



## Family Handbook

## **Greetings from Maine and Welcome to Camp Runoia's 111<sup>th</sup> season!**

An exciting summer lies ahead for all of our campers and counselors. We are thrilled to continue Runoia's timeless traditions and dedication to campers and counselors this summer. It is a pleasure to have your daughters join us.

Our Family Handbook is written to provide reference information for you and your family along with some guidance about coming to camp for the first time and for returning families. You will find the answers to many questions in the next few pages. Feel free to contact us with any additional questions.

Thank you for giving the gift of camp to your daughter, we find it to be one of the most profound experiences a child can have. We look forward to working together in the months and years to come.

Regards,

Pam Cobb Heuberger and Alex Jackson  
The Camp Runoia Directors for the Runoia Team



## **Important Dates and Contact Info:**

### **First Session**

Drop Off: Thursday, June 29 (1:30pm to 3:30pm)

Pick Up: Saturday, July 22 (9:30am –10:30am)

### **Second Session**

Drop Off: Sunday, July 23 (1:30pm to 3:30pm)

Pick Up: Wednesday, August 16 (9:30am-10:30am)



### **Camp Contact Info**

Phone: 207-495-2228

Fax: 207-495-2287

### **Emails:**

General: [director@runoia.com](mailto:director@runoia.com)

Alex: [alex@runoia.com](mailto:alex@runoia.com)

Pam: [pam@runoia.com](mailto:pam@runoia.com)

Office: [office@runoia.com](mailto:office@runoia.com)

### **Mailing address – year round (for mail):**

Camp Runoia  
PO Box 450  
Belgrade Lakes,  
ME 04918

### **Address for UPS or FedEx (our street address):**

Camp Runoia  
3 Lucy Weiser Lane  
Belgrade, ME 04917

## **Directions to Camp**

**For GPS use the following address:**

**3 Lucy Weiser Lane, Belgrade Maine**

### **Directions:**

Take Interstate 95 (traveling north or south) to exit 112B near Augusta, Maine. Exit 112B will put you on Route 27 North towards the Belgrade Lakes Region. After passing through the town of Belgrade (about 8 miles north of Augusta) you will cross Route 135, with the Belgrade Town Hall on your left and Christy's Market/Irving Gas on your right. Continue on Route 27 towards the town of Belgrade Lakes. From the intersection of Route 135, travel 1.9 miles and turn right onto Point Road (if you have arrived in the town of Belgrade Lakes, you've gone too far). Drive 2 miles to the end of Point Road -Point Road ends at the camp gate with the two stone pillars.



## Accommodations in the Belgrade Lakes Area



Belgrade Lakes, Maine, is just over one hour from the coastal regions of Portland, Boothbay and Camden and one hour from the Weld Mountain region. Augusta is about 15 -20 minutes drive from camp. Contact the places directly for rates and reservations.

[www.belgradelakesmaine.com](http://www.belgradelakesmaine.com)

**Among the Lakes B & B**, Runoia alums, Polly Beatie and Sandy Famous, own and operate this B & B in Belgrade (207) 465-4900 [www.amongthelakes.com](http://www.amongthelakes.com)—15 minutes from camp.

**Belgrade Lakes Four-Season Cottages**, Belgrade Lakes, Maine (207) 495-9217; 5 traditional Maine cottages have something for everyone. They each have their own personalities. They are all set up like little houses. 10 minutes from camp.

**Wings Mill B & B**, overlooking the dam in Belgrade Lakes (207) 495-2400. A beautiful location up on the hill with gourmet dining. 10 minutes from camp.

**The Village Inn**, Route 27, Belgrade Lakes, Maine (207) 495-3553; 10 minutes from camp right in beautiful Belgrade Lakes. Waterfront access across the street.

