



Camp Runoia Family Handbook

Greetings and Welcome to Camp Runoia's 118th season in 2024!

An exciting summer lies ahead for all of our campers and counselors. We are thrilled to continue Runoia's timeless traditions and dedication to campers and counselors this summer. It is a pleasure to have your daughters join us finding their own profound camp moments and growing as part of Runoia traditions and experiences.

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

Thank you for giving the gift of camp to your camper. We find it to be one of the best growth experiences a child can have.

We look forward to working together in the months and years to come.

Regards,

Alex Jackson
The Camp Runoia Director for the Runoia Team



Important Dates and Contact Info:

First Session

Drop Off First Session: Saturday, June 24 (1:30-3:30 pm)

Pick Up First Session: Sunday, July 16 (9:30-10:30 am)

HLC Mini

Drop Off HLC Mini: Saturday, June 24 (1:30-3:30 pm)

Pick Up HLC Mini Session: Sunday, July 2 (10:00 am)

HLC A

Drop Off HLC A: Wednesday, July 5 (1:30 pm)

Pick Up HLC A: Sunday, July 16 (9:30-10:30 am)

Second Session

Drop Off Second Session: Monday, July 17 (1:30-3:30 pm)

Pick Up Second Session: Tuesday, August 8 (9:30-10:30 am)

HLC B

Drop Off HLC B: Monday, July 17 (1:30-3:30 pm)

Pick Up HLC B: Friday, July 28 (10:00 am)

HLC C

Drop Off HLC C: Monday, July 31 (1:30pm)

Pick Up HLC C: Tuesday, August 8 (9:30-10:30 am)



Camp Contact Info

Phone: 207-495-2228

Fax: 207-495-2287

Emails:

General: info@runoia.com

Alex: alex@runoia.com

Office: office@runoia.com

Mailing address – year round (for USPS mail):

Camp Runoia

PO Box 450

Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918

Address for UPS or FedEx and GPS (our street address):

Camp Runoia

3 Lucy Weiser Lane

Belgrade, ME 04917

Directions to Camp

For GPS use the following address:

Camp Runoia

OR

3 Lucy Weiser Lane, Belgrade, Maine

Directions:

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



Accommodations in the Belgrade Lakes Area



Belgrade Lakes, Maine, is just over one hour from the coastal regions of Portland, Boothbay, and Camden, and one hour from the Weld Mountain region.

Augusta is approximately a 15 -20 minute drive from camp.

Contact each location directly for rates and reservations.

www.belgradelakesmaine.com

The Lakeside Inn, Belgrade Lakes, Maine (207) 592-5990 rent a room with private bath or the whole house - right in the village.

The Village Cape, Belgrade Lakes, Maine (207) 592-5990 - next to Hello Good Pie (bakery we highly recommend!)

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

Best Western Plus, Civic Center Drive, Augusta, Maine [207-622-4751](tel:2076224751)

The Pressey House, Lakeside Bed and Breakfast, Oakland, Maine (207) 465-3500. A historic, charming, and comfortable B & B, located on Messalonskee Lake about 20 minutes from Runoia.

www.presseyhouse.com

Willow Run B & B for Dogs a great dog kennel!

www.willowrunfordogs.com

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

Hampton Inn, Augusta, Maine 207-622-4077

Comfort Inn, Augusta, Maine (207) 623-1000

Marriott Fairfield Inn and Suites –Augusta, exit 112B (207) 623-2200

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

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

Auto Arrival and Departure



Arrival Days: June 24 and July 17, 2023

Families driving to camp please arrive between 1:30 pm and 3:30 pm. When you drive through our gates you will be greeted by Runoia staff. They will help you unload your camper's luggage and take it to her cabin. Please refer to other forms for more information: 'camper arrival times 2023', 'What to Expect on Opening Day', etc.

Departure Days: July 16 and August 8, 2023

Families are welcome to arrive at camp at 9:30 am on departure days. Please note, your daughter's luggage will be waiting for you in our parking lot and our staff will help load all belongings into your car.

