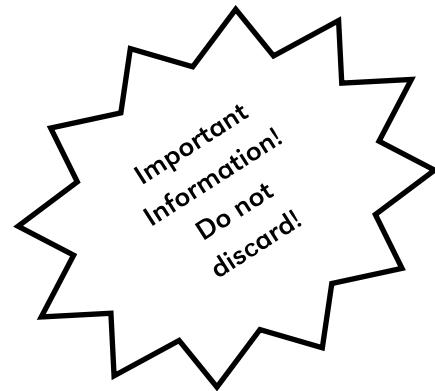




# Family Handbook

## Summer 2026





# Contents

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK.....	6
OUR MISSION .....	6
2026 SUMMER CAMP DATES.....	7
Program Registration Information .....	7
Meet and Greets and Orientations.....	7
2026 QUEST SUMMER CAMP PROGRAMS.....	8
REGISTERING FOR CAMP.....	11
<i>When to apply</i> .....	11
<i>Fees</i> .....	11
<i>Donations</i> .....	11
<i>Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)</i> .....	12
<i>Application Process</i> .....	12
Year-Round Activities.....	13
LIFE AT CAMP .....	13
<i>Eligibility</i> .....	13
<i>Camp Communication</i> .....	14
<i>Camper Conduct</i> .....	15
<i>Camp Site</i> .....	16
<i>Wilderness Experiences</i> .....	17
<i>Swimming and Water Safety</i> .....	17
<i>Typical Daily Schedule</i> .....	18
<i>Program Activities</i> .....	18
<i>Food Service</i> .....	19
<i>Birthdays at Camp</i> .....	20
HEALTH CARE .....	20
<i>Health Care at Camp</i> .....	20
<i>Health Form</i> .....	20
<i>Immunizations</i> .....	21
<i>Medication Procedures</i> .....	21
<i>Menstrual Hygiene</i> .....	22
<i>Health Insurance</i> .....	22
<i>Emergency Contacts</i> .....	23

<i>Traveling While Child(ren) is at Camp</i> .....	23
<i>Sunscreen</i> .....	23
<i>Bedwetting</i> .....	23
<i>Mental, Emotional, and Social Health</i> .....	23
<b>INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND CAMP</b> .....	24
<i>Establishing a "Bubble"</i> .....	24
<i>Pod Method</i> .....	24
<i>Social Distancing at Camp</i> .....	25
<i>Testing</i> .....	25
<i>Preparing For Camp</i> .....	25
<i>Screening</i> .....	25
<b>PACKING FOR CAMP</b> .....	26
<i>Packing List</i> .....	26
<i>Theme Days and Holidays at Camp</i> .....	27
<i>Laundry</i> .....	28
Sherwood Forest Camp will NOT be held responsible for lost or damaged items.....	29
<i>Footwear</i> .....	29
<i>Cameras</i> .....	29
<i>Cell Phones</i> .....	29
<b>PREPARING FOR CAMP</b> .....	30
<i>My child(ren) wants to go to camp, but they are nervous</i> .....	30
<i>Transportation</i> .....	30
<b>PARENT INFORMATION FOR WHILE YOUR CHILD(REN) IS AT CAMP</b> .....	31
<i>Camp Contact Information</i> .....	31
<i>Packages-</i> .....	31
<i>Letters and Emails</i> .....	31
<i>Common Parent Feelings when a Child is Away</i> .....	33
<i>Receiving Phone Calls from Camp</i> .....	33
<i>Who should I call when I have a question?</i> .....	33
<i>Telephoning and Visiting Camp</i> .....	33
<b>STAYING IN TOUCH AFTER CAMP</b> .....	34
<i>Campers and Staff Members Staying in Touch After Camp</i> .....	34
<i>Sharing Photos of Camp</i> .....	34
<b>LAST BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST</b> .....	34

<i>American Camp Association</i> .....	34
<i>United Way of Greater St. Louis</i> .....	34
<i>In the Event of a Crisis</i> .....	34
<i>Need Additional Information?</i> .....	35

## ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Hello Families,

Thank you for enrolling your child in the Quest Program. In Quest, your child(ren) will have the chance to develop independence, experience outdoor fun and adventure, relax, unplug, and make life-long friendships.

Summer camp provides an amazing opportunity for kids to be kids, to face challenges, make mistakes, to learn, and to grow. You are giving your child(ren) the space and encouragement to live and thrive in a unique environment away from home. They will be given the space to grow in confidence and independence. They will play, laugh, sing, and maybe even cry. You are giving your child(ren) a truly magical experience which will allow them to explore and become their best selves.

To help prepare you and your child(ren) for the camp experience, we put together this handbook with detailed information on our summer camp program. It is important that you take time to review this handbook in entirety with your child(ren) and any other family members/guardians involved in their lives BEFORE making the decision to enroll them in Quest and send them to camp this summer. This handbook includes details on program qualifications, eligibility, camp expectations, health care at camp, and important information on keeping in touch throughout the summer.

After you have reviewed the entire handbook with your child(ren), speak to them about the expectations of Quest. If you and your child(ren) agree that summer camp combined with our year-round programming is a good fit for them, then please take time to complete the application required for attendance. If you have questions about summer camp or Sherwood Forest's programs or policies, please call our office at 314-644-3322.

Sincerely,



Aliyah Walls

Aliyah Walls  
Camp Director  
Sherwood Forest Leadership Alumni '12

## OUR MISSION

At Sherwood Forest, we provide dynamic programs and immersive outdoor experiences that inspire and empower youth from under-resourced communities to discover their resilience, prepare for their future, and embrace their civic responsibility.

Sherwood Forest serves child(ren) and families from under-resourced communities in the St. Louis area. A child who begins our programs at the end of first grade has the opportunity to "grow up" at Sherwood Forest over the next 17 years. We strive to establish and sustain long-term relationships with our campers, their families, and the agencies and schools that serve them.

By balancing traditional camp adventures with evidence-based programs that reinforce and support school-year learning, Sherwood Forest connects with, educates, and inspires the youth of St. Louis. And in doing so, we help kids discover the best in themselves.

## 2026 SUMMER CAMP DATES

Grade refers to current grade in school (2025-2026 school year). All camp sessions are open to *all genders*. Campers may enroll in **1 session**.

### Program Dates:

<b>Mini Camp</b> <i>Current 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders</i>	<b>Session 1</b> - June 7 – June 13, 2026 <b>Session 2</b> - July 9 – July 15, 2026 7-day session
<b>Explorer Camp</b> <i>Current 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Graders</i>	<b>Session 1</b> - June 17 – July 2, 2026 <b>Session 2</b> - July 19 – August 3, 2026 16-day Session
<b>Leadership Camp</b> <i>Current 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> Graders</i>	<b>Session 1</b> - June 7 – July 2, 2026 <b>Session 2</b> - July 9 – August 3, 2026 26-day Session

## Program Registration Information

**Returning Campers** – Returning campers are given priority in registering for camp. Your camper's spot for summer 2026 will be held until November 3<sup>rd</sup>. You have until this time to confirm your camper will be attending camp. You can do so by completing the online Camper Registration information or requesting a paper Camper Registration packet. After November 3rd, enrollment in camp will open for new campers and we cannot guarantee a space for your child. If you are having difficulty completing the initial paperwork or paying for camp, please contact our office at 314-644-3322. Please do not delay submitting registration materials, even if you have payment concerns.

**New Campers** – We accept new campers in 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades. Applications for new campers may be completed at any point via our online Camper Registration or by requesting a paper Camper Registration packet. New campers will automatically be placed on the waitlist until space becomes available. Once a new camper registration has been confirmed, you may receive information about upcoming year-round programming. Remember, 80% of our spaces are reserved for children who qualify for free or reduced lunch.

*The deadline to register your child(ren) for camp is April 15, 2026.*

*\*\*Space is limited, so please do not wait to register your child, as we cannot guarantee availability. \*\**

## Meet and Greets and Orientations

To prepare your child for camp, we require all new campers in 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade to participate in an in-person Meet and Greet/ Orientation with our staff. During this session, your camper will engage in group activities and games, allowing us to observe how they interact in a group setting. We will also speak with each camper individually to discuss their upcoming camp experience and address any questions they may have. We kindly ask parents and guardians to step away during this time so that the camper can speak freely.

To help new families prepare for camp, we also strongly encourage all new families to participate in an orientation with our staff. This may be online or in person. Orientation is designed to help you and your camper learn more about camp before the summer begins. We will review the basics of camp life, our camper conduct policy, show pictures of camp, and answer questions from campers and their families. Orientation dates will be provided once we have received your completed registration materials.

## 2026 QUEST SUMMER CAMP PROGRAMS

Whether your child(ren) has been attending Sherwood Forest for years or this will be your first summer with us, we want to keep you informed of how our program is growing and changing. We also want to make sure you understand how each year of our program builds upon the previous years.

Our goal is that once a child(ren) joins the Sherwood Forest family, they grow up with us, graduate from high school, pursue post-secondary education or job training, and, as an adult, they have the skills needed to achieve their dreams.

Our programs are designed with this goal in mind, and we work closely with education experts, artists, teachers, and other youth development professionals to provide children with new, innovative, and exciting opportunities. We believe that connections with nature are critical experiences for children, and our programs focus on providing new and challenging activities in the natural environment. Please note that we do not kill our critter and creature friends, we relocate them when we find them in our living spaces.