(Under new ownership)

**The Pressey House**, Lakeside Bed and Breakfast, Oakland, Maine (207) 465-3500. A historic, charming, and comfortable B & B, located on Messalonskee Lake about 20 minutes from Runoia. [www.presseyhouse.com](http://www.presseyhouse.com)

**Best Western Senator Hotel**, Augusta, Maine (207) 622-5804 Western Ave. @ Interstate 95 – 20 minutes from camp

**Comfort Inn**, Augusta, Maine (207) 623-1000; 15 minutes from camp. Indoor heated swimming pool. (Located at the intersection of I95 and Rt. 27 –exit 112B)

**Marriot Fairfield Inn and Suites** –Augusta, exit 112B (207)623-2200 15 minutes from camp. The newest of the chain hotels in the area.

\*\*\*Weekly Cottages\*\*\* – check with them if they want to rent for shorter periods:

**Lake Side Cottage Rentals** – Stephanie Gardner – 207-512- 2957

**Weekly Rental on Echo Cove**: Runoia Alumnae Cottage – contact Stephanie Yeaton at Lakeside Cottage Rentals 207.512.2957 ask for Nina’s Echo Cove Cottage

**Long Pond home for Rent** –Belgrade Lakes -Runoia parents Liza and Bob Sullebarger, 4 bedroom 2 bath cottage on Long Pond. 400 feet of waterfront with sunset views. Contact Liza @ 978 772-4762 or [esullebarger@charter.net](mailto:esullebarger@charter.net), see the house on line at: <http://www.vacationrentals.com/vacation-rentals/32680.html>

**Willow Run B & B for Dogs** a great dog kennel! [www.willowrunfordogs.com](http://www.willowrunfordogs.com)

# Auto Arrival and Departure



## **Arrival Days:** Thursday June 29 and Sunday, July 23

Families driving to camp please arrive between 1:30 pm and 4:00 pm. When you drive through our gates you will be greeted by Runoia staff. They will help you to park. Once you find out which cabin assignment, campers and families go to the health check area and then go onto their cabin. Our staff will take your luggage to the cabin. Help orient your daughter to her cabin area and then begin the process of your departure. We find that it is best to plan for about 45 minutes to one hour for drop off. **DOGS on arrival:** please leave family pets at home unless traveling with them. Dogs MUST BE LEASHED at all times at camp and in your car at camp.

## **Departure Days:** Saturday, July 22 and Wednesday, August 16

Families are welcome to arrive at camp at 9:30 am on departure days. At 10:30 you are invited to join us for a mid-morning snack, coffee and a brief presentation. Families are asked to depart by 11:30. Please note, your daughter's luggage will be waiting for you in our parking lot and our staff will help load all belongings into your car. For safety reasons, please do not bring your family dog(s) to camp on closing day.

**DOGS:** please leave family pets at home unless you are traveling with them. Dogs MUST BE LEASHED at all times at camp and in your car at camp.



# Air Flight Arrival and Departure

## **ARRIVALS**

**International flights** (flying from outside the US into a US city to connect to Boston, MA or Portland, Maine) PLEASE CONTACT Pam [pam@runoia.com](mailto:pam@runoia.com) or Alex [alex@runoia.com](mailto:alex@runoia.com) to find out about international flight options, date of arrival and more.

**Domestic flights** (travel within the United States to Boston, MA or Portland, Maine)

Please book flights according to this schedule:

Arriving Portland, Maine (PWM) – between 9 am and 1 pm on the date camp opens.

Arriving Boston, Massachusetts (BOS) – between 8 am and noon on the date camp opens

*Please note the supervised pickup fees are as follows:*

**Portland, Maine \$75 per camper OR Boston, Massachusetts \$200 per camper**

## **DEPARTURES – Domestic and International**

All flights should be booked in the time frames indicated: Departing Portland, Maine (PWM) – between 6:30 am and 12 noon on the date camp closes. Departing Boston, MA (BOS) – between 1 pm and 7 pm on the date camp closes.

note: campers departing Boston will be at Boston Logan Airport from 1:00 pm until their flight departs. If your daughter is on an evening flight she will be leaving camp in the morning and be accompanied by an adult from Runoia while she waits at Logan Airport for her flight.