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



Air Flight Arrival and Departure

ARRIVALS

International flights

(flying from outside the US into a US city to connect to Boston, MA or Portland, Maine)

PLEASE CONTACT jen@runoia.com to find out about international flight options, date of arrival and more. Check your dashboard for dates.

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

Contact jen@runoia.co to coordinate Runoia escort/pick up.

Arriving Portland, Maine (PWM)

Arriving Boston, Massachusetts (BOS)

See schedule of fees in your forms Camp-in-Touch dashboard

DEPARTURES – Domestic and International

Departing Portland, Maine (PWM)

Departing Boston, MA (BOS)

note: campers departing Boston will be at Boston Logan Airport from mid-day until their flight departs. If your daughter is on an evening flight she will be leaving camp in the morning and be accompanied by an adult from Runoia while she waits at Logan Airport for her flight. She should have her own money to buy her meals and snacks.

See schedule of fees in your forms Camp-in-Touch dashboard

SHIPPING AND PACKING

Options for shipping your camper's luggage to camp:

1. ShipCamps www.shipcamps.com
2. The Mailing Center www.mailingctr.com
3. United Parcel Service (UPS) www.ups.com
4. FedEx www.fedex.com

Please ship trunks and duffel bags to the following address:

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

• Put our address on the inside of the luggage as well as the outside

• **Keep the weight under 50 pounds PLEASE**

Please note, if shipping luggage home, ***ALL luggage should be shipped from camp with the Ship Camps or the Mailing Center.*** There is no option to ship via FedEx or UPS.

Help Us to Help Your Daughter Bring it All Home:



MARK EVERYTHING - Play clothes are the best clothes for camp

Mark your daughter's belongings with name tags or indelible ink markers. The inside or sides of shoes, backpacks, sleeping bags and pads, rain gear, bathing suits, hats, linens, tennis racquets, etc., need to be marked (especially flip flops, sneakers, water shoes), as well as all clothing.

Unmarked items left at camp will be donated.

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

At Runoia our focus is on the experience campers have, not on what they wear. Remember that cabin space is shared space and we ask you to pack with that in mind.



2 large items - a trunk and duffel or 2 duffels ONLY.

Less really is more. Should you choose to pack in a trunk, please keep the weight to less than 50 pounds.

What not to pack

- Expensive clothing, jewelry, and money are strongly discouraged.
- The following clothing items are not acceptable at camp:
 - clothes that have mean expressions or put down others
 - clothes that are sexually explicit or display alcohol/drug or tobacco graphics
 - anything inappropriate to youth and a kind atmosphere.
- Campers may not bring weapons or any kind to camp. Knives for JMG may be kept with a staff member.
- Alcohol, vapes, smoking products, drugs including non prescribed medication may not be brought to camp.
- No pets!

Packing continued...

Packing for Maine weather:

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

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

RAINBOOTS

FLEECE PULLOVER OR JACKET

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

We are pleased to have a new outfitter at The Camp Spot in 2023. The Camp Spot has a dedicated Runoia section at www.thecampspot.com. We require each camper to have a fleece or warm layer and encourage you to look at the selections at TCS. Use the direct link or type "Runoia" into the camp name search bar at the main website page.

Laundry: Laundry is done weekly and is turned around in 48 hours. Pack 8-9 days of clothing that is all that is needed (see packing list for suggested amounts).

Tip: pack extra underwear and socks.

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

Sports Equipment: If your daughter has a tennis racket, softball mitt, cleats/shin guards, mouth guard, eye protection, etc. she can bring this equipment to camp. LAX equipment will be provided (as well as protective mouth and eye guards) but your daughter may bring her own.

Riding Equipment: If your daughter chooses to ride at camp –please pack the following items if you have them:

- A low or high cut boot with a small heel, long pants, and a helmet (if your child already has one).
- Helmets and appropriate footwear are required to ride - camp has a reasonable supply of shared boots and helmets.
- If she has half chaps, breeches, riding boots, she is welcome to bring her own gear.
- New campers only have one 'try it' lesson included in their session and may borrow equipment. Riders taking more than the one lesson must bring their own equipment or they may lease from camp. Contact our Equestrian Director and Assistant Director Jen Dresdow. Additional lessons are at an additional expense. Contact jen@runoia.com for more info and/or questions.

