

## **Covid Q&A for summer children and youth sessions**

**Our leadership team and camp sites have been working hard to prepare a safe, fun, and meaningful camp experience. As you consider signing up your child for camp you may have some questions about what to expect or what precautions will be in place. Here are answers to some commonly asked questions.**

- **How were camp precautions determined?**

Camp guidelines were developed using the [Youth Program Guidelines from Oregon](#) in cooperation with local health authorities. The reopening framework from the [Greater Northwest Area of the United Methodist Church](#) has also informed our camp guidelines. We have also utilized recommendations from the CDC and American Camp Association in our preparations. Our camp staff are monitoring changes in state and local guidelines as well as activity of Covid-19 locally. Each site maintains a Communicable Disease Plan and practices for the uniqueness of their facilities and programs. Our camp guidelines will adjust and change as new information warrants.

- **What does our family need to be aware of before camp?**

Creating a safe and healthy camp experience starts well before camp and your family has a role to play. First, we ask that you take the time to become familiar with health and safety protocols in place at camp, then talk about it with your child, to ensure camp is the right fit for you and them this summer. Please reach out to us if you have questions. We want to be partners with you as you consider and prepare for camp.

Before coming to camp, please take precautions at home in efforts to contribute to a healthy and safe environment at camp. Please avoid possible exposures, especially the two weeks prior to camp (wear masks when in contact with others, practice physical distancing, avoid unnecessary outings or group events). Camp guidelines define a close contact with a confirmed or suspected case to be exposed within 6 feet or less for a cumulative 15 minutes over the course of a 24- hour period. We also ask that you self-monitor all household members for any possible Covid-19 symptoms or possible exposure (camp will provide tools for your use). Any campers or staff that may be ill or may have been exposed to the virus should stay home. More information will be included in your preparations for camp.

Please also help your camper develop healthy habits before camp like frequent handwashing, covering coughs with their elbow, and wearing their mask securely over their nose and mouth.

- **We don't have the financial ability to send our camper this year. Is there help available?**

We understand that the Covid-19 crisis has created deep struggles in our communities and among our families. As part of our dedication to providing Christian hospitality and learning to all persons, we believe no one should be turned away from camp due to financial need. The Camp and Retreat Ministries' campership fund is available to families facing financial stress. To find out more or to request a campership, please visit <https://www.gocamping.org/campership> or contact us directly, [registrar@gocamping.org](mailto:registrar@gocamping.org)

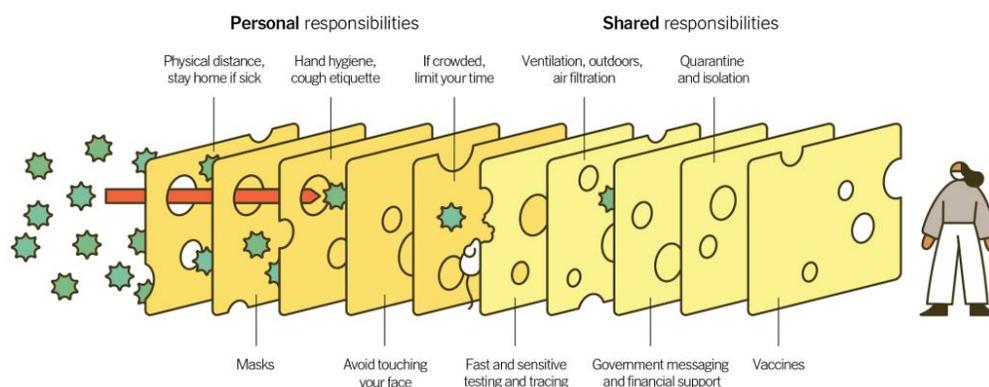
- **What other precautions will be in place?**

At camp we plan to use a multi-layer approach. Think of it like swiss cheese. On it's own one slice of cheese has holes that could allow something to fall through, but when you layer multiple slices together there are fewer holes and less opportunity for something to fall through. There are many non-pharmaceutical interventions that have proved helpful in minimizing the spread of Covid-19, the strongest approach is to use a combination of different precautions rather than just to rely on one.

Handwashing is one of our best tools to prevent the spread of viruses of all kinds. We will also be utilizing screening protocols, physical distancing, continued sanitation, and masks. Most activities will be outside, while ventilation has been optimized in indoor settings. We've reduced our capacity to avoid large group activities, and we are following recommendations to use cohorts (a stable group of campers). All eligible staff and campers are highly encouraged to be fully vaccinated before coming to camp. Our camp staff have been trained in ways to help create a safe and fun camp environment, as well as how to respond if anyone develops possible symptoms. We have working relationships with our local health authorities to guide our decisions and respond to cases, if needed.

### Multiple Layers Improve Success

The Swiss Cheese Respiratory Pandemic Defense recognizes that no single intervention is perfect at preventing the spread of the coronavirus. Each intervention (layer) has holes.