*Please note the supervised drop off fees are as follows:*

**Portland, Maine \$75 per camper OR Boston, Massachusetts \$200 per camper**

# Where to Ship, What to Pack and What to Leave Behind

## Options for shipping your camper's luggage to camp:

1. **The Mailing Center** [www.mailingctr.com](http://www.mailingctr.com)
2. **United Parcel Service (UPS)** [www.ups.com](http://www.ups.com)
3. **FedEx** [www.fedex.com](http://www.fedex.com)

Please note, If shipping luggage home, ***ALL luggage will be shipped from camp with the Mailing Center.*** There is no option to ship via FedEx or UPS only the Mailing Center. You must register for return shipping at go to Summer Camps menu. They claim to have good deals on shipping round trip.

**Please ship Trunks and duffel bags to the following address:**

**Camper's Name**, Camp Runoia, 3 Lucy Weiser Lane, Belgrade, ME 04917

- Put our address on the inside of the luggage as well as the outside
- **Keep the weight under 50 pounds**

**Help Us to Help Your Daughter Bring it All Home:**



**MARK EVERYTHING** - Play clothes are the best clothes for camp

Mark your daughter's belongings with nametags or indelible ink markers. The inside or sides of shoes, backpacks, sleeping bags and pads, rain gear, bathing suits, hats, linens, tennis racquets, etc., need to be marked (especially flip flops, sneakers, water shoes), as well as all clothing. Unmarked items left at camp will be donated to a charitable organization.

We are partnering with a great label company called Mabel's Labels –you can find their information on our website or at **[www.camps.mabel.ca](http://www.camps.mabel.ca)** –to help make the labeling process easier for you.

At Runoia our focus is on the experience campers have, not on what they wear. Remember that cabin space is shared space and we ask you to pack with that in mind. Less really is more. Should you choose to pack in a trunk, please keep the weight to less than 50 pounds.

## What not to pack

Expensive clothing, jewelry, and money are strongly discouraged.

The following clothing items are not acceptable at camp:

Clothes that are ripped, sexually explicit, vulgar or display alcohol/drug or tobacco graphics.

## Packing continued...

### Packing for Maine weather:

Maine weather can be unpredictable at times. Typically the climate from mid-June to early August is mild to hot. Daytime temperatures range from 65 -85 degrees Fahrenheit. The evenings are between 60 -75 degrees Fahrenheit. We do experience heat waves up to 95 degrees Fahrenheit, as well as cooler weather primarily in rainy periods. The temperatures at night generally drop into the range of 50 to 60 degrees. Dressing in layers is the best way to deal with the unpredictable weather. We are flexible with our camp program and if we have severely hot weather, we spend a lot of time at the waterfront. During cooler periods, we spend less time in the water.

Two critical pieces of clothing to enjoy a summer in Maine are:

**RAINBOOTS**

**FLEECE PULLOVER OR JACKET**

**Uniforms at Runoia:** Our camp uniform, though not worn every day, is part of our camp program. Uniforms are worn on out of camp trips and special occasions. The basic uniform consists of navy blue shorts, a grey Runoia logo t-shirt, white socks and sneakers and a fleece jacket or warm layer in uniform colors.

We are pleased to have Lands' End as our clothing and equipment supplier. Lands' End has a dedicated Runoia section at [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com). We require each camper to have a fleece or warm layer and encourage you to look at the selections at Lands' End. Search for the Runoia page. Additionally, you may shop through [Amerasport.com](http://Amerasport.com) or toll free phone call (800) 786-9402.

**Laundry:** Laundry is done weekly and is turned around in 48 hours. Pack 8 days of clothing that is all that is needed (see packing list for suggested amounts). **Tip: pack extra underwear and socks.**

**The Extras:** It is great fun for campers to be able to personalize their room within the cabin. Encourage them to keep it simple and appropriate -some examples are photos from home, thumb tacks for hanging up drawings, a calendar, a stuffed animal for your camper's bed and to cuddle with at night, a special pillow or small blanket. A few books, a deck of cards or other things to stay occupied with during "Quiet Hour" are helpful. Fun items (in moderation) for costume parties are always welcome.