Bedding and Towels: In camp, campers sleep in sheets and blankets in a single cot size. Twin sheets will work even though they are bigger than cot size. Campers change out their linens once per session - please pack one extra set to change. Campers may bring their own bed linens or rent linens from camp. Camp Runoia's blankets are fleece blankets, sheets are cotton and pillows are foam-filled. If your child has allergies to these materials we suggest that you provide your own linens. Towels are not included in linen rental.

MP3 Music, Video, Video Games, TV, Laptops, iPads: We enjoy being in the Maine woods together and hearing the sounds of nature around us. We encourage frequent reading of books, singing, and performing of music. Campers are not allowed to bring Electric tablets or electronic books (Kindles, Nooks, etc.) or MP3s with screens/video/phone capabilities or electronic games to camp. Campers (age 13 and older) can have MP3 players in their cabin for personal listening during quiet times. The only acceptable MP3 players are ones *without screens/wifi*, for instance an iPod Shuffle or Nano or older version of iPod. Sony and other manufacturers are making sport wearables without wifi that are perfect for camp. Girls younger than 13 may not bring MP3 players to camp.



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

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

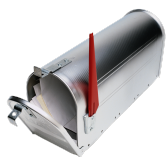
Musical Instruments: For campers and staff who play musical instruments, we like them to bring them to camp to play in their free time or for a talent show. We have a good piano in the camp Lodge. Please be aware camp cabins/buildings can be humid. The humidity may affect any instrument brought to camp.

Communication: Mail, Telephone, and Visiting

Camp Runoia does not have a formal visiting day.

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

Fax: Please use our fax only for official business and not for writing to your camper at camp. Thank you. Our fax number is #207-495-2287



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

International Campers may have their letters scanned and emailed home two times a week.

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

Packages: Campers who celebrate their birthdays during our camp season may get a package. Otherwise, packages are restricted to necessary items only. No care packages. Please ship them to your daughter % Alex Jackson at our camp address. Questions about packages? Contact colleen@runoia.com

Telephone Calls: Under regular circumstances, campers may not receive phone calls at camp. We encourage parents to correspond with their children through the mail. Please call the Directors or your camper’s Head of Cabin if you would like to find out how your child is doing at camp. Or you may email director@runoia.com at any time to set up a meeting to discuss your camper’s progress.

Updates from Camp: Parents and guardians can expect periodic communication from their camper’s Head of Cabin. These emails will be personalized to update primary contacts of their camper’s progress at camp and any need-to-know information. New families to Runoia will additionally receive direct communication from our parent liaison, colleen@runoia.com.

Opportunities and Rewards: Achievement

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



Activities, Achievement and Awards: Campers choose a schedule for a 3-day block of time and again for a 2-day block of time each week. There are four periods in each day and the same schedule repeats for three days. A new schedule is picked for the 2-day block. Each week, campers have rotating blocks and get to choose new schedules. Over a session, campers have five blocks and an optional wilderness trip. This progressive program allows each individual to excel to the best of their ability and achieve awards in the activity. One period is for mandatory swimming lessons. Achievement and recognition awards are announced and presented at the end of each session.

Informal Evaluation of Campers: Camp Runoia does not have a formal evaluation of camper progress. Camp allows for reflection and achievement and awards are presented at the end of each session. The camp experience is valuable for building lifelong skills to adulthood. If you need references for school or other programs, the directors would be pleased to provide them.

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

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

Additional Information

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

Summer Reading List: NO E-READERS PLEASE

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



Forms, Special Dietary Needs, Emergency Contacts

Medical and Permission forms for each camper will be available on your Camp-in-Touch dashboard. You login through the parent login area [here](#). Every camper must have up to date medical and permission forms with an emergency release signed in camp prior to June 1. In addition to parent completed forms, each camper must have a medical form completed and signed by the camper's pediatrician. Contact health@runoia.com with questions. Each camper must review and sign our honor policy.