The following is a brief description of our summer camp programs. Children can attend Sherwood Forest as first-time campers from 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

### Programming notes for all grades:

- All campers live and sleep in cabins in groups of approximately six to twelve campers. Each cabin group has two or more group leaders. At least one Group Leader who identifies as the same gender as the campers, lives and sleeps in the cabin with the children.
- Sherwood has a progressive wilderness tripping program, which includes outdoor backpacking and hiking in which all campers participate. It starts in 1st grade with a night under the stars!
- Life jackets are required for all individuals (children and adults) while in or on a lake or river, regardless of their swimming ability.

### Discovery – Mini Camp – 1st and 2nd graders, 7-day program-

Mini Camp is designed as an introduction to residential camping to help children take their first steps toward independence. Typically, children at this age have not spent many nights (if any) away from home or family. Campers will:

- Focus on discovering the joys of camping through a variety of activities
- Participate in activities as a group
- Spend at least one night sleeping outside under the stars
- Help cook a balanced meal over an open fire

\*Year-round activities typically include one fall and one spring activity. Examples: Halloween weekend at camp, a day or evening at the zoo, etc.

### Explorers – 3rd graders, 16-day program

The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Explorer program is designed as an introduction to residential camping to help children develop independence and build friendships. Campers will:

- Focus on discovering the joys of camping through a variety of activities
- Participate in our 3rd grade Book Club designed to make books come alive
- Learn to cook balanced meals over an open fire
- Hike on our camp property to a campsite
- Participate in an overnight up our valley where each person sleeps in an individual tarp shelter
- Take a day trip to the river where they can splash and explore

\*Year-round activities typically include two fall and one spring activity. Examples: a reading activity at a bookstore or the library, Halloween weekend at camp, day trip to a local park, etc.

### **Explorers – 4th Grade, 16-day program**

The 4<sup>th</sup> grade Explorer program is designed to help campers develop connections to camp, their peers, and the natural environment. Campers will:

- Participate in the first year of Earth Club which provides opportunity for scientific exploration with a focus on nature and the outdoors
- Progress to the next level of our backpacking and hiking program by participating in one or two overnight trips on our camp property
- Be introduced to canoeing and stand-up paddle boards on our lake
- Cook a balanced meal over an open fire
- Participate in day trip to the river or a day float trip in a raft, depending on the campers' skills and abilities

\*Year-round activities typically include two fall and one spring activity, such as a full day hike in local parks, a visit to an outdoor environmental science event, a trip to camp, etc.

### **Explorers – 5th Grade, 16-day program**

The 5<sup>th</sup> grade Explorer program is designed to help campers continue to focus on connecting with peers and learning in nature and the outdoors. Camper will:

- Demonstrate independence, decision-making, goal setting, and accomplishing goals
- Participate in the second and final year of Earth Club, which brings teaching life science through hands on activities
- Progress to the next level of our backpacking and hiking program by participating in a day hike, one overnight trip on our camp property, and one hiking overnight at a local State or National Park
- Participate in a day trip on the river in canoes.
- Cook balanced meals over an open fire

\*Year-round activities typically include two fall and one spring activity, exploring local parks, visiting the Science Center, animal sanctuaries, or a trip to camp, etc.

### **Leadership Training Program – 6th to 9th graders, 26-day program**

Throughout their four years in the Leadership Training program, youth work on the following skills: responsibility, self-discipline, effective communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. The Leadership Training Program is a year-round initiative, centered around a residential summer camp experience. Our progressive outdoor backpacking and hiking program culminates through their four years in a series of multi-day backpacking, hiking, and river excursions, providing participants with hands-on leadership and outdoor skills development. Youth in this program are expected to fully participate in all components.

### **Challenge (6th grade)**

The Challenge program is designed to help campers focus on identifying individual strengths and gaining a greater understanding of oneself. This is the first year of our Leadership Training Program and is the last year we will accept new campers. Campers will:

- Work to discover their personal strengths and assets as well as areas for growth and learning. Campers do this through intensive outdoor-focused experiences that encourage them to stretch outside their comfort zones and explore new aspects of themselves
- Participate in team building and outdoor survival skill development designed to help them be better equipped for their multi-day wilderness trips
- Learn and implement 'Leave No Trace' principles, basic trail etiquette, and wildlife awareness
- Participate in short river and hiking trips to prepare for their extended trip
- Complete an extended two-day hike in the Mark Twain National Forest on the Ozark Trail
- Complete a three-day, extended river trip on the beautiful and spring-fed Current River

### **Trek (7th grade)**

The Trek program provides campers with an opportunity to choose between two tracks, wilderness trek and art trek. Both "treks" are designed to harness the leadership capabilities of campers by teaching them essential life skills, teamwork, cooperation, communication, and work ethic. The overall focus is helping youth feel competent in using their talents to strengthen a team and demonstrate their ability to lead, make decisions, and work as part of a team to achieve a larger goal. Campers will:

#### **Wilderness Trek**

- Acquire team building and outdoor survival skill development to help them be better equipped for their multi-day wilderness trip
- Learn and implement Leave No Trace Principles, basic trail etiquette, basic wilderness first aid, trail and navigation makers, and wildlife awareness
- Complete an extended four-day hike in the Mark Twain National Forest on the Ozark Trail
- Complete a four-day extended river trip on the spring fed and beautiful Current River

#### **Art Trek**

- Accomplish a goal as a team or camp community through the production of a play and/or other larger scale creative or performing art projects
- Design and build the set, plan rehearsals, run the technical elements of the performance, cast actors, design and make costumes, etc.
- Collaborate with theatre and art professionals to learn more about the field and career path
- Gain an appreciation for the arts through hands-on experience and reflection
- Form an effective team through daily collaboration
- Participate in outdoor/wilderness-based activities such as campouts and hikes with their peers

### **Adventure (8th Grade)**

The focus of the Adventure program is to help youth learn about their local communities, their role within those communities, and how their individual and team strengths benefit that community.

Campers will:

- Begin thinking about life during and after high school
- Collaborate to plan a trip and/or overnight to explore the Missouri region (often including college tours, immersive outdoor experiences, and community service projects)
- Visit historic sites

### **Journey (9th Grade)**

As the final year of the Leadership Training Program, Journey campers are seen as role models in our camp community and as such we hold them to high standards of responsibility, decision-making, and leadership. In this program, we help youth identify their interests for life after high school and continue learning about their role within local and national communities. Campers will:

- Continue learning about the importance of agency and self-determination
- Expand civic engagement beyond camp with a multi-day trip outside of camp
- Travel outside the State of Missouri to visit colleges and universities
- Visit historic sites
- Participate in community service projects
- Complete their goals and objectives while at camp

**Supports for Success** – Once children have graduated from our Leadership Training Program, they enter the Supports for Success Program. This program works with children in 10<sup>th</sup> grade to 5 years past high school graduation.

**Counselor-in-Training (CIT)** – Leadership Training graduates completing the 10th or 11th grades have the opportunity to return to camp and work. The CIT Coordinator will work with them to help transition from a camper to a staff member.

## **REGISTERING FOR CAMP**

### ***When to apply***

The application process for camp begins mid-September, but we continue to accept applications on a “rolling” basis. Spaces are open to returning campers first. Priority is given to those campers who qualify for the Summer Food Service Program. We then consider the applications of campers who were on the wait list the previous summer and the applications of new campers whose siblings attend or have attended camp. Finally, applications for new campers are considered. Our goal is to allocate at least 80% of our spaces to campers who qualify for the Summer Food Service Program. Applications will be accepted until all spaces are filled or until April 15th whichever comes first. Children will be placed on a waiting list if all spaces are full when their application is received. Do not wait to apply for your child(ren) to attend camp due to financial concerns. Please call us if you are worried about how to pay for camp.

### ***Fees***

The fees for Summer 2026 are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade session (1 week) - \$35, which includes a non-refundable registration fee of \$10.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade sessions (2 weeks) - \$50, which includes a non-refundable registration fee of \$10.
- 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade session (4 weeks) - \$75, which includes a non-refundable registration fee of \$10.

*\* Do not wait to apply due to financial concerns. We never want finances to be a barrier to child(ren) attending camp. Please call us or include a note with your child(ren)’s application if you are worried about how to pay for camp. \**

### ***Donations***

Did you know that the actual cost of camp is roughly \$300 per camper per day? That means a 14-day session actually costs approximately \$4,200 and a 28-day session costs \$8,400 per child. Your child(ren)’s camp fee only covers a small portion of this cost. Please join others in our community by contributing to our scholarship fund. If you choose to do so, please mark the amount you would like to contribute on your application. A contribution of any size is welcome. Every dollar helps!

## ***Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)***

The Summer Food Service Program is similar to the school lunch program and helps to offset the cost of food for children while they are at camp. For our program to receive funding, we must have an Income Eligibility Form completed **by every family** and signed by an adult household member. You need to complete the form even if you do not think your family will qualify.

Your family does not have to qualify for your child(ren) to attend camp, although priority is given to child(ren) whose families do qualify. The fee for summer camp is the same for all campers. There is no additional charge for food if your child(ren) does not qualify. All campers share the same family-style meals. Additional information can be found in the letter with the Income Eligibility Form.

## ***Application Process***

Sit down with your child(ren) and review all the information included in the program description and parent handbook. Make sure to review the expectations for the program for which they are applying. If you would like additional information regarding the Quest Program, please contact our office. If they are still interested, complete and return the items listed below. Make sure to include all information needed for your child(ren)'s program, based on the grade they will complete during the 2025/2026 school year and just prior to attending camp for the summer. A separate application is needed for each child.

