



# INFORMATION GUIDE

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# WELCOME

Welcome to the Parent's Guide to Camp Laurel. We look forward to sharing the best experience that Camp Laurel has to offer to your child. For over twenty-nine years, The Laurel Foundation has offered free camp programs to at-risk children and their families and has all but perfected our programs with over 50 years of combined residential camp experience. Now in its 29<sup>th</sup> year, The Laurel Foundation is an accredited camp of the American Camping Association, which recognizes that our organization has passed strict health and safety measures.

Whether your child is new to camp or if they are a returning camper, this guide will help you through every aspect of our camp program.

By now you have signed up for a camp session and have returned our multiple page application or update packet. If we need any additional information, we will contact you immediately. This will assure that your child is best served in our camp setting.

On behalf of The Laurel Foundation's Board of Directors, and staff, we welcome you to the continuing tradition of Camp Laurel.

# Who We Are

The mission of The Laurel Foundation is to enrich and empower at-risk youth through diverse and educational camp experiences. Our population served is children and youth affected by HIV and AIDS, transgender and gender diverse youth. We strive to give youth an opportunity to experience wilderness camping in order to enrich their lives. Camp Laurel will provide opportunities for each child to broaden their capabilities and to heighten their self-esteem.

The Laurel Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing:

- an emotionally and physically safe unique camping opportunity for the youth
- an atmosphere where children can forget about their stresses, and enjoy life
- safe, structured environment for all campers
- supportive environment to children and youth where they can be their authentic self
- novel and unique experiences to campers

And the best part of the program is - it's FUN!! Campers make new friends, have new experiences and learn important lessons all at the same time. No other extra-curricular activity can even hope to match what we offer. But don't take our word for it. Just ask the thousands of former campers who have experienced Camp Mulberry year after year. It truly is an experience that will last a lifetime!

## Summer Camp

Summer Camp is a seven-day camp for youth affected by HIV and AIDS ages 6-17. It is a time to learn new skills, find their inner strength, and to just be a kid and have fun! Activities include, low ropes course, archery, drama, arts and crafts, to name a few!

# Medical Staff and Procedures

## Camp Laurel's Medical Staff

Each camp session is staffed with an expert medical team. This team supervises your child's health and administers medical care and routine medications. Camp Laurel maintains a staff of nurses on site 24-hours a day to handle your child's medical needs. While at camp, the Medical Staff operate under the direct supervision of an on-call medical doctor. For our transgender/gender diverse camp we will have nurses who specialize in working with transgender/gender diverse youth.

## Camp Laurel's Medical Procedures

If your child needs medical attention while at camp, we will call you to let you know, and documentation of any treatment and instructions for further action will be sent home with your child.

Should a medical emergency occur while your child is at camp, our medical staff will first assess the situation and decide the most appropriate course of action to take. We will call you, to make you aware of the situation, and inform you of the steps we intend to take.

## Camp Laurel's Medication Management:

At Camp Laurel, we strive to maintain an absolutely perfect safety record. Managing medications for our campers and volunteer staff population is a very serious endeavor that is successful only with your cooperation.

Parents have many concerns when sending their children off to camp. Making sure they have taken their medications, accurately and on schedule, should not be one of them.

We dispense over 100 medications in any one-day at camp. This is made possible by prepackaging the medications into daily doses using an established standardized packaging system. **Prepackaging medications is among the most reliable methods to reduce the risk of medication errors.** Therefore, based on the American Camp Association guidelines, only a registered nurse and/or medical staff are responsible for administering the daily medication while campers attend camp.

# Mail

We strongly encourage you to send your child mail! This little detail is a nice reminder that they are being thought of and missed. Remember your child will be away from home for up to seven days! And because we do so much at Camp, six days seems like seven weeks. So, send your child some mail: it'll make their day!

## Here's how to do it:

On the Tuesday BEFORE YOUR CHILD LEAVES FOR CAMP, sit down and write a letter. Then go to your local post office and mail it. Mailing an item on the Tuesday before your child leaves for camp is the only way to ensure that it gets there before your child leaves Camp. We will send the address to the campsite closer to the camp date.

Camper Name:  
Camp Laurel  
C/O Camp Arbolado  
42500 CA-38  
Angelus Oaks, 92305

Your children can also send mail to you, so you may want to provide them with a pad and pen, a couple of envelopes with your home address pre-written on them, and stamps. Remind your child to send the letter within the first few days or you may not receive it before they come back from Camp.

