

Kabeyun

PARENT HANDBOOK

Congratulations! You're about to embark on a fabulous summer adventure. Yes, we know, it's your son who's heading off to camp, but sending your son to summer camp is an experience for you as well, and we know that can be both exciting and (maybe) a little bit terrifying, especially if it's the first time he'll be so far from home for so long.

If you've got questions, we've got answers – lots of them! We hope this guide addresses some of the basic logistics you might be wondering about, without overwhelming you. Here are some of the questions we're asked most often:

- Are we ready? What about forms and paperwork, and tuition payments?
- Do we have everything we need? Are there things he shouldn't bring? What if he forgets or loses something?
- What if he runs out of something? Does he need money?
- Can we visit camp while he's there, and see him in action?
- What's opening day like? Is it scary for him? For us?
- How can I stay in touch with him? What can I send? Will I hear from him while he's away?
- What if he gets sick or hurt at camp?

SORTING OUT THE DETAILS

Get in touch with your CampInTouch account! The link is at the top of every page on the Kabeyun website, just look for the yellow text that reads "Parent/Staff Login."

1. Forms and Paperwork

All the paperwork we need – medical history form, immunization records form, camper questionnaire form, travel plans form, insurance and release form, etc. – is online now. Your CampInTouch account has everything we need to prepare for his arrival. Forms are, predictably, found in the **"Forms & Documents"** section. Some you fill out online, and others need to be printed, filled out, and either scanned and uploaded, faxed, or mailed. Call or email the office if you run into difficulty!

2. Tuition Balance Payment

Tuition balances are due by April 1, unless you've made arrangements with the office for a payment plan (or you enrolled after April 1, in which case it's probably due... now!). You can check your balance in your CampInTouch account in the **"Financial Management"** section.

3. Camp Store Accounts

Read more about the camp store and how that works further in this handbook, but when you're looking to deposit money into that account, or to see what your son has bought, find it in the **"View Accounts"** section.

The screenshot shows the CampInTouch account dashboard. At the top right, there are links for [My Account](#), [Help](#), and [Log Out](#). Below these is a link for [Not John? Click here](#). The main header area has a 'Ship Camps' button with a red arrow pointing to it, and a link to 'Click here to easily ship your luggage to and from camp'. Below the header, a welcome message says 'Hi John, welcome to your CampInTouch account.' There is a 'News Bulletins' section with a link to 'View News'. The 'Forms Dashboard' section has a link to 'Forms & Documents' with a red arrow pointing to it. The 'Your Camper' section has links to 'Camper Application', 'Ship Camps', and 'Camper Information'. The 'Your Family' section has links to 'Contact Information', 'Financial Management' (with a red arrow pointing to it), and 'View Accounts' (with a red arrow pointing to it). The 'Your Account' section has a link to 'Login Details'.

PACKING LIST

Please follow this list as you prepare your son for his summer at camp. Experience has taught us that having enough (but not too many) of certain essential items can make a significant difference between a comfortable summer and one spent scrounging and wanting.

Your son's name should be on EVERY item he brings. Whether you hope it returns home with him or not, the important thing is that he still has it after the first days of camp. Ordinary permanent markers bleed and fade, so use a laundry marking pen, labels, or a clothing stamp. Check here: everythingsummercamp.com/name-labels.

What to Pack

Basic necessities

- ☐ 2 **sheet sets** (to fit a 30" x 74" x 6" mattress) & two **pillowcases**
- ☐ 2 **blankets** and a **pillow** (a sleeping bag works great as 1 of those blankets)
- ☐ 4 large **towels**
- ☐ 2 **laundry bags**
- ☐ 1 pair of **sandals** (Chacos, Tevas...) or water shoes
*** **NO** flip-flops, sliders, or Crocs – they don't stay on the feet. Sandals must secure around the back of the heel.
- ☐ 2 pairs of **sneakers**, or 1 pair and a pair of **light hiking shoes**
*** smooth-soled tennis shoes are encouraged but not required on our tennis courts
- ☐ 12–15 pairs of **socks**, 12–15 pairs of **underwear**
- ☐ 2 – 3 pairs of loose-fitting **pants**, 6–8 pair **shorts**
- ☐ 3 pairs of **swim trunks**
- ☐ 10–12 **t-shirts** and 2–3 **long-sleeve tees**
- ☐ 2 **sweatshirts** or flannel shirts... something warm
- ☐ 1 wool or fleece **sweater** (non-cotton)
- ☐ 1 **waterproof rain jacket** with hood (preferably no ponchos)
- ☐ wool or fleece **hat**
- ☐ **sun hat** or ballcap
- ☐ **water bottle** (2 is better than 1)
- ☐ **toilet articles** (shampoo, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.) and carrying case
- ☐ **headlamp** or flashlight & extra batteries
- ☐ **stationery and stamps**, pens

