



CAMPER AND GUARDIAN HANDBOOK 2021

Program Description

We recognize the importance of intervention in the aftermath of a loved-one's suicide and so have established Camp Kita (Abenaki-Penobscot for “listen”). We understand that timely intervention and support is critical in shaping the landscape of grief for a child survivor. We believe that if we help survivors navigate this grief appropriately, we can enhance and highlight the ability of each individual child to endure. Our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where child survivors can connect with one another while learning constructive ways to deal with the often unspeakable and fierce emotion of losing a loved-one to suicide. By creating a space for child survivors, we effectively ease the stigma around what it means to have lost a loved-one to suicide. The campers’ shared loss and experience affords them the opportunity of forming deep, knowing bonds with others and thereby forging connections that we hope will last a lifetime.

As a community of survivors, our focus at camp will be to provide and explore constructive forms of self-expression. We will practice self-awareness as a way of identifying feelings and communicating them in a focused way. Our focus on grief, on shattering apart, will dovetail with an equally important focus on hope—the power and purpose of piecing oneself together. Most importantly, we will empower campers to utilize the tools and resources we provide so that they may draw upon them throughout their lives.

Our approach is multifaceted and includes a variety of recreational as well as traditional therapies in a camp setting. In addition to daily, small group meetings with our trained support staff, campers will participate in activities such as swimming, sports and fitness, hiking, games, arts and crafts, campfires, and assorted therapeutic sessions. Throughout our session, the kita zone will be available for any camper needing additional support during regularly scheduled activities.



Code of Conduct

Camp Kita's priority is ensuring a safe and healthy community. We provide a structured and wholly therapeutic environment in which each camper's time will be spent positively and productively. In order to maximize your child's experience at Camp Kita, please review the following expectations with your camper for behavior.

Behavioral Expectations / Respect

Though campers are bound by their shared experience of losing a loved-one to suicide, our camp community is made up of children and staff from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, races, and religions. First and foremost, we foster an environment of respect for differences, and we expect our campers to interact in ways that are respectful and inclusive. Prejudice, discrimination or oppression on the basis of class, race, gender, or sexual orientation will not be tolerated.

Along with the four freedoms—of speech and expression, of religion, from want, and from fear—first articulated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in a State of the Union address, we recognize the freedom to be oneself. We encourage campers to find and exhibit their truest and most genuine potential without fear of exclusion. We follow the golden rule of treating others as one wishes to be treated and thereby expressly prohibit disrespectful or inappropriate behavior, particularly at the expense of another camper.

In line with our mission and expectations for behavior, Camp Kita does not permit the following:

- Angry or vulgar language including swearing, name calling, and shouting
- Physical contact with another person in an angry or threatening way
- Any demonstration of sexual activity or sexual contact with another person
- Harassment or intimidation with words, gestures, body language, or other menacing behavior
- Behavior which intends to or results in the theft or destruction of property
- Carrying or concealing any weapons or devices that may be used as weapons including but not limited to scissors, lighters, and Swiss Army knives

Please also note that Camp Kita strictly prohibits the possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs. Campers involved in any incidents will be removed from camp immediately at the camp's sole discretion. While a fully therapeutic environment is our mission, we do not have the appropriate staff or resources to manage drug or alcohol use or addictions.



Discipline Policy

To ensure the safety and well-being of campers and staff members, the following course of disciplinary action will be implemented when circumstances deem necessary:

1. Camper receives a verbal warning regarding Camp Kita's expectations for behavior
2. Camper receives a second verbal warning regarding Camp Kita's expectations for behavior and is asked to sit out of the activity until appropriate camp staff invites the student to return

In the event of extreme behavior such as endangerment or intent to endanger the well-being of self or others, the following procedures will be implemented:

1. Camper will report to the director
2. Director will contact the camper's parent / guardian
3. Director will determine further action and reserves the right to order parent / guardian to pick up his or her camper within 24 hours

Technology Policy

Due to the nature and duration of our program, we do not allow personal electronic devices including cell phones, iPads, laptops, and music players. These items are expensive and have the potential to be damaged or lost. More importantly, solitary use of electronics tends to isolate campers from one another rather than foster the lifelong relationships and community we intend to build. All electronics brought to camp will be confiscated and held at the office until departure day. At Camp Kita, we take our technology policy seriously, so please set the expectation accordingly with your camper to respect these guidelines.

Communication Policy

We limit campers' telephone contact with guardians to emergencies only. For this reason, please do not tell your child in advance that he or she may call if homesick. The majority of homesickness diminishes once campers are adjusted to activities and schedules. Please also know that we have a phenomenal staff of loving individuals who are more than happy to ease any anxiety or sadness related to homesickness.

If the need arises to speak with your child, please call (207)-500-2233; you can leave a message if you do not reach someone directly, and your call will be returned in a timely fashion. You may also send an email to your child at info@campkita.com. Please include your child's full name in the subject line. Emails will be delivered directly to your child nightly, but your child will not be able to respond.