You may also send a "one-way email" to your child which we will print out and deliver to them. One-way emails should be sent to: [Info@Laurel-Foundation.org](mailto:Info@Laurel-Foundation.org)

# Emergency Contact/Drop off Procedures

If there is an emergency and you should need to speak with The Laurel Foundation staff, you will be able to call our emergency line at (213) 300-CAMP.

## Drop Off Procedure & Safety Rules

The following safety procedures have been put into place to ensure the safety of your child at Camp Laurel drop-off and pick-up locations:

### Drop Off:

- Please do not leave your child unattended until they have been released to The Laurel Foundation staff for supervision.
- Please stay clear of the parking lot flow of traffic. This is a working facility and there will be many cars coming in and out of the parking lot.
- We will check in campers at the designated Check In spot in the parking lot. Once you have checked in, you will then move to the Medical Team station, where you will complete a Medication Form for the medications you will be dropping off for your child.
- Masks will be worn by all at check in, regardless if you are fully vaccinated or not. This is to ensure the safety of everyone.
- Once your child is checked in, their Cabin Counselor will take them to their cabin to meet the rest of their cabinmates.

### Pick Up:

- At pick up, you will check in with the station at the parking lot, at which time we will radio for your child to come to the parking lot. We will release children only to parents/guardians and adults named on the Camp Laurel Camper Care and Medication Form (the form you completed at Check-In). If you are unable to Pick up your child at the end of camp, please make sure to specify notify The Laurel Foundation prior to Pick up and let them know who is authorized to pick-up your child.
- When releasing campers, The Laurel Foundation will ask to see photo identification for anyone (including parents/guardians or anyone listed on the Camper Care and Medication Form) picking up a child. Please have it ready so that we may release your child.
- Please be patient when the campers are being checked out and released to you at the end of Camp. We must check all identification and distribute medications before releasing your child.
- Please keep clear of traffic in the parking lot.

Sending your child to camp on that first day is sometimes a chaotic experience. In order to alleviate some of the chaos, we have created a sense of order on departure to Camp day.

First, you must arrive with your child, your child's belongings, and any previously uncompleted forms at the time stated on your "Transportation Flyer", which we will email to you 2 weeks before camp.

Once you arrive, please proceed directly to the check-in table where your registration forms will be checked. The Laurel Foundation staff will verify that all forms are complete.

Then proceed to the Medication Station. Complete the Medication Care form and deposit your child's meds with the RN. The RN will then check your child for lice and administer treatment if necessary. When this is complete your child will receive a name tag and their counselor will take them to their cabin to meet cabinmates, at which point The Laurel Foundation will assume care and custody of your child.

Your child will be set to have a GREAT time!! Don't forget to confirm the return date and time, for your child's pick up.

### Pick Up Procedure & Safety Rules

Return-from-camp-day is almost as hectic as departure-to-camp-day. We have, however, established the following procedures to make it even easier for you.

We ask that you arrive at the Camp Laurel to pick up your child, on time (the time designated on your ("Transportation Flyer")) to receive your child. Once you arrive, please check in with the Nurses station in the parking lot.

It is imperative that you remain patient while we verify that every child in our care has been properly returned to his or her legal guardian. We need to give you your child's medications and have you sign them out.

Once your child has been released to your custody and care, you may pick up his or her belongings, which will be in a designated area in the parking lot (it is your responsibility to pick-up medications so please make sure to do so) . Then your child is checked-out and you may leave.

**\*REMEMBER, when picking up your child, The Laurel Foundation requires photo identification; please be sure to bring one.**

### Evaluations

Within two weeks of your child's return from camp you will receive an evaluation form via email. It is extremely helpful to us for you to complete this. We are constantly trying to improve Camp Laurel to ensure your child's experience at Camp is the BEST!

### Parent Orientation

The Parent Orientation is a highly recommended event that you as a parent should attend before your child is scheduled to depart for Camp. The Parent Orientation is held via ZOOM. It is a short meeting where you can ask questions about Camp Laurel, meet some of the camp staff, and share your excitement about your child coming to Camp. It is not mandatory for you to attend but we would love to have you there. **Please Contact Sofia for more information at (626) 683-0800 and to Register for the meeting. The Orientation date is: July 21, 2021 at 7:00PM.**

### Lost and Found

The camp staff and all The Laurel Foundation employees are not responsible for any items lost or stolen during the course of camp. Should we find any items left behind by campers, we will gladly hold them at the office for one week. We will make every attempt to contact you if the item is labeled. After one week, the items will be donated to a thrift store. Please note that cell phones are not allowed at camp for the campers. We will ask you to take their phones home with you when you drop your child off at Camp.