Recommended, but not necessary

- ☐ pajamas, bathrobe & slippers, stuffed animal
- ☐ musical instrument, playing cards, books, small board games
- ☐ mask & snorkel, baseball glove, fishing tackle, tennis racquet, badminton racquet, Frisbee
- ☐ 1 pair hiking boots, 3 – 4 pairs heavy socks, sleeping bag
- ☐ folding camp chair (Crazy Creek)

What to Leave Behind

Camp is FULL of tools and toys for campers – kayaks, sailboats, ropes courses, etc. Some items that we're used to playing with as part of our everyday lives are things that detract from the Kabeyun experience. **Please help us keep his attention on camp by leaving the following at home:**

- ⊗ **all electronics**
iphone, ipod, cell phone of any sort, smartwatch, radio, cd player, gameboy...
- ⊗ **digital cameras**
including GoPros, Flips, etc.
- ⊗ **knives** of any shape or size
- ⊗ **weapons** of any sort (including firearms, air-soft rifles, bb guns, etc.)
- ⊗ skateboard, skates, bike...
- ⊗ **money, candy, food...**
- ⊗ **vaping devices, e-cigarettes, tobacco, alcohol, drugs...**
- ⊗ **money** (really! seriously! for real!)

Special Notes

- ★ If you pack bug repellent, sunscreen, or deodorant, **no aerosol sprays, please!**
- ★ **For out-of-camp trips:**
We have packs, tents, stoves, and utensils. He should bring his own sleeping bag, and it can double as a comforter when he's in camp.
- ★ **Don't forget to pack bedding!**
2 sets of sheets (to fit a 30" x 74" x 6" mattress) & pillowcases, blankets, pillows.
- ★ **PLEASE LABEL ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING WITH HIS FULL NAME!!! NO EXCEPTIONS!**

THE CAMP STORE

Kabeyun's camp store is a source while your son's at camp for basic incidentals, such as toothpaste, batteries, stamps, etc. If he runs out of any of these items, we can supply them from the camp store instead of his having to write a letter home and wait for you to send them as a package, which of course we don't permit! We also have shirts, sweatshirts, hats, and other higher-price items that, if he wants, he will need your permission to purchase.

Below are some of the items that can be acquired at the camp store:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| → Afterbite | → Kabeyun Ballcaps | → Playing Cards |
| → Batteries | → Kabeyun Fleece Hats | → Postcards |
| → Bar Soap & Soapboxes | → Kabeyun 1/4-Zip Fleece Tops | → Razors & Shaving Cream |
| → Bug Nets | → Kabeyun Sweatshirts | → Shampoo |
| → Bug Repellent | → Kabeyun T-Shirts | → Stamps (postcard, 1st class, international) |
| → Chapstick | → Kleenex | → Sunscreen |
| → Comb | → Laundry Bags | → Swim Goggles |
| → Croakies (for sunglasses) | → Nail Clippers | → Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, & Toothbrush Covers |
| → Dr. Bronner's Soap | → Nose Plugs (for kayaking) | → Water Bottles |
| → Envelopes | → Pads Of Paper | |
| → Flashlights and Headlamps | → Pencils/Pens | |

The camp store doesn't require any cash, so please don't send him with any money – he won't need any while he's at camp. We ask that you deposit however much money you think he might need for his time at camp in advance, which will help to give him a budget to work with. Depositing money in his store account is something you do in your CampInTouch account, and throughout the season you can log in and see what his balance is and what he has purchased. If his balance gets low, you have the option of replenishing his account or cutting him off – entirely up to you. If he has a remaining balance in his store account at the end of the summer you can choose to donate it to the Kabeyun Annual Fund, carry it over to next summer, or we can issue you a refund.

SENDING HIM MAIL WHILE HE'S AT CAMP

Getting mail at camp isn't just a nice way for campers to feel connected to home while they are away, it's an essential part of the experience of being away. You are our partner in making this experience a positive one, because without care and thought, mail from home brings with it the risk of triggering or exacerbating homesickness. Please be thoughtful in your approach to communicating with your son or sons while they are at camp. Do send mail – send lots! – and try to keep the following in mind when you sit down to write:

- Sometimes the first few days are the hardest, and it takes time for mail to make its way to camp. **Consider sending out a few letters in advance of opening day**, so he'll have some notes from home right away.
- **Ask lots of questions about camp life.** This will give them motivation to write back! **"What activities have you tried?" "Which are your favorites?" "What's your favorite camp meal so far?" "Tell us about the other kids in your cabin?" "Have you been out on any trips?"** You're reminding him that you're excited to hear about what he's been doing, that you're proud of him, that you hope he's learning new skills. It's a comfort to him – it reminds him that you're happy about sending him to camp.
- **Don't talk too much about what's happening at home.** Doing so can be a reminder of things he may feel as though he's missing – **"We had the neighbors over for dinner last night"** or **"We had a great day at the beach yesterday"** – and believe it or not, if you tell him how much you miss him – **"It's so quiet here without you"** or **"The dogs can't wait for you to get home"** – it can trigger feelings of guilt and concern. Even **"Be glad you're at camp, it's so boring here at home"** is an invitation to a wave of emotions that can make things harder for him, so steer clear. And if you've got bad news – **"The family fish isn't doing so well"** – save it for when he gets home.