Healthy Food

We are very proud of the delicious and nutritious meals we serve at Camp Kita. Every child receives a healthy amount of each item offered at mealtimes. We serve nutritious food and encourage campers to taste a little of each item we serve. However, there is enough of a variety that most every child finds something they like at each meal. Please note that families are discouraged from packing or mailing food or candy as it will be removed and stored at the office until departure day.

Cabins and Waysides

Campers will sleep in cabins that have screened windows, a front and back door, ceiling fan, lights, and power outlets. Each cabin sleeps between seven to nine campers plus an adult counselor. Camp CenterStage is separated into four villages: Boys' Village, Girls' Village, Arts Village & Nelson Dining Hall. Girl's and Boy's Villages are divided by a car path. Boys are never allowed in girls' cabins, and vice versa. After dark, girls are not allowed in Boys' Village and vice versa. Most mattress sizes are 30" x 72" x 4". Campers may bring sheets and a blanket, or just put a sleeping bag on top of the mattress. It is highly recommended that campers cover their mattress with a fitted sheet.

Cabin placements are designated by age and gender. We are unable to guarantee camper placement requests. Each cabin will be assigned a toilet stall and shower stall, please note these are not located inside the cabins.

Our bathroom facilities are called "Waysides". There is a Wayside on each village side. Each Wayside has several independent (private) shower stalls, sinks with mirrors, and several toilet stalls. The Waysides are new (2019) and clean! As part of the CCS community living experience, cabins are assigned to clean the Wayside during rotating days while they are at camp.

In addition, waysides will be cleaned by a senior staff member at least 3 times a day. Campers are encouraged to bring a fanny pack for toothbrush, toothpaste and other toiletries they may use at the sink - this will prevent campers from setting toiletries down on the shelves. Campers are also asked to bring hanging shower caddies (again to prevent setting things down on shelves or benches).



PREPARING FOR CAMP

Campers should dress casually and comfortably with shoes that will remain securely on their feet. Laundry is available in emergency situations only, so please be sure your child brings enough clothing for at least seven days. Below is a general guideline of items to pack for camp. Please label *all* items.

In addition to leaving electronic devices at home, please do not send your child with food, snacks, jewelry, money, or other valuables. Your child has no need for additional money while at camp. Please note that Camp Kita is not responsible for lost articles or equipment. Guardians are strongly encouraged to label everything prior to arrival at camp and to check cabins as well as the lost and found area prior to departure.

What to pack

- Shorts
- T-shirts
- Undergarments
- Sandals that secure to feet (please, no flip flops)
- One sweatshirt or thin coat
- One pair of pants or sweatpants
- Bathing suit
- 2 towels (one for swimming / one for shower)
- Bathroom accessories (toothpaste, toothbrush, shampoo)
- Fanny pack
- Hanging shower caddy/toiletry ditty bag
- Pillow
- Sleeping bag
- Fitted sheet
- Water bottle
- Eyeglasses and case (where applicable)
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Sunblock
- Bug Repellant
- Disposable camera (if desired)
- 4 - 5 face masks (with their names written on them)
- Travel size of hand sanitizer, (we will have sanitizer stations throughout camp where campers can: use the sanitizer & refill their travel size bottle.)
- Back Up Bag



What to include in a Back Up Bag:

In an effort to be prepared for keeping our entire campus and camp population healthy this summer, we are asking you to prepare and bring a “Back-Up” Bag for your camper. This would be used in the case that your camper needs an outfit of clean clothes. We want to be best prepared to keep all of our campers and staff healthy and safe. Please have your camper’s Back Up Bag packed in a gallon size (or larger) zip-lock type bag labeled with the camper's full name and cabin. No need to be concerned with style or fashion – this bag is for comfort.

Your camper’s Back Up Bag should include clean:

- Sweatpants or yoga pants or leggings (something comfortable)
- T-shirt
- Sweatshirt or other warm shirt
- Underwear & socks
- Safe footwear (anything that your camper won’t need / want during camp)
- Travel toothbrush /toothpaste

We will collect Back Up Bags when you arrive and check-in on opening day of camp!

Medications

As previously noted, please keep all medications in their original packaging. For prescription medications, keep the medication in its original packaging / bottle that identifies the prescribing physician, the name of the medication, the dosage, and the frequency of administration. Please do not separate medication into plastic bags or pill holders. For the duration of camp, all medication will be held and distributed by the camp nurse who takes meticulous care of every medical situation, particularly when dispensing medicine. In the event that a camper must have an EpiPen or inhaler readily available to them at all times, his or her counselor will be responsible for the EpiPen or inhaler.

What if there is severe weather during camp?