**Riding Equipment:** If your daughter chooses to ride at camp –please pack the following items: A low or high cut boot with a small heel, long pants and a helmet (if your child already has one). Helmets and appropriate foot wear are required to ride. If she has half chaps, breeches, riding boots, she is welcome to bring her own gear. All campers have two lessons included in their session. Additional lessons are at an additional expense. Contact office@runoia.com

**Bedding and Towels:** In camp, campers sleep in sheets and blankets in a bed (single cot size). Pillowcases must be on pillows. Campers may bring their own bed linens or rent linens from camp. Camp Runoia’s blankets are fleece blankets, sheets are cotton and pillows are foam-filled. If your child has allergies to these materials we suggest that you provide your own linens. Towels are not included in linen rental.

**Electric Books, MP3 Music, Video, Video Games, TV, Lap Tops, iPads:** We enjoy being in the Maine woods together and hearing the sounds of nature around us. We encourage frequent reading of books, singing and performing of music. Campers are not allowed to bring Electric tablets or electric books (Kindles, Nooks, etc.) or MP3s with screens/video/phone capabilities or electronic games to camp. Campers (age 13 and older) can have MP3 players in their cabin for personal listening during quiet times. The only acceptable MP3 players are ones without screens, for instance an iPod Shuffle or older version of iPod. All devices with screens will be held in the office for safe keeping. Girls younger than 13 may not bring MP3 players.



**Cell Phones:** If you would like your daughter to travel to camp with a cell phone, please collect it from her before you arrive on opening day and take it home for safe keeping. If your daughter is flying to and/or from camp, we will be happy to keep it for her and try to charge it for her return trip if you provide a charger. Campers may not have cell phones with them in camp and we appreciate your help by you knowing where your daughter’s phone is before you drive to camp.

**Magazines:** Camp Runoia is a place where people are valued for their ideas and contributions, not for their looks or popularity. To help girls disconnect from pop culture values, icons and celebrity obsessions, we *do not* allow magazines like: US, People, Teen People, Cosmo, Cosmo Girl, YM, Seventeen, etc. If you need help finding better choices for magazines, please contact alex@runoia.com

**Musical Instruments:** For campers and staff who play musical instruments, we like them to bring them to camp to play in their free time or for a talent show. We have a good piano in the camp Lodge. Please be aware camp cabins/buildings can be humid. The humidity may affect any instrument brought to camp.

## Communication: Mail, Telephone and Visiting

**Mail:** Mail is fun to get! It is a treasured item in camp and is delivered Monday through Saturday. Keep your letters simple. Generally one to three letters or postcards per week is plenty mail. Serious news should be handled with care – please contact a director if you have something serious to share with your daughter so we can be helpful and support your daughter as necessary.

**Mail from camp:** You might consider giving your daughter pre-addressed, stamped envelopes to simplify the letter writing process. Mail from Central Maine takes a couple days longer than expected to get to its destination. Since the weather can cause dampness, please pack envelopes and stamps in a plastic bag to keep them from getting stuck together. If international campers are unable to purchase United States postage, please contact Camp Runoia about purchasing stamps. Mail leaving camp can take 4-6 days to reach you.

**One Way email** This one-way email service is a fee-for-email program through Camp Minder. Emails are printed and delivered with our mail Mon-Sat. Daily emails are discouraged – mailed letters are treasured! If you want to email, use your CAMP-IN-TOUCH account and your communications tool on your dashboard to purchase emails.

