

# WEST END HOUSE GIRLS CAMP PARENT'S HANDBOOK



## WEST END HOUSE GIRLS CAMP MISSION

West End House Girls Camp (WEHGC) is an overnight summer camp for girls ages 6-17, located in Southern Maine on the shores of Long Pond. The WEHGC experience is intentionally small, progressively multi-cultural, and 100% camper-focused.

'I AM' is what defines the West End House Girls Camp: I AM Strong, I AM Courageous, I AM Intelligent, I AM ME. Send your girl to a place where they will be encouraged to be their best-self, gain lifelong friendships, and return home saying, "Camp was awesome! Can I go back next year?"

The Mission of the West End House Girls Camp (WEHGC) is to positively influence the lives of a diverse community of girls by providing them with skills, support, and the opportunities needed to grow into healthy, productive, and responsible young women.

# WHY WEST END HOUSE GIRLS CAMP?

When it comes to finding a summer camp for your daughter, you want the best. We strive to be the best by actively partnering with parents and fostering an atmosphere that upholds our mission to positively influence the lives of the girls by providing them with skills, support, and opportunities needed to grow into healthy, productive, and responsible women. At WEHGC, girls get to experience the things everyone gets from camp: Sunshine. Laughter. Campfires and new friends. But beyond that is where the magic happens. Empowerment is found when your daughter is able to try on new things, be her best self, and experience life in a judgement-free zone.

Get a taste of what makes West End House Girls Camp the **ULTIMATE** choice for summer camp...





## MAKE FRIENDS FOR LIFE

Some say camp friends are the best friends one can have. We tend to agree! Friends made at camp are friends for life and for good reason. Playing together, exploring new opportunities and growing in responsibility are formative experiences that create strong bonds. As we say at camp, "Once you are one of the girls, you are always one of the girls!"



## CHOICE ACTIVITIES

Camp life at WEHGC is filled with adventure and fun all day long! Campers choose morning specialties designed to help them progress in skills throughout the week. After lunch our campers kick back and relax for an hour of rest time before engaging in a full afternoon of elected activities. The evening time hosts our large group activities including Gold Rush, Talent Shows, Tubing, and Counselor Hunts!





## OUR STAFF

West End House Girls Camp staff are best described as Wonder Women. We spend all year scouring the globe for the very best role models for your daughters. With an average ratio of 3 to 1, you can breathe easy knowing your daughter's safety and enjoyment is our top priority.



## FOOD & NUTRITION

WEHGC's talented kitchen team creates mouthwatering, camper-friendly meals every day. When asked, "What's one of your favorite things about camp?" campers say "the food is amazing!" Made mostly from scratch and partnering with local farms, we agree... it is **AMAZING!** Our kitchen caters to a variety of food allergies and sensitivities including gluten-free and vegetarian/vegan options.



## STAFF TRAINING

WEHGC's staff begin training as youth development professionals months before they arrive at camp with trainings focused on homesickness, conflict resolution, child development, female empowerment, and sensitive issues. Before campers arrive, staff undergo ten days of intensive training on-site with first aid, CPR, AED & blood borne pathogens certifications, emergency procedures and much more.



## ACCOMMODATIONS

Our campers LOVE our cabins! Made of sturdy cedar each cabin has electricity, wooden bunk beds, and two bathrooms, showers and sinks. Bunk mates share a cubby to hold their belongings and are encouraged to decorate their bunk to make it feel just right. Many hours are spent lounging on the hammock chairs on the large front porch.