All Prescription Medication and over-the-counter medication must be in the original container, labeled with the physician's instructions, the name of the medication, and the dosage. Please repeat these instructions on the camper's medical form. All medications and/or vitamins/supplements will be held by the health team and will be dispensed by our medical staff.

Food and Special Dietary Needs: If your child has special dietary requirements or allergies to food, please be sure to indicate this on the camper's medical form. In addition, we would appreciate a letter to the directors regarding special dietary needs. You can ask Jen Dresdow jen@runoia.com about how your daughter's needs can be met while at camp.

- For lactose intolerance, we have milk substitutes.
- We have vegetarian food for campers who have written permission to eat vegetarian.
- We encourage campers who have a hard time with regular meals to supplement their meals with bars or snacks they will eat. Items can be drop-shipped to camp c/o Jen Dresdow.

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

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

Camp Accreditation, Financial Policy, and Gratuities

Financial Policy: Camp Runoia must have an online completed enrollment form and financial deposit to hold a space for a camper for the camp session. Once the enrollment form and non-refundable deposit are received, the tuition balance is due in full (with installments of 50% due Feb. 1 and April 1) by April 1. There is no reduction in the tuition for late arrival or early departure. In case of cancellation, the enrollment deposit fee is non-refundable and the financial agreement for cancellations before May 1 will be considered on a case by case basis. Please understand that your family has been holding a space for your daughter when other families may have been put on a wait list.

Tuition is payable in U.S. dollars by check or credit card with a 3% processing fee (4% for AMEX). Wire transfers to Camp Runoia's account are available to international families. Extra charges for wire transfer are the family's responsibility. During the season there is no reimbursement for cancellation or departure prior to the end of the session.

Please note there is cancellation insurance available to families when they sign up for camp. Please read the policy to determine if it is a good option for your family.

Enrollment for Next Summer: In August, we send information to camper families for re-enrollment. Some age groups and sessions fill up rapidly. We encourage you to make plans as soon as possible to ensure a space at camp for your child for the following summer. Campers are accepted on a first-enrolled basis with a non refundable deposit.

Risks Inherent to Summer Camp: To help reduce risk, Camp Runoia is voluntarily accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). We follow standards pertaining to: program, site, facilities, transportation, vehicles, administration, personnel, and health care. Standards are evaluated by ACA professionals every five years and updated by Camp Runoia annually. Camp Runoia was recently evaluated and renewed this accreditation in the summer of 2022. Camp Runoia follows Maine State and Federal guidelines applicable to camp programs. Camp Runoia hires qualified and certified counselors to run the programs and activities available to your daughter at camp. Statistics show that fewer accidents happen at camp than in homes and at school. We care about your children as if they were our own. The risks inherent to camp activities and the environment are undeniable. We will do everything possible to reduce and manage risk in the camp setting in order to provide a safe, caring, and healthy environment for your child. If you have concerns about specific activities, please contact the directors to discuss these concerns.

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

Camp Runoia and the Internet

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

To celebrate our community and our love of Runoia, we have created the Camp Runoia Official Facebook page, Instagram, and TikTok, and we are thrilled to count campers, staff (past and present), alumnae, and friends among its members. As with our time while at camp, we are excited to be together and we have a set of expectations that apply to the group and to the use of Runoia's name in cyberspace. It is our intent that all members of our community will refrain from the following behavior while on the Official Runoia Facebook page and in all cyber contexts that refer to or imply connection to Camp Runoia:

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

Please help us to keep Runoia and its campers and staff in cyberspace the same magical place that we all know it to be – safe and with that feeling of “I want to go back again to ol’ Runoia...”

We frequently search different sites for Camp Runoia's name. We have found fun postings by our campers and staff who are thrilled to share their experience through pictures and stories. Nearly all of the postings are positive. We, of course, have no control over what gets posted, how campers or staff members portray themselves or what they say about our camp. We ask families to be respectful of the Camp Runoia name and reputation.