### **All campers need the following in order to apply for summer camp:**

- Your child(ren) must first, and foremost, want to attend summer camp. This is critical for your child's success at camp. This must be their decision. It is okay if they are nervous, but they must want to be at camp.
- Completed application (paper and/or online) signed by parent/guardian. Please make sure there is an answer for every question! If there is not, the application is incomplete and will not be accepted.
- Camper Conduct Policy (part of application)
- Camp Participation Waiver (part of application)
- Health History Form signed by a parent or guardian, including the child's immunization record (either completed as part of the Health Form or you can attach a copy of your child's immunization record.)
- Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Income Eligibility Form (one form per family with ALL family members listed) – this is mandatory, even if you do not qualify. This is used to determine income eligibility for our program.
- Goals and Objectives Form: 3<sup>rd</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> graders only
- Copy of Health Insurance Card (front and back) if the child is covered by health insurance or Medicaid. If the child is covered by primary and secondary insurance, please include copies of both cards. Make sure all copies are labeled with your child's name and birth date. If your child does not have insurance, please note that on application.
- Title XX Form: Illinois Campers Only
- Health/Medication Update Form: Complete only if there are health/medication changes since the health form was completed and turn in at the bus stop prior to the start of camp.

We will contact you within three weeks of receiving your child(ren)'s application to confirm receipt, let you know the status of the application, and provide you with an opportunity to ask any additional questions. Please note:

- All new campers must participate in a new camper meet and greet/ orientation.
- All campers who are on conditional return MUST meet with a member of our program team to discuss any concerns from their previous camp experiences. A parent or guardian must attend the discussion as well. You will be contacted individually if this applies to your camper.

After additional information has been gathered, eligibility has been confirmed and all meetings (when applicable) have been completed, we will confirm your child(ren)'s placement in a camp program in writing via email, postcard, or letter.

Approximately three weeks prior to your child(ren)'s camp session, we will send a letter with last-minute details.

*\* Do not wait to apply for your child(ren) to attend camp due to financial concerns. Please call us or include a note with your child(ren)'s application if you are worried about how to pay for camp.*

## Year-Round Activities

Each level of our program includes required year-round activities. Additional information about these activities will be shared once your child's space is confirmed in the camp program. The program descriptions outline the numbers of activities offered each year.

## LIFE AT CAMP

We believe that the summer camp experience is important for all child(ren) and hope that this is an experience your child(ren) loves. Participating in Sherwood Forest year-round programming is a commitment, and it is important that you talk with your child(ren) about the expectations of camp life and whether it is a good fit for them.

### *Eligibility*

Sherwood Forest's Quest program is designed for child(ren) in 1<sup>st</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grades who live in the St. Louis region. To be eligible for our programs, campers should live in one of the following counties – St. Louis City, St. Louis County, Jefferson County, Franklin County, St. Charles County, St. Clair County (IL), or Madison County (IL).

Sherwood Forests reserves 80% of our spaces for children from low-income families. This is defined by a child(ren)'s qualification for the Summer Food Service Program. Campers who do not qualify for this program are able to attend camp, but priority is given to those who qualify.

It is also a requirement that campers themselves have a strong interest in going to camp. Regardless of a parent/guardian's wish for their child(ren) to go to camp, if a child does not want to come to camp, they will struggle to adjust to camp life and, in some cases, might never fully adjust. *Please be sure to discuss camp thoroughly with your child(ren), to make certain that they want to attend camp.*

In addition to a desire to attend camp, child(ren) must be able to demonstrate behavior that is safe and appropriate for their age. We are not a therapeutic camp. While we will work with child(ren) to help them transition to camp life, we are not able to manage behaviors that make camp an unsafe environment for your child(ren) and other children.

## Campers and families should also understand:

- Although we target a 1:4 camper to staff ratio, some activities have a 1:8 ratio
- Staff sleep when campers sleep. Campers must be comfortable staying quietly in bed at bedtime and they must be able to wake a counselor if they need assistance.
- There are times when staff are only within hearing distance of campers. Campers may transition from activity to activity on their own.
- Camp is not fenced. We have approximately 500 acres of land. Campers must be able to stay in designated areas.
- Camp activities take place outdoors, often in the woods. There are bugs and critters, and we walk everywhere we go on uneven and rocky terrain.

Eligibility is contingent on campers completing all steps of the application process. All campers attending camp for the first time must participate in a new camper meet and greet.

### What qualities help child(ren) succeed at camp?

- desire to attend camp
- ability and willingness to live in close quarters with others
- ability and willingness get along well with other child(ren)
- ability and willingness to follow camp rules
- ability and willingness to take and follow direction from young adults and/or adults who are not part of their family
- ability to take responsibility and consequences for their actions
- ability to care for themselves independently
- ability to verbally express their needs
- ability to transition between activities independently
- willingness to try new things and accept new experiences
- have respect for other camper's belongings, personal space, culture, and beliefs

## Camp Communication

Prior to the start of the camp session, you will be contacted by our Camp Nurse, a Wellness Specialist, and/or your child(ren)'s Village Director. This communication is important in helping us better prepare for the best camp experience possible for your child.

During the summer, you may be contacted by the Camp Nurse or Wellness Specialist, and you will likely hear from your child(ren)'s Village Director periodically. While at camp, we do not permit campers to use the telephone to speak to their family members or guardians as this can increase feelings of homesickness and cause campers to make poor behavioral decisions. It is also important that campers learn how to work through challenges and solve problems on their own or with the support of adults outside of their family. This is a valuable skill that has shown to increase positive outcomes, particularly as they transition into young adulthood.

If an issue arises at camp, your child's Village Director or the Camp Director will contact you to communicate any challenges and/or to seek advice on how challenges have been managed successfully at home. Our goal

is to help your child build the skills to work through difficult situations while gaining confidence and independence.

If there is an emergency at home, please contact the Camp Director, who will help facilitate communication between you and your child.

### ***Camper Conduct***

We believe that all campers have the right to a safe, fun, and memorable camping experience. We expect campers to be respectful, responsible, and cooperative. For this experience to be positive for your child(ren), it is important that both you and your child(ren) understand Sherwood Forest's rules of conduct and what is expected of campers in terms of their behavior.

- **You AND your child(ren) MUST read, discuss, and sign the Camper Conduct and Behavior Policy Agreement (a copy of the agreement is included below for your reference).**
- **Consequences will be enforced. These may include taking time out, losing privileges, or, if deemed necessary by the Camp Director, dismissal from camp. Sherwood Forest will not refund fees if your child(ren) is sent home for behavior issues.**
- **Please do not make plans to be out-of-town while your child(ren) is at camp. If your child(ren) needs to return home for any reason while at camp, we cannot keep them on site, and you must be available to take them home. If we cannot reach you, we will release him/her to another parent/guardian or emergency contact.**

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### ***Camper Conduct Policy***

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At Sherwood Forest, we believe that all children have the right to a safe, kind, fun, and memorable camping experience. We expect campers to be respectful, responsible, and cooperative. We want campers to make friends, learn and try new things, and to have fun. In order to create a positive camp culture, it is important that every member of our camp community commit to the following conduct and behavioral expectations. Every parent/guardian is required to read the following information with their camper. The camper and parent/guardian must sign and return the Camper Conduct and Behavior Policy to Sherwood Forest. (This must be on file prior to the start of camp.)

Campers are encouraged to practice positive social skills which allow them to resolve conflicts and meet their needs without the use of harmful or destructive behaviors. When disciplinary situations occur, staff will work with campers to help them understand why their behavior is inappropriate. They will then help campers identify alternative behaviors that are appropriate for camp. We recognize that campers may have coping strategies and conflict management techniques that work for them at school or at home and staff will attempt to utilize these strategies and techniques as much as possible as appropriate for camp.

#### **Camper Description:**

We love and appreciate that all of our campers hike to the beat of their own camp song! However, there are three criteria that every camper must meet: first, they must want to come to camp. Second, they must be willing and able to learn and participate in a group. Third, they must be willing and able to follow the direction of staff members. These are required in order to ensure camp is safe, kind, and fun for all.

#### **Campers are expected to:**

- Maintain a positive attitude.
- Follow all camp rules and directions given by staff.

- Respect fellow campers and staff members, including personal space, belongings, choices, opinions, and lifestyles.
- Respect camp property, equipment, and natural resources.
- Use appropriate language – swearing, cursing, or discriminatory/racist, offensive/lewd jokes will not be permitted or tolerated.
- Talk through conflicts and challenges.
- Take responsibility and accept the consequences for their actions.
- Contribute to the camp community through supporting their peers, helping with group chores, and reflecting the Sherwood Forest values.

**Bullying Policy:**

Sherwood Forest defines bullying as repeated aggressive behavior with the intent of asserting power and/or control over another individual. We expect all members of our community to be respectful towards one another, therefore we take all incidents of bullying very seriously. If a camper has difficulty meeting this expectation, disciplinary action will be taken.

**If a camper violates any part of the Camper Conduct and Behavior Policy:**

- 1) We will discuss our concerns with them.
- 2) We will invoke disciplinary actions. (i.e. loss of privileges, time out from an activity and/or a call from home). At Sherwood Forest, we do not use any form of punishment; we use logical consequences to help campers learn more appropriate behavioral responses.
- 3) We will call parent(s)/legal guardian and if deemed necessary by the Camp Director, the camper may be dismissed from camp.

**Immediate Dismissal:**

Our hope is that we do not have to send a camper home before the session ends. However, our staff reserves the right to immediately dismiss campers whose behavior endangers the safety of themselves, other campers and/or our staff, thereby bypassing some of the disciplinary steps outlined above.