# Camp Activities

## Low Ropes Adventure Course

Our leaders will guide your child and their cabin group through a series of problem-solving exercises. Children learn to work in a group on our Low Ropes Challenge Course.

## Archery

Our archery instructor will teach your child how to safely shoot a bow-and-arrow and aim for the target.

## Arts and Crafts

Your child can learn how to make wonderful keepsakes, which will remind him or her of the camping experience for years to come.

## Fishing at the Lake

In lieu of canoeing and swimming in the lake this year, we will be fishing with our campers and showing them what it's like to catch something wild caught!

## Mountain Biking

Campers will have the opportunity to take a nice ride through camp on a mountain bike to see all the beauty that surrounds them!

## Native American Studies

Your child will learn about the different indigenous groups native to California and do art projects that incorporate nature and art.

## Evening Programs

Your child's cabin will participate with the other cabins\* in various friendly programs (like a scavenger hunt or campfire). There will be a new and different program for your child every night of the session. \* This year cabins will be in pods for evening programs due to the pandemic.

## Camp Fire

Various nights throughout the week, your child's cabin will entertain the camp with skits, songs, and silliness at our "infamous" campfire program.

# Camper Behavior Development

At Camp Laurel we implement a traditional positive behavior development model. Within this model, our counselors are trained to provide structure, set expectations for camper behavior, give campers choices, as well as praise when positive choices are made. We continually strive to foster a community that ensures both physical and emotional safety for all members.

If a behavioral issue arises our counselors are trained to address the issue the first time by having a conversation with the camper(s) in a way that is respectful and constructive. Campers are not shamed for an undesired behavior or choice made; instead, counselors facilitate a conversation that leads to a behavior plan that encourages a more appropriate behavioral choice in the future.

A positive behavior management plan will likely contain an appropriate consequence or resolution. A consequence is designed for learning and correcting behavior. It is designed to be fair and meaningful, not a punishment.

If the behavioral plan with the counselor is not successful and/or the behavior escalates to an unsafe level, it will be brought to the attention of the Camp Director and Mental Health team. Each behavioral situation and camper is different. If a call home is needed, parents will be notified to discuss the situation. Campers who are unable to make behavioral corrections and/or are imposing physical danger to themselves or others will be asked to leave camp.

All counselors are trained in appropriate standards of conduct and child abuse prevention guidelines. Through those trainings, counselors understand that physical or emotional abuse/punishment will not be tolerated in any circumstance.

Camp Laurel ensures that behavioral specialists are a part of the counseling staff each session. These professionals play a critical role in helping coach campers and staff through challenging situations.

It is our goal to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all Camp Laurel participants.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

## Why does Camp Laurel require an annual Physical?

Requiring an annual physical in order to attend our camp programs is a great way to ensure everyone is physically able to attend,

## Can I call my camper during the week?

We prefer not. Camp is a time for children to grow and gain self-esteem through experiencing independence. Our experience shows that if a child is in contact with their parent, they will grow homesick and wish to return home. Please feel free to call the Camp Director at camp to ask how your child is doing! We will be posting photos on our social media accounts as well.

## How are the Camp Counselors screened and selected?

The Laurel Foundation's priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of our campers at all times during camp sessions and camp-related activities. It is the policy of The Laurel Foundation that every applicant endures a rigorous selection process involving a pre-screening phone interview, group interview, reference checks, and a criminal background check. Additionally, each volunteer must attend 24 hours' worth of Camp Laurel volunteer training.

## How does the wait list work?

We encourage everyone to turn in their application as soon as possible to avoid being placed on the wait list. If your child is wait listed, though there are no guarantees, there is a good chance that they will be able to attend camp because it is likely that there will be cancellations. If there are cancellations, you will be confirmed on a first come, first served basis.

## Why can't I bring my cell phone or electronics to camp?

Camp is an opportunity to spend quality time with each other and for campers to get away from their everyday challenges. Cell phones, electronic games, iPods, tablets, etc. are prohibited. These are considered "anti-social devices" and would not allow you or your child to fully enjoy camp.

## Is there a Camp Group photo?

Yes, everyone poses for a group picture the first day of camp. This photo is just for the kids to have as a keepsake of camp.