If you would like to rate your Runoia experience, there is a camp ratings website www.campratingz.com search for Runoia in Maine and add your opinion!

Preparing for camp: New Campers, Friends and Siblings

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

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

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

Preparing your Child for Her New Adventure

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

Your camper may get homesick at camp—we all miss those we love when we are away. They may write home and state it clearly, they may write home and complain about camp, and they may say nothing at all. Here are some ways to navigate "homesick" correspondence.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY: PLEASE DO NOT MAKE "THE PICK UP DEAL".

If you tell your daughter before camp that if she doesn't like it or is homesick, you will come pick her up, she will hang onto that thought and have an even harder time adjusting. It is a huge mistake to utter that phrase. Instead, try saying things like "There will definitely be hard times and I know you can work through them. Here are some ideas for coping with homesickness."

Then fill in the blank with "find things to do to keep you busy," "Write me a quick note and then get involved with people and activities," "Find a counselor to connect with to share your feelings and then have her help you get connected to other people."

Homesickness is a grieving emotion and we acknowledge it. Our staff are trained to console children, acknowledge their feelings, and get the child involved in activities and social situations to help them build their self-confidence. This can happen in a few minutes or a day or two. At times—bedtime and Rest Hour—children may experience temporary homesickness.

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

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

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

WHAT YOU CAN AVOID: Avoid writing about missing your child in letters –avoid discussing all the family fun she is missing while she is at camp. Do not make promises like, "I'll pick you up from camp next week if you're still unhappy," or, "I'll call you on Monday at 4 PM." These statements will only prolong her homesickness, not reassure her of your love. **Please avoid the "PICK UP DEAL".** A better approach would be: *'if you miss home a lot, please seek out counselors to help you and stay busy. People want to help you. You can miss home and like camp. Enjoy the day, stay busy and you'll be tired at night. If reading helps, ask your counselor if you can read at night a little bit longer.'*

Contact the Directors Anytime: It can be helpful to discuss the letters you are receiving. Give us a call and we can talk it through with you and develop a team approach to making sure your daughter is back on track to a fun-filled happy and successful summer. Our new parent liaison, colleen@runoia.com, can assist new families with navigating the homesickness experience.

Harmony Land Camp – Parent/Family Information

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

What Your HLC Camper Can Expect:

- A small group of friends around her age to live and connect with.
- Caring adults who understand her developmental needs.
- The opportunity to try the activities Runoia has to offer.
- An introduction to horse-back riding with a lesson or two.
- Day trips and field trips in the beautiful Belgrade Lakes area and/or Maine Coast.
- Swimming lessons in the most amazing lake - Great Pond.
- "Big sisters" in our main camp available at meal times and free time.
- All camp events and some Evening Programs with our main camp.
- Mixing in at meal times with all of camp: all ages of campers and counselors.
- Full immersion in camp daily life from wake up and cabin chores to community dining and bedtime stories.

Communication:

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

Our Head of HLC, Mindy Martone, is available via phone or email #207-495-2228

mindy.runoia@gmail.com

Mail: It would be fun for your daughter to have a fun note from you - bring one with you and we'll deliver it the next day. Plan to write a couple of letters to her while she is at camp. Send to:

Your Camper's Name, Camp Runoia, PO Box 450, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918

There is no need to send a package.

Packing List Notes for HLC:

- Bed sheets, blankets, and a pillow **will be provided by Camp Runoia.**
- Campers do not need any money, electronic devices or valuables.
- No food or candy should be packed for them. If your daughter has an allergy or specialty food needs, please let us know!
- A flashlight for night time reading is essential.
- Swim goggles are helpful and no other special athletic gear is necessary.
- All medications need to go through our camp health team.
- Use the Camp Runoia packing list as a guideline - a separate HLC list is on your online dashboard of Camp in Touch.
- PLEASE have two camp uniform tee shirts and one pair of shorts for HLC campers.
- We will do laundry during the session.
- We would suggest about 5-6 days of clothing and extra underwear and socks.

We are available to answer any packing questions! info@runoia.com