Source: Adapted from Ian M. Mackay (virologydownunder.com) and James T. Reason. Illustration by Rose Wong

- **Will my child need to wear a mask while at camp?**

Yes, campers and staff will wear masks when inside, and outside when within 6 feet of others. We understand that it's not possible to eat, shower, brush your teeth or swim while wearing a mask, so we'll designate extra space to minimize the risk of these activities unmasked. We also understand that it's not safe or reasonable to sleep while wearing a mask, so beds will be spaced accordingly and cabins/sleeping rooms will be well ventilated. We also recognize that campers of all ages will need some mask free time during the week, so safe space and activities will allow for this too.

Please plan to pack plenty of clean masks for your camper so they can change their mask as needed through the week. We recommend that you pack enough for each day of camp plus 50% if packing disposable masks or at least four cloth masks. When selecting which masks to pack, please be mindful that not all masks are equally effective in preventing disease spread. The CDC recommends masks be a minimum of two layers of a tightly woven fabric and fit snugly over the nose and mouth. Please leave neck gaiters at home as they typically don't have the fabric weave necessary to be effective. We will have extra masks at camp knowing that masks may be forgotten, break, get lost, or be soiled.

Our staff will be trained on helping campers wear their masks at the appropriate times and providing safe opportunities for campers to take their masks off while outside and distanced from others. If a camper refuses to properly wear a mask for an activity that requires a mask, they will be asked to participate in an activity that does not require a mask (if appropriate) or may miss out on participating in activities at that time.

- **Will camp still be camp?**

Our camp staff are flexible and creative. That means that while some things require changes, we have remained true to our values and commitment to create a fun, meaningful experience for your camper grounded in Christian learning. We look forward to welcoming your camper into the camp experience and inviting them to have an open mind while enjoying familiar and new activities, as well as doing things a little differently this year. Honestly, as we plan for summer we think this year at camp will be very special for those involved.

Please remember that while camp may be different, our staff are patient and trained to respond to campers' physical, emotional, and spiritual needs throughout the week. Together we'll deepen relationships with new and old friends, the natural world, and God.

- **Will there be singing?**

For many campers, a big part of camp is singing around the campfire. Recent guidance allows for singing with appropriate precautions like distancing, masks, and an outdoor setting.

- **How will meals happen this year?**

While meals will look different, our camp staff are committed to providing quality, nutritious meals. Many meals and snacks will happen outside. Physical distancing will be an important aspect of meals, since masks are removed for eating. Since each site is different, please check in with camp staff if more information would be helpful to you. Please also reach out to us if your child has dietary needs we should prepare for.

- **Will on-site check-in be different?**

Yes, we are developing systems to create a safe and efficient arrival experience and will be sharing information specific to each event well before camp. Our health screening at check-in has been expanded and will include a temperature check and questions to identify possible symptoms of Covid-19.

- **What happens if my child, or a close contact, becomes ill while at camp?**

While we are making vigilant efforts to minimize chances of exposure to Covid-19 and other viruses, any activity carries some risk. Since the camp staff has no way of determining what you may consider as a health concern or an emergency, the general camp practice is to contact parents when there is concern about a camper's health and/or when a situation is not progressing as expected. We will use the phone contact information provided on the health form to reach you calling the listed emergency contact as needed. Please make sure this information is accurate and includes an emergency contact who will be available while your child is at camp

We will reach out in the following situations:

- 1) Any illness/exposure that persists longer than 24 hours, requires quarantine from the camp community (fever, coughs, excess expulsion of bodily fluids, allergic reactions, severe tiredness, etc), or requires testing for a communicable disease.

- 2) Any injury that causes severe prolonged pain, discoloration, and/or swelling
- 3) Any condition that cannot be sufficiently treated by camp staff
- 4) Any condition requiring transport to other medical services

Camp staff will work with local health authorities if a case is identified or suspected at camp, and follow their recommendations on how to proceed. Campers who develop symptoms or are suspected to have been in close contact with a confirmed or probable case of Covid-19 will be quarantined from others to reduce the opportunity for the virus to continue to spread. Camp guidelines define a close contact with a confirmed or suspected case to be exposed within 6 feet or less for a cumulative 15 minutes over the course of a 24- hour period. You will be asked to pick up your child from camp if your child is ill, requires testing, or is unable to participate in activities due to exposure.

- **What about cancellations and/or refunds?**

If we cancel a session, you will have the following options: 1) you can request a full refund of any monies paid; 2) you can make a donation to Camp and Retreat Ministries with some or all of the payment; or 3) you can transfer the payment to another event this year or hold it as a credit for next year.

If you cancel your registration to an event more than one week prior to the start of the event, you will receive your money back, less the deposit. Full refunds for cancellations within one week of the start of camp are generally not granted. In the case of extenuating circumstances, contact the registrar at [registrar@gocamping.org](mailto:registrar@gocamping.org)

- **I have a credit from last year; how do I use that?**

If you register using the same email as last year, your credit balance will appear on the payment screen. Please contact the registrar if you have questions: [registrar@gocamping.org](mailto:registrar@gocamping.org)

- **I still have questions, now what?**

Please know that our camp staff are available as you prepare for camp. Please feel free to drop us an email or give us a call if you have specific questions or concerns about the camp experience or want to share information unique to your camper. We also will be sure to reach out with additional information when helpful.

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