**Fax:** Faxes will be delivered to your daughter with the daily mail, Monday through Saturday—not on Sundays. If you send more than one fax a week, you will be billed \$5.00 for each additional fax. Our fax number is #207-495-2287

**Packages:** Please limit packages to ONE shoe box size package per **family** per session. If you do send one package, some ideas for items: books, games, comic books, stationary, postcards, stickers, stamps, replacement batteries. If your daughter needs an emergency supply of toiletry/hygiene items, we will provide them. Try to plan ahead for items like toiletries, batteries, thumb tacks, stationary, stamps, etc. **Do not send food, candy or gum to camp.** We will open packages with campers and send all food/gum/candy items to a local food pantry or shelter. Please inform friends and relatives about our policy on packages. We appreciate your support for our “no food, candy or gum” policy. We appreciate you respecting our “one package a session” rule. Letters and photos are often more cherished than stuff! Campers who celebrate their birthdays during our camp season may get a second package.

Questions about packages? Do contact us! [alex@runoia.com](mailto:alex@runoia.com)

**Telephone Calls:** Under regular circumstances, campers may not receive phone calls at camp. We encourage parents to correspond with their children through the mail. Please call the Directors if you would like to find out how your child is doing at camp. Or you may email [director@runoia.com](mailto:director@runoia.com) at anytime to set up a meeting to discuss your camper's progress.



**International Campers:** May have letters scanned and emailed home a couple of times a week.

## Opportunities and Rewards: Achievement

**Activity Choices:** Our general program allows campers to try a variety of activities. As the session goes on please let her know she can talk to the program director to try activities she has not had a chance to try yet. Sometimes it takes more than one summer session to get to all the activities at camp.



**Achievement and Awards:** Five days a week, each camper has an activity called a "major". A camper submits her top three or four choices of activities for a "major". She will receive one of these choices each week as her major. During the major period, the campers are able to build skills from instruction and practice what they learn. This progressive program allows each individual to excel to the best of her ability and achieve awards in the activity. Campers choose two other activities daily. One period is for mandatory swimming lessons. Achievement and recognition awards are announced and presented at the end of each session.

**Informal Evaluation of Campers:** At the end of the camp session, counselors will write an informal evaluation regarding your daughter's progress over the camp session. We keep copies of the camper evaluations for two years and would be able to make additional copies upon request. The camp experience is valuable for building lifelong skills to adulthood. If you need references for school or other programs, the directors would be pleased to provide them for you.

**English as a Second Language:** We are proud to have an international population represented at Camp Runoia with both campers and staff. Most international campers have a basic command of the English language, and learn a lot more English while at camp through the camp experience. We feel fortunate to have a global community at camp and enjoy the exchange of cultures and values.

**Academic Support:** Our traditional camp experience provides a balance for academic programs for building lifelong skills. If additional support is necessary in the summer time, we may be able to assist campers with summer studies and attempt to accommodate their needs. Please call our office to discuss

# Additional Information

## Summer Reading List: NO E-READERS PLEASE

If campers have a summer reading list, they should bring the books to camp with them. If the reading is required, please contact the directors, so that with her counselor, we can assist your child in setting up a schedule for reading. Our camp library has a selection of books of various reading levels, written in English.



## Special Policies

Parents are notified that campers may not bring weapons, have use or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco products, dangerous items, pornography, fireworks. A reminder that Runoia is a smoke-free/tobacco free environment. Any weapons traveling with families in their vehicle must be left locked in their vehicle when on camp premises.

## Forms, Special Dietary Needs, Emergency Contacts

**Medical forms** for each camper will be available on our website homepage: [www.runoia.com](http://www.runoia.com) through the parent login area. Every camper must have an up to date medical form with an emergency release signed in camp prior to June 1. Each camper's forms must be completed and signed by the camper's pediatrician.

**All Prescription Medication** and **over-the-counter medication** must be in the original dispensary, labeled with the physician's instructions, the name of the medication, and the dosage. Please repeat these instructions on the camper's medical form. All medications and/or vitamins will be held by the nurse and will be administered by our medical staff at camp.