***Camp Site***

Our camp is located 110 miles south of St. Louis on 478 acres of wooded and rugged hills and valleys. There are four villages at camp: one village has cabins with attached bathrooms, and the other three villages have separate but central washhouse facilities.

All villages have electricity; bathroom facilities have electricity, hot and cold running water, individual shower stalls, and flush toilets. While some cabins are accessible to persons with limited mobility, our entire campsite is not. The terrain is hilly and rugged; we walk on wooded trails or dirt roads everywhere we go in camp.



### **Wilderness Experiences**

At Sherwood Forest, we believe in the power of nature and the importance of learning about the natural environment. This is a key component of our programs, and wilderness experiences are at the heart of all that we do. All campers at Sherwood Forest participate in overnight camping trips. Overnights include short trips up the camp valley lasting one night, or they can be extended hiking or river trips lasting up to eleven days in length. Please refer to the description of the program in which your child(ren) will participate for specific details of their age-appropriate trip(s).

While at camp, we will help your child(ren) prepare for these trips through participating in the following activities: swimming, canoeing, and outdoor living skills (setting up a tent or tarp shelter, building a fire, cooking over a fire, etc.).

Wilderness experiences are a mandatory part of the camping experience. **If your child(ren) refuses to participate in the overnight trips or hikes, they may be dismissed from camp.** Please discuss with your child(ren) before coming to camp that they will be expected to hike, sleep, eat and go to the bathroom outdoors at some point during the summer.

Some considerations to discuss with your child(ren):

- All campers will be camping – this includes sleeping outside on overnight trips.
- Your child(ren) is expected to participate in these trips and overnight excursions. **They are not optional.**
- There will be bugs and other critters outside. Most of these critters are not harmful in any way and we will educate campers on which ones to look out for.
- Your child(ren) will be cooking meals and eating outside on these trips.
- These trips require learning to use pit toilets or digging small holes for using the bathroom. Please discuss this with your child(ren) and make sure they are comfortable with this.
- Overnights and campouts will happen even in some types of inclement weather, including rain.

### **Swimming and Water Safety**

When arriving at camp, all campers are required to take a test to assess their swimming ability. Depending on their swimming skills, campers wear a “deep water band” signifying the depth of water in which they are allowed to swim.

It is important that all people learn to be safe around bodies of water, and children in our programs will be participating in a variety of activities that are water based, including swimming, canoeing, kayaking, funyaking, and more. Any camper in grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> who does not receive their “deep water band” during an initial swim test will be encouraged to increase their level of skill, confidence, and comfortability around water. Campers *may* have the opportunity to participate in swimming lessons during their stay at camp.

When children participate in water activities while at camp (at the pool, lake, or on river trips), they will be supervised by certified lifeguards. While on the lake or on the river, everyone is required to wear a Personal Floatation Device. Campers will not be made to swim in any areas they are uncomfortable with, however, aquatic activities are a major component of our program.

All children in 3rd through 9th grade will participate in at least one canoeing activity. Campers in 5th – 7th grade may also participate in overnight canoe trips on the Black or Current Rivers. If you or your child(ren) is uncomfortable with this, please contact our camp office to discuss the program further. Although campers are required to wear personal flotation devices (PFDs, aka lifejackets) when canoeing or participating in activities on a lake or river, campers participating in river trips will need to demonstrate mastery of specific swimming and canoeing skills before participating in these trips.

### ***Typical Daily Schedule***

The following is an example of a typical daily schedule. The schedule is subject to change based on weather, infectious diseases (such as Covid-19), activity availability, or other factors.

7:30am- Wake Up and Morning Routine  
8:00am - Camper Wellness Checks/Morning Meeting  
8:30am – Breakfast  
9:15am- First Activity Period  
10:30am –Second Activity Period  
11:35am –Reflection Time  
12:30pm –Lunch  
1:15 pm – Cabin Clean Up  
2:00pm - Siesta  
3:00 pm – Third Activity Period  
4:15 pm - Fourth Activity Period  
5:20 pm – Cabin Time/Dinner Preparation  
6:00 pm – Dinner  
7:15 pm – Evening Program  
8:15 pm – Begin Bedtime Routine  
9:15pm - Lights out/Bedtime (1<sup>st</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> grade)  
9:45pm- Light out/Bedtime (6<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> grade)

### ***Program Activities***

Each camp program is geared to campers' abilities, interests, needs, and skill development. Sherwood Forest Camp offers a wide range of activities. The following is a sample of the activities we offer:

- Tango Tower (climbing)
- Library / Reading
- Archery
- Field Games
- Backpacking
- Swimming
- Canoeing
- Funyaks (Kayaking for kids)
- Outdoor Cooking
- Hikes & Nature Games
- Ropes Course
- Orienteering
- Adventure Sports
- Campcraft Skills
- Ceramics and pottery
- Drawing
- Painting
- Tie Dye
- Music
- Dance
- Gardening

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*\*\*Activities offered are subject to change based upon campers' interests, artists-in-residence, and staff specialties.*

All activities are led and instructed by trained staff members or volunteers. Some activities may require additional supervision depending on safety regulations and/or optimal instruction ratios. Attendance is taken at each activity to ensure that all campers are accounted for at all times; however, campers may transition to and from activities on their own.

### ***Food Service***

Three healthy, balanced meals are provided each day. Fresh fruit is also available to campers throughout the day if they need an additional snack. Meals are served family-style and campers eat each meal with their cabin groups.

### ***Dietary Restrictions***

Our kitchen staff can accommodate most dietary needs related to food allergies, but not those related to food preferences. Please make sure to note allergies and dietary restrictions on your camper's Health History Form. All dietary restrictions must be listed on the Health Form. We will be unable to accommodate any restrictions not listed. Vegetarian alternatives are available for campers and staff. **Due to the requirements of the Summer Food Service Program, we are unable to accommodate vegan diets.**

If your child(ren) is a picky eater, please review the following details with them:

- Each mealtime, campers will be served a complete and balanced meal. The kitchen will not provide alternative meal items for campers who do not like what is being served. Alternatives will only be provided for those with dietary restrictions noted on the Health History Form.
- Campers are encouraged to try everything. Part of the camp experience is trying new things, which includes mealtimes. Your child(ren)'s counselors will encourage them to try all food that is being served.

\*Please call us if your child(ren) has a gluten allergy. We will need to discuss whether we can make the appropriate accommodations. \*

### ***Allergies and Health Concerns***

If your child(ren) has a specific, diagnosed, medical reason to have their laundry washed separately, Sherwood Forest will accommodate this (such as eczema – this must be noted on your child(ren)'s health form). However, any laundry detergent used must be dye-free, scent-free, hypoallergenic, and provided to Sherwood Forest. Any other laundry detergent that is sent will be disposed of.

**Sherwood Forest will NOT be held responsible for lost or damaged items. Do not send anything that, if ruined or lost, would cause you or your child(ren) to become upset. DO NOT send new items to camp. Clothing and shoes will get dirty, and many campers will misplace items over the summer.**

*\*Please refer to pages 25- 26 for more information on packing for camp\**

### ***Camper Supervision***

#### **Villages and Cabins**

Typically, campers live in same-gender cabin groups of six to twelve with other campers who are in the same grade in school. Groups have two or more leaders; in some groups one of the leaders may be a high school student in a junior staff or Counselor-in-Training role. We house both campers and staff based on their identifying gender. Leaders who live in the same cabin as campers will be the same gender, however,

we do have mixed gender group leaders. Cabin groups are organized into Villages based on gender and grade. Each Village is then overseen by a Village Director who ensures that cabin and village life is running smoothly. Village Directors are also the main point of contact for families if they have questions or concerns about their camper's experience.

## General

Campers must always be within earshot of staff. Most of the time, campers are within the immediate proximity of one or more staff members. However, there are brief periods of time during the day and evening activities when staff members in the general vicinity supervise campers. For example, if we are playing a running game and your camper happens to be faster than their group leaders.

### ***Birthdays at Camp***

If your child will be celebrating their birthday at camp, know that we will make it a fun, memorable experience. If you would like to send your child a birthday card or package please send it well in advance of their birthday. Write on the outside "Birthday. Please deliver on (date)". We will hold this mail to ensure it is delivered at the appropriate time. **Please note, the only time we accept packages at camp is if your child is celebrating their birthday during their session.** If you choose to send a birthday package with a birthday snack or edible treat, please make sure it is something that can be consumed in one sitting (one snack) and that you send enough for the entire cabin group to share.

## HEALTH CARE

Our campers' health and safety is our top priority while they are at camp. It is critical that we have accurate information to best support them throughout their stay at camp. Please review this section carefully and contact our St. Louis office with any questions you might have before camp begins.

### ***Health Care at Camp***

In 2019, Sherwood Forest built a brand-new health lodge, the Comfort Lodge, to better serve the health needs of our campers. The Comfort Lodge is overseen by a registered nurse while children are at camp in the summer. During some sessions, a LPN, student nurse, and/or EMT may also be in residence. Our health care staff follow health care protocols that have been approved by a licensed physician. When necessary, our Camp Nurse consults with a licensed physician.

The nearest hospital is in Arcadia Valley, about 30 minutes from camp. Reynolds County, where the camp is located, provides ambulance service, and the camp is a member of Air Evac Lifeteam.

Insect bites, headaches, minor poison ivy, upset stomachs, cuts and scrapes, etc., are considered routine medical care. It is our policy to contact parents only if a child(ren) experiences illness or injury requiring more than routine medical care. Please remember that your child(ren) is our first concern. First, we will seek the necessary treatment; then, we will follow-up with you. Please feel free to contact the Camp Director or Camp Nurse to ask any questions about your child(ren)'s healthcare. Please be sure you have provided accurate contact information and two additional emergency contacts who will be available while your child(ren) is at camp.