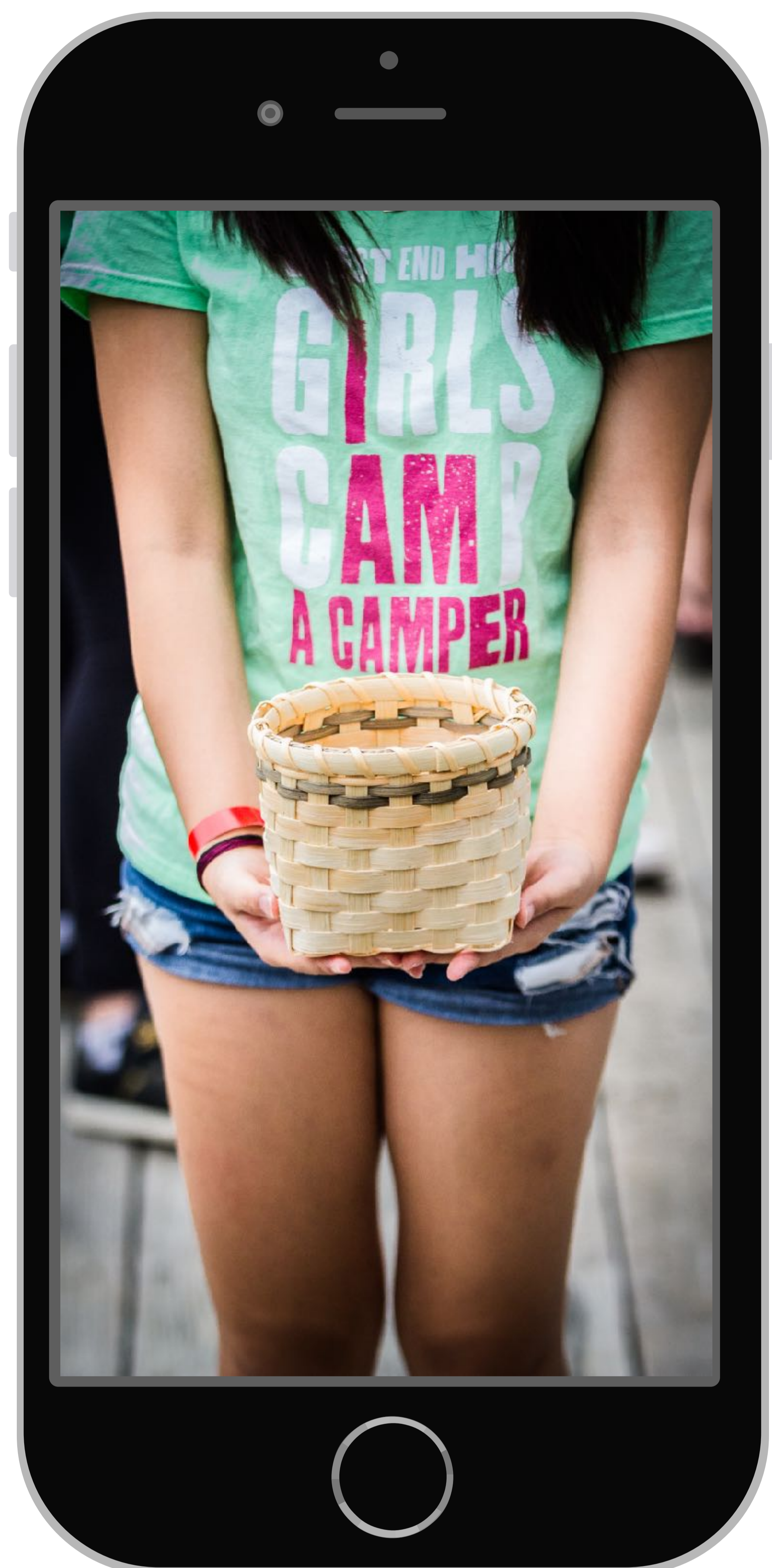


## FACILITIES

Located on Long Pond in southern Maine, our location couldn't be better! Our facilities boast new camper cabins, a mess hall overlooking the lake, beautiful outdoor courts and much more!

## TECH FREE & PHOTO ACCESS

WEHGC is a tech free camp! While campers cannot use their cell phones or other tech devices, parents are welcome to contact us with questions. As partners in parenting, we take seriously any questions or concerns you have and are here to work with you throughout the summer. Our summer phone line is available 7am-10pm - 7 days a week during the summer and our emergency phone line is available 24hrs a day. We love keeping our parents in the loop and take pictures to give you a flavor of what's happening at camp every day!



Parents are welcome to call the camp if there is a concern or question regarding their child. Almost all electronic devices are prohibited at camp. As a rule, any item that can: send or receive a phone call or text messages, play a DVD, send or receive e-mail or access the internet is prohibited at camp. Handheld electronic games are also prohibited. iPods or other expensive equipment are strongly discouraged. WEHGC is not responsible for the damage, theft or other loss of any personal items.

# OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe in the power of camp to change lives and are committed to positively influencing the lives of the girls by providing them with skills, support, and opportunities needed to grow into healthy, productive, and responsible women.

WEHGC is an inclusive, diverse, supportive, fun-filled community. We strongly believe that diversity fosters strength and adds beauty to our camp and therefore we encourage girls to be who they are! Our programming is centered on 10 characteristics we believe are the keys to success and want campers to develop.

These characteristics are:

## RESPECT FOR OTHERS

All campers are encouraged to keep their personal areas neat and to treat others in a respectful manner. Campers are taught that showing respect is more about what the other person feels is respectful, than about themselves.



## SHARING

WEHGC is a tight-knit community where campers and staff act and live as a family. Community members are encouraged to share responsibilities such as cabin cleanup.