**Contacting Parents for Medical Reasons:** Either the camp director or the nurse on duty will contact parents if the camper is taken into a medical facility for evaluation or treatment. Additionally, if a camper runs a fever of over 100 degrees F for longer than 8 hours and/or spends the night in our Health Cabin, the parent(s) will be contacted.

**Emergency Contacts:** The camp medical form includes an area for two emergency contacts. Please be sure to notify these individuals that you are using them as emergency contacts for Camp Runoia. We will make every attempt to notify parents in an emergency. If you will be away from your home and/or office for even a few days during your daughter's camp session, please notify the directors in writing regarding your travel plans and itinerary.

**Food and Special Dietary Needs:** If your child has special dietary requirements or allergies to food, please be sure to indicate this on the camper's medical form. In addition, we would appreciate a letter to the directors regarding special dietary needs. We will attempt to accommodate your child's needs, however, we need to be informed prior to the beginning of camp. For lactose intolerance, we have milk substitute. We have vegetarian fare for campers who have written permission to eat vegetarian.

## Camp Accreditation, Financial Policy, and Gratuities

**Financial Policy:** Camp Runoia must have an online completed enrollment form and financial deposit to hold a space for a camper for the camp session. Once the enrollment form and non-refundable deposit are received, the tuition balance is due in full (optional installments on Feb. 1 and April 1) by April 1. There is no reduction in the tuition for late arrival or early departure. In case of cancellation, the enrollment deposit fee is non-refundable. Tuition is payable in U.S. dollars by check or money order. Wire transfers to Camp Runoia's account are available to international families. Extra charges for wire transfer are the family's responsibility. During the season there is no reimbursement for cancellation or departure prior to the end of the session.

**Enrollment for Next Summer:** In August, we send information to camper families for re-enrollment. Information for early enrollment discounts is included. Some age groups and sessions fill up rapidly. We encourage you to make plans as soon as possible to ensure a space at camp for your child for the following summer. We will hold your daughter's space in camp until September 30, after which another camper will be offered the space.

**Gratuities:** Our camp policy, and the policy of the American Camp Association, state that counselors and employees of Camp Runoia may not receive monetary tips or gifts from parents for the care of their children. We adhere to this policy and all our employees are informed of and understand this policy. Parents can express their appreciation by making donations to the Camp Runoia "Betty Cobb Memorial Campership Fund", a not-for-profit 501 © (3). Checks may be made out to the Camp Runoia Alumnae Organization (CRAO) and mailed to the Camp Runoia office: PO Box 450, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918 USA

**Risks Inherent to Summer Camp:** To help reduce risk, Camp Runoia is voluntarily accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). We follow standards pertaining to: program, site, facilities, transportation, vehicles, administration, personnel, and health care. Standards are evaluated by ACA professionals every three years and updated by Camp Runoia annually. Camp Runoia follows Maine State and Federal guidelines applicable to camp programs. Camp Runoia hires qualified and certified counselors to run the programs and activities available to your daughter at camp. Statistics show that fewer accidents happen at camp than in homes and at school. We care about your children as if they were our own. The risks inherent to camp activities and the environment are undeniable. We will do everything possible to reduce and manage risk in the camp setting in order to provide a safe, caring, and healthy environment for your child. If you have concerns about specific activities, please contact the directors to discuss these concerns.

# Camp Runoia and the Internet

So many of us count our friendships with our camp friends as our most meaningful and true friendships. We wait expectantly until we will be together again and cannot wait to build more memories together. Unlike ten, twenty or thirty years ago we can have instant access to these friends throughout the school year. We can Facebook, twitter, instant message, Skype and text throughout the day. This continued contact will help foster our friendships and keep us current in each other's lives. We can share in triumphs, console in sadness, cheer success and laugh together. What a gift to have the chance to move our camp community from the shores of Great Pond to cyber space.

To celebrate our community and our love of Runoia, we have created the Camp Runoia Official Facebook page and we are thrilled to count campers, staff (past and present), alumnae and friends among its members. As with our time while at camp, we are excited to be together and we have a set of expectations that apply to the group and to the use of Runoia's name in cyber space.