During camp sessions, the CCS Staff monitor multiple weather web sites to allow us to have plenty of time to prepare & react to weather. If we receive a severe storm warning, campers are gathered at Nelson Hall (if time permits) so that the entire camp is together and in a secure place. If time does not permit, campers stay with the group they are currently assigned to and the Leadership Team communicates via walkie-talkies to keep everyone updated and informed. Whenever there is a threat of thunderstorms or other extreme weather, the waterfront is closed.



What about bugs and insects?

Camp is in the woods of Maine so mosquitoes, flies and other annoying insects can appear. However, the campus is kept well-groomed, reducing the areas for insects to thrive. We encourage that your camper pack a good repellent spray or lotion for use in the evening. Maple Lane is treated for ticks and we educate all campers and staff regarding tick prevention.

What if my camper is not feeling well?

They will receive plenty of TLC from our Camp Nurse, as well as counselors, staff, and even fellow campers! Often when a camper isn't feeling well, a bit of extra rest is all that is needed; and we have several private bedrooms available in the Health Center just for this purpose. If their illness (or injury) is more serious, we will contact you right away to discuss the best course of action.

We have implemented procedures to check for the signs of COVID-19 on a daily basis and will be promoting healthy hygiene practices during our time together at camp. We regularly communicate and monitor developments with our local authorities, on-call doctor and Franklin Memorial Hospital. Our camp community's health and safety is our utmost concern and we will update our Operations Guide with our camp medical team and the local authorities.

This summer we have a dedicated isolation cabin in addition to our isolation room in the Health Center.



COVID-19 Preparedness

Camp Kita is putting the health and safety of your campers and our staff at the center of everything we do this year. In order to hold an in-person camp, there are certain precautions we need to take including:

Pre-Camp Policies / Procedures

- 10-day pre-camp health screening
- **Each camper (and staff) is required to provide proof of a negative PcR test as close to 72 hours prior to arrival to camp OR have proof of full vaccination.**
- Contactless camper drop-off
- 10-day staff pre-camp quarantine
- Clear communication with camp families
- Signage regarding hand-washing, stopping the spread of germs, protective measures throughout campus
- Assigned seating in Nelson Dining Hall (to be used for inside dining and gathering spot)
- Increased cleaning schedule for all community used spaces
- Videos to families regarding behavior that prevent spread of COVID-19
- Videos to families regarding new procedures
- Back up bags for campers & staff
- Use of outside spaces whenever possible

In-Camp Policies / Procedures

- Daily Temperature checks with camp nurse(s)
- Teach & reinforce handwashing
- Hand Sanitizer available in every cabin, waysides, Nelson Dining Hall and all studio spaces and on dining tables
- Outside dining whenever possible
- Wearing of face coverings and social distancing when cohorts are co-mingled
- "Closed Campus" mode:
 - No field trips off campus, no visitors on campus, Limited deliveries
- Increased cleaning of all community used spaces (Wayside, Dining Hall, Dance Studio)

Our nurse and program director will be reaching out to all camper guardians before camp week to ensure that all questions are answered and all plans put in place so we can have a successful contact free drop off on June 22.

TRAVEL TO AND FROM CAMP KITA

Registration day

Camp Kita will be hosted this year at the wonderful Camp CenterStage facility located at **295 Maple Ln, Livermore, ME 04253**.

Camper check-in and registration on June 22, 2021 is from 3-6PM. Dinner will be served at 6:30PM, so please plan your camper's meals accordingly. There will be a contactless staging area for all campers and your camper's counselor will welcome them to Camp Kita and help them get their belongings to their cabin! We will have a porta potty available for guardians. In order for our check in to be contact-less we ask that guardians stay in the car while dropping off their camper. Your child will then meet with his or her counselor and cabin-mates. We are very excited to meet this year's campers!

Departure day

Camper pickup is on Sunday, June 27, 2021 - Campers will begin packing in the morning and should be picked up between 10-12 AM. No child is permitted to stay past 12 PM. A signup link will be provided the week of camp where you will book a 15 minute time slot to pick up your camper. Guardians are to stay in their cars and a staff member will help to load camper belongings into the car. Before you leave with your child, you are encouraged to review his or her belongings to ensure nothing is left behind. Afterward, you must sign your child out.

Directions to camp

From the South

1. Follow I-95 to Auburn.
2. Take exit 75 in Auburn.
3. Take LEFT on Route 4 North to Livermore.
4. Drive 26 miles. Take a RIGHT on Route 108 East (Boothby Rd).
5. Drive 1.25 miles. Take a LEFT on Norland Rd.
6. Drive 100 yards. Take immediate RIGHT on Strickland Ferry Rd.
7. Drive 1.25 miles. At STOP sign, take LEFT on River Rd.
8. Drive 1.50 miles. Take RIGHT on Maple Lane.
9. Drive 1.25 miles. Camp Centerstage is on your RIGHT.