## RESPONSIBILITY

WEHGC campers are expected to take responsibility by fulfilling their roles at camp with a positive attitude whether they are acting as meal waitresses, firewood collectors, or score keepers; as well as taking ownership and responsibility for their actions and their action's effects on others.



## TEAM PLAYER

WEHGC maintains a consistent team atmosphere where all of our campers are encouraged to be supportive of one another in individual pursuits, and to be excellent team members by actively listening, staying engaged, sharing ideas, and making compromises.



## COMPASSION

Campers are encouraged to show compassion to others through supporting one another in their individual growth as well as through community support opportunities. Throughout the summer girls support one another as they advance in swimming and other athletics, creating a comfortable environment to try new skills and overcome mental obstacles.





## DRIVE

At WEHGC we want all of our campers to learn to push themselves to try new things and to achieve their goals. We value the process of achievement as much as we value victories. Our girls are encouraged to try everything that we offer at camp under the guidance of expert staff.



## LEADERSHIP

At WEHGC we view leadership as the ability to encourage and guide a group in a constructive direction while maintaining positivity and compassion.



## SPIRIT OF THE HOUSE

As a traditional West End House value, Spirit of the House is one of the most sought after characteristics. A camper who embodies the Spirit of the House is one who is enthusiastic about camp activities and shows camp spirit, who actively embraces the camp traditions such as color war, rip rip rips, and evening campfire.



# LEADERSHIP TEAM



**LAURIE PALAGYI**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WEHGC is led by Executive Director Laurie Palagyi who joined the camp in April 2013. As a former educator, Laurie earned a Master's degree in Experiential Education from Wheaton College, and later turned her focus to mental health earning a Master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. Laurie has extensive experience working with youth, children, and families in multiple settings including outpatient and in-home therapy, residential therapeutic homes, wilderness trip leading, adventure challenge programs, and summer camps. Laurie is passionate about creating innovative outdoor experiences where girls can flourish and be empowered.

Contact Laurie at [laurie.palagyi@wehgirlscamp.org](mailto:laurie.palagyi@wehgirlscamp.org)



**BETSY BROWN**  
CAMP DIRECTOR

Betsy joined WEHGC in July 2013. As a former Food Service Manager, Betsy revolutionized the camp menu implementing a “from scratch” menu with an emphasis on whole, nutritious foods. In 2016 Betsy focused her management skills on camper enrollment and joined WEHGC full-time in 2017. She holds a Bachelors in Art Education from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She comes to us with many years of working with children as a substitute teacher and a 4-H leader. She holds a Manager Level Serve Safe food designation, American Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguard and SOLO Wilderness First Responder certification.

Contact Betsy at [betsy@wehgirlscamp.org](mailto:betsy@wehgirlscamp.org)

# THE ENROLLMENT PROCESS

## ENROLLMENT & FEES

Our application process is easy and must be completed online. There is a \$125 deposit per week your camper is enrolled. The deposit is applied to your camper's tuition. Your application acceptance will be confirmed via email.

## TUITION BALANCE

Tuition is due in full by June 1st. If June 1st falls on a weekend, tuition is due the next business day. Statement and invoices are emailed monthly after each registration is processed. Tuition is paid online. You have the option of paying the deposit and tuition in full at time of registration or setting up an automatic monthly payment plan.

## WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists are created as soon as a camp session is full. Once an age group is filled for a session, that camper will be placed on a waitlist. Deposits will not be processed until the camper has been enrolled. Because our camp fills early, there is usually movement on the waiting list as the lives of enrolled campers change, and thus we recommend placing your child's name in the queue. Campers who are on the waiting list, and do not decline enrollment if a spot becomes available, are eligible for the priority registration period in the next camp season. This priority registration period is limited to returning campers and wait-listed applicants.



## CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

All summer camp registrations include a \$125 non-refundable deposit per week as part of their registration.

Camp Cancellations There will be no refund of your deposit. We do understand, however, that sometimes plans change. The following are our refund policies:

**Before February 15th:** you will receive a 100% tuition refund minus the weekly deposit fee.

**February 16th-March 15th:** you will receive a 50% tuition refund minus the weekly deposit fee.

**After March 15th:** no refunds.

\*During your enrollment process, registration insurance is provided as an option. Please consider this as a safeguard for your investment.

For more details, please see our refund policy here.

## SPECIAL NEEDS

### ACCOMMODATION POLICY

West End House Girls Camp provides services to children with disabilities or any special needs in the same way we provide services for other children of comparable age. Requests for special accommodations will be considered on a case by case basis.