It is our intent that all members of our community will refrain from the following behavior while on the Official Runoia Facebook page and in all cyber contexts that refer to or imply connection to Camp Runoia:

- Hurtful or unkind comments or photos
- Sexualized comments or sexually suggestive comments or photos
- Degrading comments or photos
- Swear words
- Topics relating to alcohol or drugs

We frequently search different sites for Camp Runoia's name. We have found fun postings by our campers and staff who are thrilled to share their experience through pictures and stories. Most all of the postings are positive. We, of course, have no control over what gets posted, how campers or staff members portray themselves or what they say about our camp. This summer we will discuss with our senior campers about being careful for their own safety, being respectful to the people in our camp community and respectful of the Camp Runoia name and reputation.

Please help us to keep Runoia in cyberspace the same magical place that we all know it to be –help keep it a place where: "I want to go back again to ol' Runoia..."

## **Preparing for camp: New Campers, Friends and Siblings**

**Friends at Camp and Social Interaction:** Camp Runoia's culture is conducive to making camp friends quickly. Children live together by age groups, choose most daily activities individually, and share meals family-style at tables of mixed age groups that are rotated on a weekly basis. In the evening, our program is designed to get the entire camp involved in a group activity. Some girls like to go to camp with a friend, others like their independence – we can accommodate both styles easily at camp.

Your daughter may get homesick at camp –we all miss those we love when we are away. She may write home and state it clearly, she may write home and complain about camp and she may say nothing at all. Here are some ways to navigate “homesick” correspondence.

### **Preparing your Child for Her New Adventure**

- \* Discuss the schedule with your daughter. Discuss what camp will be like - share in her excitement over all the new activities and give her a chance to voice any concerns she might have. Plan a few sleepovers with friends and relatives to help her get used to and “practice” being away from home.
- \* Send one letter to your child before camp, so she has a letter waiting for her at camp. The section on “Mail” gives some suggestions about letter writing. Let your child bring a favorite stuffed animal, doll or blanket for her room at camp, so she can feel comfortable in her new surroundings.
- \* Spend time with your daughter before camp begins and assure her of your love. Don't mention how much you'll miss her; rather, emphasize how proud you are of her and how excited you are about her camp opportunity.
- \* Help your child to feel positive about going off to camp and the first steps will begin this spring while your child is still at home.

**Cabin Assignments:** Campers live by age groups. Cabins are assigned and are based on mixing campers together as much as possible. As our campers return to camp for many summers, we realize an important aspect for girls is spending time with their camp friends. We understand this and work with returning campers to assign cabins with one or more of their friends. New girls adjust very well since returning and new campers are mixed together – no one is a stranger for long! We try to accommodate requests although we cannot guarantee your daughter will be in a specific cabin with specific people. If campers come to camp with a friend, they might not be in the same cabin. If parents have special requests, please contact the one of the directors. Please support our decisions and do not ask a counselor on opening day to make roommate changes.

**Siblings at Camp:** Some sisters enjoy the familiarity of being together and others would prefer to spend time away from their family members. They choose activities separately and can spend free time together or with their own friends.

**WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY:** “It’s hot, mosquitoes are everywhere. Nobody likes me. I hate camp and I want to come home.” Dr. Johnson, a psychologist with the American Camp Association says, “95% of the time, children overcome their homesickness and are adjusted by the time a sad letter reaches parents. It’s a mistake for parents to view these initial thoughts as representative of the camp experience.” We agree with Dr. Johnson. Homesickness is a grieving emotion and we acknowledge it. Our staff is trained to console children, acknowledge their feelings, and get the child involved in activities and social situations to help them build their self-confidence. This can happen in a few minutes or a day or two. At times—bedtime and Rest Hour—children may experience temporary homesickness.

