



## **Additional GSWISE Summer Camp 2021 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

*Last updated: February 2021*

Dear Girl Scout Families,

Sending your child to Girl Scout camp is an amazing opportunity for her to grow, learn, have fun, and make lifelong friends. We take this responsibility seriously and are grateful for the trust you place in our staff and volunteers.

We also know that you have questions! This document is designed to help answer the most common questions that come up each summer. At the same time, Summer 2021 is unique as we work to protect the safety of all participants during a global pandemic. For this reason, we have separated the Q&A into two segments – COVID-19 related and general. Of course, if you have questions and concerns that are not covered here, do not hesitate to reach out. We are here to help.

Yours in Girl Scouting,



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### **COVID-19 Related Questions**

**Q: When will a decision be made if camp will go ahead this summer?**

A: We are excited to offer summer camp this year, with registration opening on **Thursday, February 25 at noon**. If there is a shift in the pandemic, it is possible that the State of Wisconsin or Local Health Departments would recommend us not operating camp as scheduled. Please note, we have spoken with and are working closely with these agencies and do not anticipate cancellations based on current trends. Should anything change, we will communicate with our camp families ASAP via email.

**Q: Will there be capacity limits for campers?**

A: We have always had capacity limits based on the health and safety of our camp communities (e.g., storm shelter capacity, number of restrooms etc.). We will follow the Center for Disease Control (CDC), American Camp Association (ACA) and our local health department COVID-19 guidelines to ensure a safe camper census. For example, maintaining a 6-foot distance – especially indoors. This will impact the number of available camper spaces. With this in mind, we recommend registering as soon as you can.

**Q: What will you be doing to keep the community safe?**

A: The safety of our campers, staff and volunteers is, and always will be, paramount. Girls will be outdoors in fresh air as much as possible (weather permitting), and we will increase handwashing, sanitize surfaces, wear masks, update food/meal procedures and keep campers in units/cohorts to limit possible cross-contamination. We will continue to monitor and adapt our practices and share this information with parents before and during camp.

**Q: What happens if a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 or shows signs and/or symptoms?**

A: Any camper or staff member with COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home and require a doctor's note in order to return. If a person tests positive, we will work with the health department to notify all potential exposures. Those individuals will need to go home to quarantine. A pro-rated refund will be issued based on the number of camp days missed.

**Q: Will we need to wear masks at camp?**

A: We remain committed to following the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, as well as all local, state, and federal requirements. At this time, Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) now requires all girl and adult members to wear masks during in-person activities, regardless of state mandates. If an activity prohibits safely wearing a mask, such as swimming or strenuous sports – then a mask will not be required during participation of the related activity. Anyone living with a disability and/or underlying medical condition which prohibits them from wearing a mask are exempt. Please note a doctor's letter is required for this exemption.

**Q: What if my family or child needs to quarantine during the time my child is supposed to go to camp?**

A: You will receive a pro-rated refund based on days missed, transfer to a later camp session, or be provided a credit for next year.

**Q: Can we volunteer to help at GSWISE Day Camp this summer?**

A: With limited camper capacity and a need to carefully control the number of adults who come and go, we will not be permitting volunteers at GSWISE Day Camp this summer. While we value our volunteers, we feel this is an important safety precaution for this specific programming.

However, if you do wish to volunteer at a camp this summer, consider registering for one of our Day Camps by Community (DCC) programs.

## **General Questions**

### **Q: Can girls earn badges while at camp?**

A: Absolutely - that is just one of the many benefits of attending Girl Scout camp! Both Camp Alice Chester Overnight camp and GSWISE Day camp provide opportunities for girls to earn badges. At many Day Camps by Community (DCC) girls also earn a badge. Girls attending CampHero earn a non-college course credit through MATC.

### **Q: Can my child be with her friend or sibling?**

A: We group girls by age level so if they are the same age, they may be together. At GSWISE day camp, CampHero and overnight camp girls can request to be with one buddy, and we do our best to honor these requests. Both buddies should request the other's name during registration.

DCC camps do break girls up into groups based on their troop, while other intermingle troops. Check with your camp director for further clarification.

### **Q: Can you accommodate children with special needs?**

A: Inclusion is important to GSWISE and we make every effort to meet the needs of all girls so that everyone can fully participate. Please note any special emotional, learning, physical, mental and/or health needs for your child on her Camp Minder profile. For specific questions or situations, please email [customercare@gswise.org](mailto:customercare@gswise.org) or call 800-565-4475. We will do everything we can to make camp a great experience.

### **Q: What should campers bring to camp?**

A: A lot depends on if they are day or overnight campers. In both cases, we provide a detailed list of necessary and suggested items. You will receive this list along with your confirmation following registration.

### **Q: Can my camper bring her cell phone?**

A: No, cell phones are not part of our camp culture. Summer Camp is truly one of the few places left where children can be free from screens. In addition, as bringing one is against the rules, sneaking one in can cause undue anxiety since the child knows they are prohibited. If the loss of communication for a few days is a concern for you or your child, let us know so we can plan a way to ensure everyone is comfortable.

### **Q: Can my child or I take photos while at camp?**

A: Yes, girls can take photos of a friend in their unit with their permission and only with a regular or disposable camera (not a camera phone). We do not permit any photographs to be taken inside cabins (overnight camp) or in changing rooms/bathrooms. Parents can take photos of their own girls and other girls with their parent's permission.