A wooden cabin porch with a sign that says "ABENAKI" and a red hammock hanging from the ceiling. The porch has a wooden railing and is surrounded by lush green trees. The sign is made of light-colored wood with the word "ABENAKI" in dark, block letters. The hammock is red and is suspended from the ceiling of the porch. The background is filled with dense green foliage.

**ABENAKI**

**PACKING LIST**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The following clothing list is designed as a guide for parents and campers. Campers and staff dress informally at West End House Girls Camp. Our general recommendation is to bring clothes that are comfortable and expendable. We discourage designer clothing for three main reasons:

- Camp is rustic and your child will be active.
- A relaxed no-pressure environment gives campers the opportunity of not having to compete.
- Clothes are very easily lost or damaged at camp.

WEHGC implements a strict policy when it comes to “provocative clothing”. A general rule is that undergarments must be worn at all times and may not be visible; and that the area from the navel to the bottom must be covered completely.

## LAUNDRY

Laundry is not available to campers due to our short session lengths.

## LOST AND FOUND

Name tags should be placed on all camper's belongings. Please use the camper's first and last name. While every effort is made to help campers be conscious of their belongings and return lost and found articles back to the campers, unlabeled articles are rarely recovered. You can buy labels on Amazon.

WEHGC is not responsible for the loss or damage to a camper's personal belongings for any reason and WEHGC strongly recommends that campers not bring items of value to camp. All unclaimed lost and found clothing is donated to a local charity at the end of the summer.



## LUGGAGE

Luggage should be confined to bedding plus one suitcase or duffel bag. We reserve the right to screen a camper's luggage.

## BEDDING

WEHGC does not provide any bedding, linens or towels. All campers must bring their own sleeping bag (or sheets and blankets for a twin bed, recommended) for their nightly use, plus a pillow and pillow case. Nights can get chilly, please make sure your camper will be warm!

## PROHIBITED ITEMS

Dangerous items are strictly prohibited. No drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, zape, matches, fireworks, dangerous sporting equipment, other weapons, animals or pets may be brought into camp. If these or any other dangerous items are found at camp the staff will confiscate them and disciplinary action will be taken. WEHGC cannot guarantee the safekeeping or return of confiscated items. Campers are also not permitted to bring their own personal vehicles to camp. Search and seizure is allowed when possession of illegal substances or weapons is suspected, done by or in the presence of the camp director.

## GENERAL PACKING

- 14 pairs of underwear including bras
- 14 pairs of socks
- 8-10 pairs of shorts
- 2 - 3 pairs of long pants, jeans or sweats
- 13-14 short sleeved T-shirts
- 1 pair of sturdy sandals
- 1-2 pair of tennis shoes
- 1-2 long sleeved shirts
- 2 sweatshirts
- 1 light jacket
- 1 hat
- Journal
- 2 bathing suits
- 2 shower towels
- 1 beach towel
- 2 sets of PJ's
- Bedding
- Toiletries (Please include sunscreen, lip balm and moisturizer) and shower caddy
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight
- Insect repellent
- Day pack
- Disposable camera
- Pens, pencils, paper, envelopes, stamps
- Water bottle
- Rain coat
- Both a Blue and White outfit for Color Wars



# CAMP TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

[QUICK LINKS](#)

[VIEW GOOGLE MAP AND GET DIRECTIONS](#)







## CAMP DROP OFF LOCATION

West End House Girls Camp is located at:  
[39 Pineridge Road | Parsonsfield, ME 04047](#)

Driver's please note: if your directions do not take you to Road Between the Ponds, your information may be incorrect. Do not drive down Pine Ridge Road, instead look for the Girl's Camp sign off "Road Between the Ponds". Please also note that GPS does not work at times due to internet connection issues. Print directions before leaving. Please call us for assistance at (207) 625-8221.

If you are providing the transportation for your camper, please plan to drop-off your child between designated drop-off times (please do not arrive early as staff are busy prepping camp for an amazing experience for your camper and gates will be locked) and pick-up your child promptly on Departure Day.

[View Google Map and get Directions](#)

## ARRANGING TRANSPORTATION

You will indicate your transportation choice when you enroll your camper. While many parents will drop their child off at camp, we do offer bus transportation alternatives. All changes in transportation must be made in writing, emailed to [laurie.palagyi@wehgirlscamp.org](mailto:laurie.palagyi@wehgirlscamp.org)

No child will be permitted to leave camp with anyone other than their parent or guardian without written consent from their parent or guardian. Consent can be provided through your camper account.