### ***Health Form***

Health history information must be up-to-date and submitted to the camp office with your child(ren)'s application and may be updated prior to your child(ren) coming to camp. Campers have a mandatory health screening at the beginning of the session and/or prior to getting on the bus which is performed by our nursing team.

Please carefully and completely answer each question on the Health History Form. We ask these questions so we can provide the best care possible for your child(ren). If you have any concerns about the physical and/or behavioral/emotional needs of your camper, please let us know. It is very important for us to know these concerns so that we can create a plan prior to their arrival at camp.

Our goal is to work with you to provide the best possible camp experience for your child(ren). *Physical, behavioral, and/or mental health diagnoses do not disqualify your child(ren) from attending camp. However, we will want to discuss how these diagnoses may impact your child(ren)'s camp experience.* We must have an updated Health History Form completed and signed each year. The form is not complete without a copy of current immunization records or immunization dates written on the health form and a copy of your child(ren)'s health insurance card, if applicable. Please write your child(ren)'s name and birth date on the copy of their health insurance card.

Please complete the Medical Update form or send a written update to the Camp Nurse if your child(ren)'s medical status changes prior to his/her arrival at camp. Changes include medication changes, recent illness or injury, onset of menstrual cycle, etc.

### ***Immunizations***

The safety and health of our campers and staff are priorities for Sherwood Forest. Each year, the American Academy of Pediatrics publishes a "Recommended Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedule." Pediatricians across North America consider this the standard of care. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has established vaccine standards for both children and adults. The routine vaccination of all campers and staff is an important public health matter especially in the confined environment of a residential summer camp with round-the-clock communal living where illnesses spread much more easily.

All those who are attending Sherwood Forest Camp, including campers, program participants, and staff, are required to have age-appropriate vaccines as outlined by the Missouri Department of Public Health & Senior Services (Missouri Statute 167.181).

<https://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/immunizations/pdf/2023schoolrequirements.pdf>. These immunizations are also required for students to attend school in Missouri.

All campers, program participants, and staff must present documentation of up-to-date immunization status, including month, day, and year of each immunization before arriving at Sherwood Forest.

Required immunizations should be administered according to the current Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Schedule, including all spacing, (<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>)

To attend, campers and program participants "in progress" must have an Immunization In Progress form on file. In progress means that a child has begun the vaccine series and has an appointment for the next dose. (i.e., vaccine series was started but the child is not yet eligible to receive the next dose in the series.)

Religious and Medical exemptions are allowed and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The appropriate exemption card and approval for accommodation must be on file prior to arriving at Sherwood Forest.

### ***Medication Procedures***

We ask you to pre-pack the first three (3) days of your child(ren)'s medication. The nurse will prepare the remaining days of medication following camp procedures once your child(ren) is at camp. This will help the health team quickly sort through all this important information while still delivering medication in a timely manner.

About three weeks before camp, we will mail you pre-labeled envelopes for this purpose and directions for how to prepare them. Each envelope is labeled with the day of camp and identifies the time it is administered.

Please make sure that remaining medication is sent to camp in the original container(s) showing your child(ren)'s name and ensure that you have sent enough for the entire session. Do not send expired medication. On the Health History Form, please write explicit instructions for dispensing and/or using the medication. If your child(ren) has over-the-counter medication (including vitamins, creams, and herbal remedies) it must also be in the original containers with explicit written directives for use.

Place all envelopes and the remainder of your child(ren)'s medication in sufficient quantities for their entire stay in a Ziploc bag. **Please make sure each medication and the Ziplock bag are clearly labeled with your child(ren)'s name in black marker.** This medication should be given to our staff at your child(ren)'s designated bus stop. During our check-in procedures at camp, the Camp Nurse will go over medications with campers. Medications are securely kept in the Health Lodge and dispensed according to prescription or written health care procedures. Exceptions are made for items such as rescue inhalers, epi-pens, and prescribed face wash and/or ointments, which will be logged by the Camp Nurse, and may be returned to campers to be used as needed.

Important things to note:

- If your child(ren) takes medication during the school year, please send that medication to camp. Camp is a structured environment, and it is important that medications taken during school continue. If you have questions about this, please contact our office.
- If your child(ren) uses an inhaler, we strongly encourage you to send a back-up inhaler for safekeeping in the Health Center.
- Please do not send incidentals such as Tylenol, Advil, etc. unless your child(ren) takes them on a regular basis, as we stock these in the Health Center. You may send these (along with specific written instructions) if your child(ren) takes them on a regular basis.

### ***Menstrual Hygiene***

If you have a camper who has started their period or may start their period soon, please include this information on the Health History Form and pack enough sanitary napkins/tampons for their entire stay.

If your camper starts their period at camp, our nursing team will contact you to discuss how we can support your camper in personal care.

Please speak with your camper prior to them coming to camp about their personal care should they start their period. Even for campers who have gotten their period before, managing it at camp can be uncomfortable due to the communal living accommodations. Make sure they know they can speak with their Group Leaders or the Nursing staff if they have any questions or concerns.

Note: Camp involves multi-day wilderness trips with limited access to running water. Managing a period in the wilderness can be tricky, so please make sure your camper knows to speak with their Group Leaders if they have their period during their wilderness trip.

### ***Health Insurance***

If your child(ren) has health insurance or Medicaid, please provide a copy of their health insurance card labeled with their name and birth date. Sherwood Forest's medical insurance is secondary coverage; if a camper requires medical treatment and has medical insurance, the parent will be billed as having primary coverage.

### ***Emergency Contacts***

On both the Application and Health History Form, we request two emergency contacts. This needs to be someone other than a parent or guardian who will be available while your child(ren) is at camp and able to take care of your child(ren) should they need to return home. By listing someone as an Emergency Contact you are providing consent that we may release your child(ren) into their custody. Please be assured that we will try first to contact you as a parent or guardian, but if we are unable to reach you, we will try the emergency contact.

### ***Traveling While Child(ren) is at Camp***

If you must be out of town or you will be unavailable while your child(ren) is at camp, please make sure to notify camp in writing and let us know who we should contact in your absence. This person must be able to competently talk about your child(ren) and take care of your child(ren) if they must return home. If your child(ren) needs to return home for any reason, your emergency contact must be able to take them. Please do not make plans to travel if you have no one who can watch your child(ren) while you are away.

**Please provide the following information, in writing, to camp if you must travel while your child(ren) is at camp.**

- Dates and length of time out of town
- Location and/or estimate of how long it would take for you to return home
- Emergency Contact Name
- Emergency Contact Phone number
- Emergency Contact relationship to camper

### ***Sunscreen***

We provide sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection for your child(ren) to use while at camp. We constantly remind campers to wear and reapply sunscreen, but we cannot individually monitor each child(ren) to ensure that they are reapplying as needed. Although all counselors and staff are persistent about this issue, we ask that you talk to your child(ren) about this before they arrive at camp. Teach them the importance of applying sunscreen often and liberally. This includes our campers of color as well. It is a common misconception that people of color do not need sunscreen. All individuals, no matter the color of their skin, do need to apply sunscreen and will be asked to do so at camp.

### ***Bedwetting***

Child(ren) play hard at camp and are often so tired that they do not wake up in the middle of the night to use the restroom. We know this is a very personal issue, but if your child(ren) struggles with this issue at all, please be sure to note it on their Application and Health History Form, along with any strategies that have worked at home. Please discuss the situation with your child(ren)'s doctor, as there are medications that may help. If medication is not recommended, please consider sending them with some Goodnights or other form of nighttime pull-ups to wear to bed at camp. Even if this is not a regular occurrence, please discuss with your child(ren) what they should do if they do have an accident while at camp. Let your child(ren) know that if they have an accident which leaks onto their clothes or sheets, they should let their counselor know right away.

Note: Please include a history of bedwetting if it has occurred in the past year. Bedwetting may occur at camp due to changes in environment and routine, even if it is not regularly occurring at home.

### ***Mental, Emotional, and Social Health***

To provide a safe, healthy, and fun camp experience, we believe it is important to understand the behavioral, emotional, and mental health needs of your child. If your child(ren) has been diagnosed with any behavioral or mental health conditions, please disclose this information on their Health History Form and Application. **A**

**diagnosis does not automatically disqualify your child(ren) from attending camp.** We have had many campers with diagnosed conditions such as ADD/ADHD, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Reactive Attachment Disorder, and Autism, to name a few. We have also had campers with adverse childhood experiences and histories of trauma. Each child's experience of their condition, diagnosis, or situation is different, and it is important that we get to know your child(ren) and how best to support them throughout their time at camp.

Prior to camp starting, a member of our staff may call you to discuss any behavioral or mental health needs noted on your child(ren)'s Application or Health History Form. In some cases, we will complete an Individual Camper Plan that is designed to provide more specific information for supporting your child(ren) while at camp.

Although camp is a fun and exciting place for campers, changes in routine and environment can cause some behavioral and mental health concerns to worsen or become more prevalent. Do not be surprised if we call you with reports of a behavior that is not common at home or that methods of handling a behavior are not as successful at camp. Our goal will always be to work with you and your child(ren) to establish management techniques that help your child(ren) be successful at camp.

If your child(ren) has diagnosed or undiagnosed behavioral, emotional, social, or mental health challenges, please talk with them about how camp may impact their management techniques and coping strategies. Some strategies that work at home may not work at camp. Campers should not feel bad or be discouraged if they have new or additional challenges while at camp. However, they must be willing to work with their Group Leaders and/or our Camper Care team to establish new strategies that are better suited for camp.