Dr. Christopher Thurber defines homesickness as a preoccupied feeling people have when away from familiar surroundings. These feelings relate to fears of the unknown, fears of failure, fears of loss of loved ones, and overall anxiety. It is common and can manifest with stomachaches, headaches, misbehaving or statements of “disliking camp and missing home.” Generally, it lasts for a 1-3 days and the camper adjusts to camp by feeling familiar with her surroundings, schedule, friends, and counselors. The key to dealing with homesickness is to try and prevent it by preparing your child before camp.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Acknowledge your child’s feelings by writing her, for example, “you seem scared (or lonely or hurt). Have you talked to your counselor about how you are feeling?” Encourage your child to try all the activities at camp and focus on a simple goal she can attain. Ask her if she has taken canoeing and learned the parts of the canoe; ask her to name the horses at camp, or the girls in her cabin, or her counselors’ names. These are examples but you know your child’s interests best. Design your letter to acknowledge her feelings but move on to questions about what she can accomplish and achieve at camp.

Our staff takes the same approach and we will be effective if we are consistent when helping your daughter overcome homesickness. Please try not to dwell on her homesickness (or yours for her). Since camp is an opportunity for your child to grow, mature, and gain independence, tell her you love her very much and want her to get the most from her camp experience. Another strategy is to say, “I will continue to write you a few times a week and I want you to write me back and tell me all the things you are doing.”

**WHAT YOU CAN AVOID:** Avoid writing about missing your child in letters – avoid discussing all the family fun she is missing while she is at camp. Do not make promises like, “I’ll pick you up from camp next week if you’re still unhappy,” or, “I’ll call you on Monday at 4 PM.” These statements will only prolong her homesickness, not reassure her of your love.

**Contact the Directors Anytime:** It can be helpful to discuss the letters you are receiving. Give us a call and we can talk it through with you and develop a team approach to making sure your daughter is back on track to a fun-filled happy and successful summer.

## Harmony Land Camp – Parent/Family Information

Here are some details specific to Harmony Land Camp (HLC). The rest of the handbook will also be helpful for HLC families to read.

### **2017 HLC Sessions:**

- **HLC Mini - June 29-July 8**

Arrival between 1:30-3:30 pm departure at 10 am

- **HLC Session A - July 11- 22**

Arrival between 2-3 pm departure 9:30-10:30 am with the main camp pick up and send off

- **HLC Session B - July 23- August 3**

Arrival between 1:30-3:30 pm departure at 10 am

### **What Your HLC Camper Can Expect:**

A small group of friends around her age to live and connect with.

Caring adults who understand her developmental needs.

The opportunity to try the activities Runoia has to offer.

An introduction to horse-back riding with a lesson or two.

Day trips and field trips in the beautiful Belgrade Lakes area.

Swimming lessons in the most amazing lake - Great Pond.

"Big sisters" in our main camp available at meal times and free time.

All camp events and some Evening Programs with our main camp.

Full immersion in camp daily life from wake up and cabin chores to community dining and bedtime stories.

### **Communication:**

You are welcome to communicate with your daughter via mail and our email service available via your Camp Minder parent dashboard.

The HLC director is available via phone or email.

Mail: It would be fun for your daughter to have a fun note from you - bring one with you and we'll deliver it the next day. Plan to write a couple of letters to her while she is at camp. There is no need to send a package.

Mail can be sent to: Your Camper's Name, PO Box 450, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918

**Packing List Notes for HLC:**

Bed sheets, blankets and a pillow will be provided by Camp Runoia.

Campers do not need any money, electronic devices or valuables.

No food or candy should be packed for them. If your daughter has an allergy or specialty food needs, please let us know!

A flashlight for night time reading is essential. Swim goggles are helpful and no other special athletic gear is necessary.

All medications need to go through our camp health team.

Use the Camp Runoia packing list as a guideline. We will do laundry during the session. We would suggest about 5-6 days of clothing and extra underwear and socks.

We are available to answer any packing questions! [info@runoia.com](mailto:info@runoia.com)