## TRANSPORTATION COMMUNICATION

If unforeseen circumstances may affect a scheduled pick-up or drop-off time or location, West End House Girls Camp staff will contact the primary cell phone listed for each camper that may be affected via text. If the text is not received a call will be made. If any kind of emergency occurs, all parents will be called on the primary cell phone listed for each camper that may be affected. If we cannot get a hold of the parent a voicemail will be left when possible and other phone numbers and/or email addresses may be called or emailed to ensure that updated information has been passed on.

## BUS TRANSPORTATION

West End House Girls Camp offers pick-up and drop-off in Boston, MA.

Please check our website for current pick-up and drop-off locations.



# TRANSPORTATION RULES FOR CAMP VEHICLES

West End House Girls Camp's primary concern is for the safety of the campers in our care. For that reason, we would like to bring to attention the following rules for our buses and vans. Thank you in advance for your understanding and for sharing this information with your camper.

- No excessive noise or rowdiness.
- No horseplay.
- No body parts are permitted outside of the vehicle.
- In the case of buses, campers and staff are to remain in their seats and not standing in the aisles. When being transported in a camp vehicle (bus or van) all passengers must remain seated when the vehicle is moving.
- Make sure that all doors are locked before departing.
- Throwing litter from a vehicle is prohibited.
- Throwing objects is prohibited.
- Playing music at a volume that distracts the driver is prohibited.
- Behavior unacceptable in camp will not be tolerated outside of camp.



# BEFORE CAMP BEGINS

## CAMPER SUCCESS CHECKLIST

For your camper to successfully attend camp this is a list of some skills they should be able to:

- Sleep in a cabin with 10 similar aged campers and 2-3 staff.
- Demonstrate group living skills like, keeping their areas clean and making their bed, sharing in the housekeeping tasks of that cabin, and be active in all of the recreational and social activities of the cabin.
- They can maintain their personal hygiene and exhibit safe personal behavior.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior without requiring an unusual amount of guidance and attention.
- Be active around camp, walking up and down hills and paths, and going in and out of the water.
- Enjoy overnight experiences including sleeping in a tent and cooking out.
- Follow both a diverse individual schedule and the group activity schedule, responsibly managing unscheduled time with minimal supervision.
- Be able to focus and respond to group instruction during camp activities.
- Join community-building group activities such as singing, campfires, and family-style meals in the dining hall.
- Follow directions and respond appropriately in an emergency.
- Communicate concerns to a responsible adult.
- Contribute positively to the camp spirit and community.
- Be their best self and be a friend to everyone.



## OPEN HOUSE OPPORTUNITIES

These opportunities are designed to enable new or prospective campers and their immediate family to tour camp, meet staff members, and ask questions. The tour takes about 1 hour. If you are interested in setting up a tour please contact us at [betsy@wehgirlscamp.org](mailto:betsy@wehgirlscamp.org)

## NECESSARY FORMS

All forms are due one month prior to the first day of camp. Please log into CampDoc to download necessary forms.

## MEDICAL FORMS

Staffed by medical professionals who are on-site 24/7 to care for the daily needs of our campers, the Wellness Center - located in the main part of camp - contains an exam room, a secure place for medical records, all medicines, and a private area for campers who may need special medical attention. We carry a full supply of basic over-the-counter medications and healthcare products like sunscreen and lip balm - all free of charge for any kids who need them. Medical staff are always on-site and they administer all medication and store it safely in the wellness center.

Our medical staff carefully review all health forms before campers arrive and check-in campers on arrival day to determine if they are healthy. Medical forms including a signed and updated health history, a copy of the appropriate health insurance card(s), and our physician's examination form or your doctor's standard form must be submitted at least one month in advance of the first day of camp. Our local treatment facilities require us to present this information at the time of treatment. A camper will not be admitted to the bus or checked in unless this information is complete. Maine State Regulations require each camper to have a medical examination within 12 months of arrival at camp. When a child has health issues or is on medication, we recommend that the medical examination be completed as close to camp arrival as possible.



# WEHGC PARENT CENTER

The Parent Center will act as your hub of information and can be found online at [www.wehgirlscamp.org/parent-center](http://www.wehgirlscamp.org/parent-center)

Here you can find the following:

[Packing List](#)

[Transportation Information](#)

[Email a Camper](#)



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For answers to FAQs see this [link](#).

## REFER A FRIEND

[Refer a friend](#) to go to West End House Girls Camp this summer!

## CONTACT US

We'd love to hear from you! Send us your questions, comments, or feedback and we will respond promptly.

Summer Address: 39 Pineridge Road | Parsonsfield, ME 04047

Winter Address: PO Box 10633 | Portland, ME 04101

Summer Camp Line: 207-625-8221

Winter Line: 857-777-6535