# What to Bring

Your child will experience exciting activities while at camp, and in order to enjoy your time it is important to pack carefully for the weather. The average temperature during the day is 85 degrees and 50 degrees at night. Campers will sleep in bunk beds inside a cabin. Cabin assignment will be made based on camper preference selection from the registration form.

## PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING LIST CAREFULLY!!

We've created the following checklist for your use so that you can pack properly for camp.

### **Use a bag that zips completely close to pack your child's items.**

-  1 warm sleeping bag OR
-  1 sleeping bag with an extra blanket
-  1 fitted single sheet (for mattress cover)
-  At least 2 pair comfortable, athletic/hiking shoes
-  A sack lunch (for the trip up on day one)
-  Warm sleepwear (modest)
-  Personal toiletry items (menstrual products, deodorant, etc.)
-  Toothbrush & toothpaste
-  Bath soap / shampoo (Travel size)
-  Hair brush / Comb
-  Lip balm with SPF
-  Sunscreen
-  4-6 pairs of socks
-  6 pairs of underwear
-  3 pairs of durable jeans
-  2 pairs of modest shorts
-  5 t-shirts (camp appropriate- no adult language or images)
-  2 sweatshirts/sweaters/sweatpants
-  2 bath towels
-  Sunglasses
-  At least 1 Flashlight and batteries
-  1 bathing suit - modest
-  1 pillow
-  1 bag for dirty laundry
-  Prescription Meds (MUST give to Med staff in ORIGINAL containers before departure)
-  Shower Shoes- flip flops (for shower use only)
-  Masks! - Vaccinated or not please pack a minimum of 10 masks

\*\* If for any reason you do not have access to any of the items listed above please contact Sofia at (626) 683-0800.

### What Not to Wear

To help create an emotionally and physically safe, as well as culturally sensitive environment for your youth, we ask that **all** campers dress appropriately for camp. These guidelines are for outdoor and indoor activities. In advance, we thank you for your cooperation and look forward to a fun-filled camp!

#### General:

- No clothing with adult language or images
- No open-toed or open-backed shoes
- No half-shirts/crop tops or low riding jeans (we don't want to see any belly buttons or undergarments)
- No low cut tops
- No short shorts or short skirts
- No sagging pants (again, no belly buttons or undergarments, so please wear well-fitting pants or a belt)

### What Not to Bring:

Please help us prevent any problems before they start. Make sure you and your child do not bring any valuables or other forbidden items to camp.

The following items are NOT permitted:

- Anything valuable
- Cell Phones
- iPods, mp3 players, tablets, etc.
- Video Games
- Money
- Weapons
- Fireworks or other dangerous items
- Alcohol or controlled substances
- Toys
- Matches /lighters
- Any pet or other live animal
- Cigarettes or other tobacco products

We suggest each camper pack all belongings in a duffel bag clearly marked with his/her name. No trunks or hard suitcases are allowed. Each camper is permitted only 2 pieces of luggage. **NO TRASH BAGS PLEASE.**

# How to Get More Involved

The Laurel Foundation is always in search of another kind heart. If you want to get more involved in your child's camp experience or The Laurel Foundation family in general, there are a number of ways you can do it. We always need help with the following: distributing fliers, mass mailing of the newsletter, making posters, fundraising events, registration and check-in on departure day, and coordinating the transportation of all the children to and from camp. You can also help The Laurel Foundation by volunteering as a counselor, coach, or referee and by donating money to the Camp Laurel program.

Support from the community is growing every year and that support takes on many forms -- from direct service to monetary and product donations. We want your help too! If you are willing to dedicate some time to The Laurel Foundation, we can certainly find a mutually beneficial way to use your knowledge and skills that will be rewarding for all of us.

For more information, please call The Laurel Foundation office at 626-683-0800 and say, "I want to help!"

We hope this helps you prepare for your child's experience at Camp Laurel.

## Find Us Online



[www.Laurel-Foundation.org](http://www.Laurel-Foundation.org)



[www.instagram.com/thelaurefdn](http://www.instagram.com/thelaurefdn)



[www.Facebook.com/TheLaurelFdn](http://www.Facebook.com/TheLaurelFdn)



[www.Twitter.com/TheLaurelFdn](http://www.Twitter.com/TheLaurelFdn)



[www.Youtube.com/TheLaurelFdn](http://www.Youtube.com/TheLaurelFdn)



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