Please keep in mind that in some cases Sherwood Forest is not the right fit for your camper. In this situation, we will do our best to recommend some alternative services, youth programs, or camps that are able to better meet the needs of your camper.

If you have any questions or concerns about managing your child(ren)'s behavioral, emotional, or mental health needs at camp, please contact the Camp Director.

## **INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND CAMP**

At Sherwood Forest, we believe that camp is an invaluable experience that your camper needs now more than ever. As such, we may take additional precautions to ensure that we can run in-person. It is important that you and your camper review all the changes and precautions that may be implemented to limit the spread of Infectious Diseases (such as Covid-19) and are fully aware of how camp may look different. The following is a sample of possible changes.

### ***Establishing a "Bubble"***

Per recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and the American Camp Association, Sherwood Forest may establish a "Camp Bubble." During this period, we would be following strict social distancing and quarantining measures, including limiting access in and out of camp. At some point, we may test all individuals living in the camp bubble and may decide to lift some social distancing measures, however we would continue to limit access in and out of camp.

### ***Pod Method***

A major element of successful social distancing at camps has been to create pods. If necessary, each camper will be placed in a pod around whom they do not need to social distance. For ease and convenience, pods will

be divided into cabin groups. Campers will be able to freely interact with their fellow campers and Group Leaders who are living in their cabin group and do not need to wear masks while in their sleeping quarters.

Pods may be required to follow strict social distancing measures anytime they are outside of their cabin, (this includes in the washhouse (if separate building from cabin), in the village, and in common spaces). We may decide to lift social distancing measures to allow pods to interact with others in their village, meaning campers can freely interact with other campers and staff in their village and campers do not need to follow social distancing measures in the washhouse (if separate building from cabin).

### ***Social Distancing at Camp***

Our best social distancing tool is following the “Pod Method” as described previously. We may also be following basic social distancing measures, outlined as follows:

- Outside – Whenever possible, campers will participate in activities outside. Since a large part of camp is spending time in nature, many of our activities are already set up to follow this guideline. Some activities that typically take place indoors may be moved outdoors, for example, mealtimes.
- Distanced – The CDC recommends that individuals outside of pods maintain 6-feet of distance. While at camp, pods will be scheduled to be in different places at different times to ensure they can stay easily distanced from each other. In situations that require pods to be in the same place, such as mealtimes or campfires, pods will have assigned locations or seating that is at least 6-feet away from another pod.
- Masked – Campers and staff may be required to wear a face mask when showing symptoms of possible infection. Face masks will be provided and a strict laundry routine will be followed to ensure the cleanliness of face masks.

We understand that following these guidelines while at camp might feel weird and/or uncomfortable. These safety measures exist to keep campers and staff healthy and safe, should a need arise. We will plan to operate camp without our infectious disease protocols, but please be aware that we will implement these procedures if needed throughout the summer.

### ***Testing***

Regular testing is an important part of identifying, monitoring, and tracking Infectious Diseases in our camp community. We will be working with local health officials to make tests available if we believe testing will be necessary this summer.

### ***Preparing For Camp***

The easiest way to ensure that camp remains free of Infectious Diseases is to take extreme precautions prior to attending camp. We recommend that your child(ren) and your family take extra precautions for the 2 weeks prior to your child(ren) attending camp. This may include:

- Limiting interactions with people outside of your household.
- Limiting unnecessary trips outside of your home.
- Limiting unnecessary social interactions outside of your household.
- Wearing a mask anytime you leave your house and may be around other people.

We recognize that some of these guidelines may be difficult to follow, so we ask that you simply do your best given your family or household circumstances.

### ***Screening***

All campers will be screened for Infectious Diseases before getting on the bus to camp. Screening will include, at minimum, a questionnaire and temperature check. You may receive an Infectious Disease and Camp Update packet in early spring that will include additional details about screening.

## PACKING FOR CAMP

### *Packing List*

The following list will give you an idea of items to pack for camp, as well as a reasonable number of each item:

#### **Clothing**

2 pairs of closed toe shoes (see footwear below)  
1 pair sport sandal/water shoes (see footwear below)  
1 pair shower shoes – Flip flops may ONLY be worn in the shower  
12 pairs of socks (see footwear below)  
12 pairs of underwear  
10-12 bras or undershirts (if worn)  
12 shorts  
3 pair jeans or long pants  
12 shirts or blouses  
4 pair of pajamas  
1 sweater or hoody  
1 light weight jacket  
1 raincoat or poncho  
2 Swimsuits or trunks

#### **Personal Care**

2 bath towels  
1 swim towel  
2 washcloths and/or loofa  
1 pillow  
1 pillowcase  
Shampoo & Conditioner  
Soap/body wash  
Deodorant  
1 comb and/or brush  
Hair care products  
Lotion (enough for your child's stay)  
1 toothbrush  
Toothpaste  
1 bottle bug repellent (lotion preferred, no aerosol)  
Medication (enough for your child's entire stay- all meds will go to our Nurses)  
Sanitary napkins and/or tampons (enough for your child's entire stay)  
Nail Clippers (optional)

#### **Other Items to Consider**

1 additional pillow  
2 additional pillowcases  
1 flashlight or headlamp  
Batteries for flashlight  
Stuffed animal for bed (Optional)  
1 disposable camera (Optional but comes in handy)  
Small Portable Battery powered fan (optional)  
Hats and/or bandannas (optional) / Hiking boots (optional- see footwear below)

#### **Items that SHOULD NOT come to camp include:**

- any type of electronics (cell phones, headphones, iPods, game systems, CD players, radios, laptops, mini DVD players)

- food of any kind (including gum)
- scented items (perfumes, lotions, soaps, shampoos etc. as they tend to attract bugs)
- weapons (including hunting knives and pocketknives)

Any of these items sent to camp **WILL BE CONFISCATED** and kept in the camp office until the session ends.

### *Theme Days and Holidays at Camp*

Throughout the sessions, we will have several “theme days” that will give our campers and staff the opportunity to dress up, have fun, and express themselves. Your child is welcome to bring items related to the theme days for camp. This is not required. Campers who do not bring items will have the chance to find items at camp to use, and all are welcome to participate or not!

- Juneteenth
- Twin Day
- Marvel vs DC Comic Day
- Neon Day
- Graphic Tee Thursday
- Crazy Hat Day
- Animal Day
- Beach Party Day
- International Day
- Disney Day
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July
- Tie Dye Day
- Tutu Tuesday
- Crazy sock day
- LGBT+ Pride
- Harry Potter

## ***Laundry***

During Explorer and Leadership sessions, laundry will be sent out to a laundromat. Extra clothing is available for use while at camp. It is our experience that Mini Campers change their clothes frequently, so even though their session is only seven days, please send extra outfits. Campers should bring at least 12 days' worth of clothing to ensure that they have plenty of clean clothes in between laundry days. Since campers are outdoors all day, their clothing will get dirty and muddy. Therefore, **DO NOT SEND NEW CLOTHES TO CAMP. DO NOT SEND ANYTHING THAT, IF RUINED, WOULD CAUSE YOU OR YOUR CHILD TO BECOME UPSET.** Please have your child(ren) help pack for camp. Besides this being a great skill for your child(ren) to develop, this will help with "lost and found" as your child(ren) will know what they brought to camp.

Laundry days are scheduled by village and length of stay at camp. Mini Campers do not do laundry while at camp. The number of laundry days per session is as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade – 0 laundry days
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade – 1 laundry day
- 6<sup>th</sup> to 9th grade – 3 laundry days

Camper's clothes may be mixed with other people's; therefore, it is very important that all clothing is labeled with camper's FIRST AND LAST NAMES.

## ***Labeling Belongings***

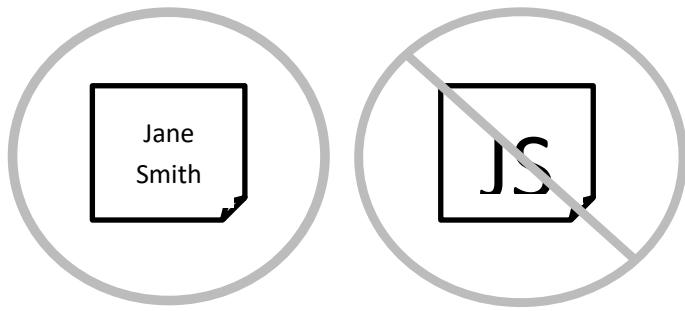
**Please mark ALL your child(ren)'s belongings with their FIRST and LAST name in permanent marker.** Because laundry is done by cabin group and village, your child(ren)'s clothing will be mixed with other peoples' clothing. **It is your child(ren)'s responsibility to care for their belongings while at camp and to claim them when they return to the village.** Part of learning to be independent is learning to be responsible for one's personal belongings.

We will have up to 300 people at camp at one time, many with the same initials. Clothing items only marked with initials will likely be misplaced. Even though items come back from being washed, you would not believe the number of items that go unclaimed in a village that later, at home, are claimed to "have been lost in the laundry". (We also find a large number of socks around camp. By the end of the session, it is impressive that anyone is wearing socks at all. But we digress...)

**All bedding is furnished by the camp EXCEPT pillows and pillowcases. If you are sending sheets and blankets with your camper, please send 2 sets.**

## **Electronics**

Campers may **not** bring cell phones, texting devices, iPods, game systems, CD players, tablets, radios, laptops, mini-DVD players, etc. These items are expensive, we do not have a way to store them, and we will not be responsible for their care. They **MUST** be left at home. Other rechargeable items or items requiring an outlet (i.e. watches, fans, etc.) should not be brought to camp since there are limited electrical outlets in the cabins.



