will be provided; however, you are welcome to include a drink if your child would prefer one.

Sunscreen and/or bug spray should be applied to your child prior to camp drop off so we can immediately get started with our daily camp activities.



Wednesday's Swim Day

On Wednesdays please bring your child's swimsuit, swim shoes or flip-flops, goggles, and any special flotation devices your child may need. Please include sunscreen. We will reapply sunscreen when they are going to the pool.

No swim toys should be brought from home as they are already provided at the pool

Towels will be provided.

SICKNESS POLICY:

* Your child must be free from diarrhea, vomiting, and fever for 24 hours before returning to camp.

* If your child is sick or you know they are going to be absent in advance, please notify our Camp Coordinator.

COMMUNICATION:

Our Camp Coordinator will serve as everyone's "go to" person during camp hours. Each morning you will have the opportunity to talk with the Camp Coordinator. If you need to speak to her, tell her when you are dropping off your child. She will direct you to a parking space and will come and talk to you when carpool is complete.

Backpacks are also a great way for you to communicate information to your counselors; so please feel free to pass along questions or concerns by paper in your child's backpack. Also, keep an eye out at the end of each day for your child's daily report and other fun stuff to reinforce at home.

PRIVACY:

Communication is critical in understanding our children, but privacy is always expected. All parties involved in A-Camp (counselors, therapists, buddies, & volunteers) have been required to sign a confidentiality agreement and are expected to respect our children at all times.



ATTITUDE & DISCIPLINE POLICY

The goal of A-Camp is to keep all campers safe and engaged in active, wholesome fun! We desire to support each camper in a way that enables him or her to feel comfortable and successful in play and warm interactions with peers and staff. By providing appropriate affect, gesture, language, and sensory support that is sensitive to each individual child, we hope to provide a positive environment for all. As we offer this atmosphere, we have great expectations that our campers will interact in an appropriate manner. We recognize that children who are on the autism spectrum sometimes experience difficulties with social rules and group interactions, but we encourage each camper to do his/her best every day. If a difficult day comes along, we will work together to address the issue, determining what caused the behavior and what supports can be provided to prevent reoccurrences. Our therapists will coach staff and volunteers in training prior to camp, and daily, as needs occur.

In order to clarify expectations for campers, at the beginning of camp, staff will review the rules with the campers. They will be positively stated with words and pictures and posted for the duration of camp. A-Camp discipline strategies will focus on prevention. Staff will anticipate situations that have the potential for triggering difficult behavior based on information provided on the A-Camp Profile Form and attempt to prevent the occurrence by identifying the initial signals of stress/behavioral escalation, and:

- * Offering reassurance or additional support
- * Suggesting the campers take a break
- * Redirecting the camper's attention to a different activity

If these preventive strategies are unsuccessful, other approaches may be utilized. These may include a time away to calm down or a physical intervention, only if necessary to maintain a safe environment for the campers and staff. If situations arise that involve significant behavioral outbursts (i.e. aggressive or injurious behaviors) or require the use of physical intervention, the staff team will come together with therapists at the end of that day of camp to discuss the situation and determine what changes can be made to prevent reoccurrence or avoid escalation. If it is decided that a camper necessitates the support of a one-on-one aide throughout each hour of camp in order to successfully participate, the expense of that level of support will be the parental responsibility. If this one-to-one support is deemed necessary, the therapist will dialogue with parents or guardians regarding potential options for continuing in camp.

For the safety and well-being of other campers, children who are repeatedly unable to abide by the rules or who present a significant risk of injury to themselves or others may be removed from camp, with no refund issued.