### **Q: Can I tour the camp before the summer?**

A: Due to the current pandemic, neither Camp Alice Chester Overnight Camp, CampHero or GSWISE Day Camp are hosting in-person open house events. However, we want to do our best to help and may be able to accommodate some individual tours (with masks and social distancing). Email Chris Friedl (Camp Director) at [cfriedl@gswise.org](mailto:cfriedl@gswise.org) to request a tour. Some DCC's may be able to offer a similar option, please check with your camp director.

**Q: What if my child is homesick?**

A: Homesickness is not uncommon and is nothing to be embarrassed about – as either a child or parent. In fact, we think of it as a healthy part of child development as the young person gains independence. To help deal with any homesickness, our staff are trained in child development and carefully watch for the signs and help campers work through missing home (which is normal for many children). If your child is having a persistent issue, we will contact you to develop a plan together.

**Q: How will you take care of my child's health care needs?**

A: The health and wellbeing of campers and staff is our number one priority. For that reason, we hire medically trained health professionals as our on-site health supervisors. They oversee medication distribution, take care of bumps and bruises (which are part of camp), and offer that little extra TLC as needed! Very rarely do we find the need to take a child to the emergency room, but if a situation warrants this level of care, your child will be accompanied by an adult and parents are called and notified immediately. Day Camps by Community (DCC) have qualified first aiders on-site for overnights.

**Q: How do you keep activities at camp safe?**

A: For water activities, there is a team of lifeguards on duty during all swimming and boating activities. High risk activities are facilitated by trained and/or certified staff or volunteers. In addition to our onsite health supervisor, all camp staff are trained in first aid and CPR.

Additionally, our treatment procedures have been reviewed by a physician whom we have on call. Please note, your camper's health history is the best tool we have for knowing what concerns to be aware of and prepared to care for. Please be as thorough as possible.

**Q: Is swimming safe at Camp and what happens if my child is not a great swimmer?**

A: Everyone comes to camp with different skill levels and abilities related to water-based activities. Every camper and staff member must take a swim assessment prior to any water-based activities, including swimming. Our waterfront areas are supervised by qualified lifeguards and trained staff/volunteers and swim areas are divided into sections based on skill level. Additionally, everyone is required to wear a personal flotation device for boating activities.

In general, we believe learning to swim is an absolute necessity, and we strongly suggest lessons to ensure this life saving skill is learned ASAP. If your child cannot swim or has not been in a body of water before, please note this on your camp forms.

**Q: What about the weather if it is hot or rainy?**

A: The one thing we cannot control is the weather – but we can certainly plan for it! We encourage girls to drink plenty of fluids and monitor them for signs of dehydration. We also provide cooling off activities and stations to ensure a mix of sun and shade throughout the day. We monitor the weather forecasts constantly. While rain does not stop camp (so do not forget your poncho!), we will move indoors if a storm is coming our way. We make every effort to present activities as described in all kinds of weather.

**Q: Can I call my camper during the week?**

A: To help your child build her independence, we discourage families from calling them during overnight camp. If there is a specific reason you may need to contact your child, talk to our camp director Chris Friedl prior to camp.

**Q: How do I reach camp in case of an emergency?**

A: The phone numbers for each of the camps are found in your parent guides and confirmation packet.

**Q: Can I send my camper mail while she is away at camp?**

A: Yes, connect with your camper even while she is away at overnight camp! Whether it is a letter sent via email or post, mail is a very important part of every girl's time at camp. Check your parent guide for tips and how-to's.

**Q: My child has a food allergy, how will that be handled?**

A: We take food allergies seriously, as well as the nutritional needs of an active lifestyle. Camp Alice Chester (overnight), CampHero (overnight) and GSWISE Day Camp can accommodate most common food allergies and provides a variety of meal/snack options. DCC volunteers will work with parents on allergy related issues. It is critical that parents notify camp during registration of any allergies (food or otherwise), as the key to a successful process is preplanning.

**Q: Have prices changed this year?**

A: Yes. Camp fees have changed for several reasons, including the increased and varying costs of operating camp safely within the pandemic environment, increased health and safety procedures and protocols, as well as changes in camp capacity. We thank you in advance for your understanding of these necessary changes.

**Q: Does GSWISE provide financial aid for those in need?**

A: Yes, we are committed to helping those families who cannot currently afford our summer programs. Simply complete the registration process and check the box related to financial aid. We will then send you a form via email to process your request. If you do not have email access, please contact our Customer Care team at [customercare@gswise.org](mailto:customercare@gswise.org) or call 800-565-4475.

**Q: Do I need to pay for camp all at once?**

A: No, you only need to pay the nonrefundable deposit at the time of registration. This fee is \$25 for day camp and \$50 for overnight camp. The remainder is due on or before June 1.

**Q: How do I pay for camp?**

A: The easiest way to pay is online using your Camp Minder account. If you need to pay over the phone, please contact our Customer Care team at [customercare@gswise.org](mailto:customercare@gswise.org) or call 800-565-4475.

**Q: How do I use a PAC to pay for camp?**

A: Register online first and pay the deposit.

If you have a PAC:

- Complete the online [Program Activity Credit \(PAC\) Redemption form](#) with your 12-digit card number, girl's name, program name, and the amount you would like to apply.
- We will apply the amount to your account.

- If you have already paid, we will reimburse the correct amount based on the PAC.

**Q: Why did you move GSWISE Day Camp and/or Day Camps by Community this year?**

A: For further information related to the relocation of Girl Scout camps, please visit [Camp Reimagined](#).