**Sherwood Forest Camp will NOT be held responsible for lost or damaged items.**

#### ***Footwear***

Sherwood Forest Camp is located in the Ozark woodlands. Our campsite has pathways and trails, most of which are not paved. All campers will be participating in some hiking and overnight camping trips, which require proper footwear. House shoes (like Converse or Vans) are unsafe and not considered appropriate footwear for camp. Please send light weight hiking boots or running shoes that are appropriate for camp activities. In addition to hiking, your child(ren) will have the opportunity to participate in river and canoeing trips. Please send water shoes, sandals, or Crocs with a heel strap that can be worn during these activities. These shoes may only be worn during daylight hours.

Socks are an important component of safety during hiking trips. We ask that you pack at least one pair of polyester or wool socks. Cotton socks hold moisture and can cause discomfort or blisters. Water shoes and hiking or running shoes can be found at stores like Wal-Mart for relatively low costs. If you are unable to send these items, please let us know so that we can make provisions to ensure your child(ren)'s safety on their trips by providing proper footwear.

Flip flops may ONLY be worn in the shower. Sport sandals (including Crocs) with a heel strap engaged may be worn around camp or as water shoes **during daylight hours only**. Please note that many camp activities require campers to wear closed-toe shoes from dusk to dawn, and closed-toed running shoes (or similar) are required.

#### ***Cameras***

If child(ren) would like to bring a camera to camp, it must be a disposable camera. Cameras have a tendency to get dropped (often into the lake), dirty, lost, or broken while at camp. Sherwood Forest will not be held responsible for lost or damaged items. If you do choose to send a camera that requires batteries, remember to send lots of regular (not rechargeable) batteries, as there are limited electrical outlets in the cabins.

#### ***Cell Phones***

Campers may not bring cell phones or texting devices to camp. Besides the obvious reasons (cell phones are expensive, they can get lost or broken at camp, and there are limited electrical outlets in the cabins) there is an even more important reason we do not allow cell phones at camp.

When you and your child(ren) decide they want to attend Sherwood Forest, you are entrusting us with their care. One of our goals is to help your child(ren) learn to trust other caring adults, and to find solutions to challenges on their own. This is an important step as your child(ren) develops independence, conflict resolution skills, and increased self-confidence. A cell phone provides quick access to a parent, and often the parent, rather than the child, finds a solution to the problem the child may be experiencing. Sending your

child(ren) with a cell phone to camp is telling the camper, "I don't trust camp and I don't think you are able to handle situations on your own."

Please help your child(ren) develop independence by talking with them before they leave for camp about who they can talk to if they have a problem or face a challenging situation. Cabin counselors (aka group leaders), Village Directors, activity instructors, camper care team members, and/or the Camp Director are always available to the campers to hear their concerns, and if a child(ren) is not sure they were heard by a certain individual, they should ask for help from another adult. Let your child(ren) know why you support our "no cell phone" policy. Camp is a low-tech environment where child(ren) develop the life skills necessary to be successful adults.

Please ask for your child(ren)'s cell phone before you place them on the bus. Cell phones are not allowed on the bus and will be returned at the bus stop. If your child(ren) brings a cell phone or texting device to camp, the cell phone will be taken away and kept in the camp office for the duration of camp.

## PREPARING FOR CAMP

### *My child(ren) wants to go to camp, but they are nervous*

Take a moment to talk with your camper, ask what they are concerned about, and reassure them. If your camper has questions that you don't know the answer to, call us! Answering their questions will set their mind at ease as they prepare for camp. Do NOT tell your child(ren) that if they do not like camp or become homesick that they can call or write you and you will come get them. This guarantees that your child will not work to resolve the issue that is bothering them, and/or prevents them from working through and managing strong emotions.

### *Transportation*

We provide transportation to and from camp by bus and/or camp vans. Once at camp, campers may be transported to or from camp activities off-site, or to and from the local health clinic. Only staff members at least 21 years of age, whose driving records have been checked and approved by our insurance company, and who have successfully completed Camp Driver Training are allowed to drive camp vehicles and transport children.

#### **Bus Stop Location and Departure Times**

- Holman Middle School, 11055 St. Charles Rock Road – 8:00 am
- Kingshighway Entrance at Tower Grove Park - 8:15 am
- AT&T Parking Lot, 3270 Telegraph Road – 9:00 am

#### **Family Arrival Time**

7:30am
7:45am
8:30am

- If a parent/guardian is driving the camper to camp, they need to arrive at 11:30 a.m.

\*Please note that camp is roughly a 2-hour drive from St. Louis. \*

Times are subject to change. Please review the letter sent just prior to camp for confirmation. Please have your child(ren) at the bus stop at least 30 minutes prior to the listed departure times so that the buses can leave promptly. At each bus stop or at camp, camper luggage will be inspected by trained Bed Bug sniffing Dogs. This process helps us to ensure that no bed bug infestations occur at camp. It is a simple process where the trained dogs will sniff your child(ren)'s belongings. If any bed bugs are found on luggage, the luggage will be treated privately. If you have any questions, please contact the office at 314-644-3322. Also, make sure your child(ren) eats breakfast and uses the restroom before boarding the bus, since food and drink are not allowed on the bus, and the ride to camp is approximately 2 ½ hours. A letter will be sent two weeks before the session begins to remind you about last-minute details.

We will contact you via text message prior to your child leaving camp with an estimated return time between 4:00pm and 6:00pm on the last day of your child(ren)'s session. Campers will be returned to their originally scheduled pick-up location. Campers usually arrive within 15 minutes of the estimated time, but they can arrive early or be delayed because of traffic and/or weather. If there are any changes to times or locations, this will be communicated to families via our email system and/or phone calls/text messages. Please be sure we have current contact information for your family on file.

Please call the main office 314-644-3322 at least 48 hours prior to camper departure to change a pick-up or drop-off location. Make sure you gather all your child(ren)'s belongings before you leave the bus stop! Items left at the bus stop may be thrown away or donated elsewhere at the discretion of the camp staff.

In case of a vehicular emergency or accident, Sherwood Forest staff will implement emergency procedures for which they have been trained. Staff will stop the vehicle and move children to safety and then contact emergency first responders. After this, they will contact our Camp Director. You will be informed if a significant incident occurs.

## PARENT INFORMATION FOR WHILE YOUR CHILD(REN) IS AT CAMP

### *Camp Contact Information*

St. Louis Office

Sherwood Forest	314-644-3322
12430 Tesson Ferry Road, Suite 304	314-644-3330 fax
St. Louis, Missouri 63128	<a href="mailto:Programs@sherwoodforeststl.org">Programs@sherwoodforeststl.org</a>

Camp Office- This is where you can write to your child(ren) (see below).

Sherwood Forest Camp	573-637-2476
P.O. Box 210	573-637-2478 fax
Lesterville, MO 63654	<a href="mailto:camp@sherwoodforeststl.org">camp@sherwoodforeststl.org</a>

If you provide us with a working email address, we may send periodic emails. Please add [camp@sherwoodforeststl.org](mailto:camp@sherwoodforeststl.org) and [programs@sherwoodforeststl.org](mailto:programs@sherwoodforeststl.org) to your email contacts so you can receive these messages.

### *Packages*

To keep things equitable among our campers, Sherwood Forest does **NOT** allow packages at camp unless your child is celebrating their birthday during their camp session. If a package is sent to camp, it will be returned to the sender or sent home with your child when they leave camp. Please make sure your camper packs everything they may need for the duration of camp. They are welcome to bring a deck of cards, a stuffed animal, coloring book, etc., but please do not send or mail food, snacks, gum, or candy of any kind. **If food is brought or mailed to camp, (unless it is a camper's birthday) it will be thrown away.** (See page 20 for more information regarding birthdays at camp).

### *Letters and Emails*

Your child(ren) will be looking forward to letters or notes from home. From St. Louis, mail takes approximately 3 – 4 days to arrive at camp. Please send a cheerful letter, postcard, or email ([camp@sherwoodforeststl.org](mailto:camp@sherwoodforeststl.org)) at least once during the session and more often if possible. If possible, we encourage you to send your child(ren) a letter, note, card, or email at least one week before they arrive at camp. That way they will have a little something from home right when they arrive. This is how you should address the envelope:

{Your Child's Name}  
Sherwood Forest Camp  
P.O. Box 210  
Lesterville, MO 63654

You can send your camper a letter via email to camp@sherwoodforeststl.org. They will be printed and delivered to campers daily. **The subject of your email should be your child's first and last name.** Please note that your camper will not be able to respond via email.

**Please do not relay disturbing news**, such as hospitalization, death or illness of a pet and/or family member, to your child(ren) in a letter. Please call us if you have something important to tell your child(ren) and the Camp Director will advise you as to how best to handle the situation.

While at camp, we encourage campers to write letters home. However, we cannot make campers write lengthy or detailed letters if they do not want to. Do not be surprised if the letters you receive are short. It doesn't mean your child(ren) does not have a lot to say, it just means they are too busy having fun! Do not misinterpret a child saying "I miss you" as a plea to come home.

#### ***Homesickness***

Our staff is trained in working with children and are sensitive to their needs. It is common for children to experience some homesickness as they adjust to camp life. They may even write and ask you to come get them. If this happens, do not be alarmed. Homesickness usually doesn't last long, and successfully overcoming it is an important life skill. Please remember that any letter you receive was written three or four days earlier, and your child has likely resolved the issue by the time you hear about it. If you do receive a "homesick" letter, first, take a deep breath, and remember this is very common when children are away from home. Then, call camp at 573-637-2476 and ask to speak with our Camp Director or your child's Village Director.

Sometimes campers write home the moment they are presented with a challenging situation. Remember, mail takes three or four days to reach St. Louis, so often by the time you are reading the letter the concern has been resolved and has been totally forgotten. However, please call us right away to make sure the problem has been addressed, even if your child writes, "please don't call camp."

Prepare your child(ren) to be successful. Before they leave for camp, reassure them about the fact that they may miss home, but camp will be a great experience and a lot of fun. Make sure they understand that they will not be able to call home or return home and that there is not a "trial period" at camp. Do NOT say, "Just try it, if you don't like camp, I will come and get you." Be positive, saying things like:

- "I know you are going to have fun."
- "I can't wait to hear about all the things you did and learned."
- "I want to hear all about your cabin, camping trip, Tango Tower experience, etc."

Please make sure your child(ren) wants to come to camp and involve them in the process of getting ready for camp. Allow them to help pack their suitcase and locate the supplies they need. If you receive a letter from your child that they are homesick, please read the section above and then call camp at 573-637-2476. Ask to speak with our Camp Director or Village Director. **Please do not respond with a letter stating, "If you continue to be unhappy, homesick, etc., you can come home."** This always guarantees that your child will not work to resolve the issue that is bothering them.

Remember that camp is an opportunity for your child(ren) to grow as an individual by learning to trust other caring adults and to find solutions to challenges on their own. When you and your child(ren) decide that they will participate in our program they are committing to staying at camp for the entire session. Your child(ren) missing home or you missing your child(ren) are not reasons to pick your child(ren) up from camp. If, at any point, you choose to pick up your child(ren) from camp, please consider the long-term effects that this might have on your child(ren), such as their confidence in dealing with adverse situations, their ability to develop independence, and their ability to successfully be away from home. And, please keep in mind that it will greatly diminish the chance of being able to return to camp in future summers.

### ***Common Parent Feelings when a Child is Away***

Please also consider how having your child(ren) away from home may affect your feelings. It is completely normal for parents/guardians to really miss their child(ren) and to worry about them throughout the summer. But please do not allow these feelings to influence your child(ren)'s camp experience. Children are not in their normal routine; they are likely excited about swimming, fishing, or outdoor cooking while at camp and, although they may miss you, they are also having fun. Please write or email your child(ren) a letter or call us and ask to speak to your child(ren)'s Village Director. Please do not assume that just because you are really missing your child(ren) that they are miserable and need you to come and get them.

### ***Receiving Phone Calls from Camp***

While your child(ren) is at camp, please accept unidentified calls in case we are trying to reach you. Please ask the person you've identified as an emergency contact to also accept unidentified calls. Cell phones are not permitted for any camper, regardless of age.

### ***Who should I call when I have a question?***

If you are wondering how your child(ren) is doing during camp, please call camp at 573-637-2476. Ask for their Village Director or the Camp Director. Please note that the Village Director and Camp Director may not be readily available, as they are most likely out around camp property. However, our staff will take a message and get it to them.

If you have a bus stop change, please call and speak to our Quest Operations Coordinator or Camp Director. Make sure you notify us of any changes at least 48 hours prior to the stop by calling the St. Louis office at 314-644-3322.

If your child(ren) forgot an item or you have a letter that needs to go to camp, please call the main office at 314-644-3322.

### ***Telephoning and Visiting Camp***

Because many child(ren) need time to adjust to camp, we've found that phone calls and visits from parents/guardians during the brief time that child(ren) are at camp tend to make that adjustment more difficult. Therefore, children are not allowed to make or receive phone calls while at camp or on trips. However, please feel free to call your child(ren)'s Village Director or the Camp Director at 573-637-2476 at any time to discuss your child(ren)'s experience while they are at camp.

\*\*Note: Please show this handbook to all friends and family members (including joint- or non-custodial parents, grandparents, etc.) who are close to your child(ren) and may want to be informed about his/her summer plans. With your permission, we are happy to talk to them by phone or via zoom about the program before your child(ren) leaves for camp.

## STAYING IN TOUCH AFTER CAMP

### *Campers and Staff Members Staying in Touch After Camp*

Because campers and staff members live together at camp, in an environment like no other, it is natural that strong bonds will develop. At camp, it is staff members' full-time responsibility to live, work, and interact with the campers. After camp, staff members resume their busy lives as students and young professionals. We tell staff members that communicating with campers outside of camp or camp-sponsored events requires the permission of the camper's parent/guardian and of Sherwood Forest Camp.

You, as parent/guardian, assume full responsibility for monitoring and supervising camper/staff relationships that continue outside of camp or camp-sponsored events. We tell staff members that they may not "friend" or "follow" campers on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or other forms of social media. Please make sure your camper understands these policies. We do not want any hurt feelings when a staff member does not respond to their request(s).

As a parent/guardian, please become a "fan" of Sherwood Forest on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date on current Sherwood events. You can find our pages at [www.facebook.com/sherwoodforestcamp](http://www.facebook.com/sherwoodforestcamp).

### *Sharing Photos of Camp*

We know that campers love to capture their memories of camp in photographs. **They should not post any pictures from camp on the internet (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.).** This policy is in place to protect any families who do not wish to have their child(ren)'s photograph shared. Please make sure your child(ren) understands this policy. Members of the Sherwood Forest professional staff and volunteers may take pictures for publicity purposes while your child(ren) is at camp. If your child(ren)'s picture should not be used for publicity purposes, please mark the appropriate box on their camp application. Remember, permission will be assumed if not specifically denied.

## LAST BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST

### *American Camp Association*

Sherwood Forest, and many of its staff, are members of, and accredited by the American Camp Association and meets or exceeds standards that address site and facilities, food service, transportation, health and wellness, human resources, operational management, and programs.

### *United Way of Greater St. Louis*

Sherwood Forest is a proud agency partner of the United Way of Greater St. Louis.

### *In the Event of a Crisis*

In our ever-changing world, crises can occur with or without warning. For many years, Sherwood Forest has had plans to respond to natural disasters such as severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, and floods. When any crisis occurs, parents' first thoughts are of their child(ren)'s safety and well-being. We are committed to helping our campers respond to difficult situations. Our emergency plan also includes responses in case of a national crisis. Here are the key areas covered in our emergency plan to respond to a national crisis:

- Steps to provide extended care (supervision, food, healthcare, and shelter) for all those at camp in case transportation is delayed for short or long periods of time.
- Communication between camp and St. Louis to notify families on the status of their child(ren) and the general status of camp.
- Providing an extended camp experience that is fun and reassuring.
- Working with the American Red Cross and other disaster preparedness programs.

The threat of a national crisis that directly affects your child(ren)'s stay at camp is very small. However, we feel it is better to be prepared and to let you know what our plans are, just in case.

### **Need Additional Information?**

If you have any questions about the registration process, programs or services of Sherwood Forest, you may speak with the Camp Director or a member of our Program Team. During the summer, they can be reached at 573-637-2476 typically between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. In the fall, winter and spring, they can be reached at 314-644-3322. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

If your child(ren) is not eligible for Sherwood Forest's camp program, or it is not a good fit, please check out our partner organizations to find other camp options:

Blue Print 4 Summer (St. Louis Only) – [www.blueprint4.com](http://www.blueprint4.com)

American Camp Association (Nation Wide) – [find.acacamps.org](http://find.acacamps.org)

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION SUMMER CAMP**

### **SUMMER CAMP DATES**

#### ***Mini Camp: 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Graders***

All Genders

**Session 1:** June 7 – June 13, 2026

**Session 2:** July 9 – July 15, 2026  
(7-day session)

#### ***Explorer Camp: 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Graders***

All Genders

**Session 1:** June 17- July 2, 2026

**Session 2:** July 19 – August 3, 2026  
(16-day session)

#### ***Leadership Camp: 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> Graders***

All Genders

**Session 1:** June 7 – July 2, 2026

**Session 2:** July 9 – August 3, 2026  
(26-day session)

# Contact Information

## St. Louis Office

Sherwood Forest

314-644-3322

12430 Tesson Ferry Road, Suite 304

St. Louis, Missouri 63128

314-644-3330 fax

[www.sherwoodforeststl.org](http://www.sherwoodforeststl.org)

[programs@sherwoodforeststl.org](mailto:programs@sherwoodforeststl.org)

## Camp Office

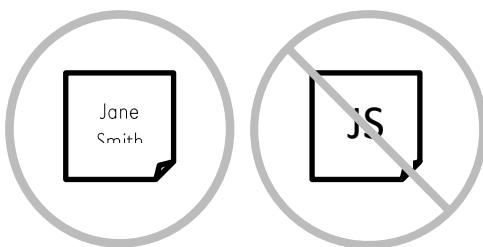
Sherwood Forest Camp

573-637-2476

P.O. Box 210

Lesterville, MO 63654

[camp@sherwoodforeststl.org](mailto:camp@sherwoodforeststl.org)



**Don't forget to label tags  
with your child's full name!**

## Bus Stop Information

### Bus Stop Location and Family Arrival Times

- Holman Middle School, 11055 St. Charles Rock Road – 7:30 am
- Kingshighway Entrance at Tower Grove Park - 7:45 am
- AT&T Parking Lot, 3270 Telegraph Road – 8:30 am
- If parent/guardian is driving the camper to camp, they need to arrive at 11:30 a.m.



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stlouis.bbb.org



Missouri Foundation  
for Health

*a catalyst for change*