- **No packages please, and absolutely no food, candy, or gum.** Although it may be tempting to send your son a box of toys or snacks, over the years, we've found packages are distracting and sometimes divisive in the cabin (who gets to share in the loot and who doesn't?). We have lots of big toys at camp, like archery bows and paddleboards, and plenty of delicious food, including dessert every night. Packages are not necessary and handling them pulls our staff members away from crucial tasks.
- Please share our no packages and no food/candy policy with friends and family members who want to send mail.
- **What if he forgot something?** If your son left a critical item at home, such as his hiking boots or sandals, please contact the office. We'll probably ask you to ship them to us directly so we can get them to your son as soon as possible. If he's forgotten or run out of toothpaste or a similar item, we can get it for him from our camp store. There's a list of what's in the camp store on Page 3. When in doubt, please call or email us and we'll happily help solve the problem!

Need to know how to address a letter to him at camp? Here's an example – you'll find out what cabin he's in on opening day, and if you send a few early letters before knowing his cabin, don't worry. We'll get it to him.

Johnny Porter
Kabeyun – Lions Cabin
PO Box 35
Alton, NH 03809

NEW MAILING
ADDRESS!

We do not have a system for receiving emailed letters for campers, unless you are an international family or traveling abroad while your son is at camp, in which case you can send letters to office@kabeyun.org. We encourage you to hand write, scan, and attach your letters rather than typing out an email, so his letters look and feel as personal as those his cabinmates get.

RECEIVING MAIL FROM YOUR SON

We make a promise that every camper will send a letter home at the end of each week. That means if your guy is a single-session camper, you should expect to get no fewer than three letters, since the end of the fourth week is the end of the session. Some guys write a lot more, some a lot less. Getting a lot of letters isn't always a good thing, and getting the bare minimum isn't always bad! If he's too busy to write, he's probably having a ton of fun. And if he's mailing out multiple letters every day, it may be a sign that he's having trouble getting settled and engaged.

- **If you get a homesick letter,** take a moment to consider the following:
 - + Time flies – it's probably already been at least a few days since he sent it, so unless you've heard from us that he's struggling, the landscape probably looks different already than it did when he put the stamp on that envelope.
 - + Letters are written during down time, like rest hour and bedtime. Otherwise, he's out and about, running around camp, getting down to activities, having a great time. Trust that. We're paying attention, and if he's struggling, we're helping him, and if he's really struggling, we'll contact you ourselves.
 - + If you're convinced there's a concern, reach out to us first, either by calling the office or emailing the director. Let us know what the letter says and give us a chance to look into it further. In many cases we can quickly tell you all about the awesome day he's having and reassure you.
 - + In your response, don't ignore what he's said, but stay measured. Empathize with what he's feeling and remind him of the things that are positives – activities, trips, friendships, new skills, etc. **Don't make bargains**, like "If you're still feeling this way in a few more days, we'll come and get you." Let us do the negotiating – we focus on short, attainable objectives and work towards a resolution that gets him out of the homesick cycle and into having a great time. Showing him an "out" generally doesn't give him a reason to try and have fun, it encourages him to stay sad so he can expedite getting home.

- **Short and sweet.** The three-line letter that says “**Camp’s good. See you soon. Bye!**” and that’s all is a GOOD thing. Don’t be offended! We’d love to have kids go into great detail about what they’re doing and express their adoring appreciation for your sending them to camp, but they don’t have time for that – there’s too much to do! If you’re craving more information, ask open-ended questions when you write back, questions that invite descriptive responses. Remember, though, you’ll hear all about everything and then some when he gets home.
- **Snail mail is putting it mildly.** We collect the mail every morning, and bring it to the post office in Alton. It doesn’t leave Alton until the next business day, and from there it’s at the mercy of the US Postal Service. If he put the letter in the box on Thursday afternoon, it probably doesn’t even leave Alton until Monday morning. So, yes, it can take up to a week for a piece of mail from your son to reach you.
- **No news is good news.** Really, it is. We’ll reach out to you if we’ve got reason to be concerned, and if you’re worried he’s hiding his discomfort from us, call or email the office. But seriously, keep telling yourself: **no news is good news, no news is good news...**

Campers do not have access to email. However, if you are an international family or traveling abroad while your son is at camp, we will scan and email his letters to you as attachments.

WHAT IF HE GETS SICK OR HURT WHILE HE’S AT CAMP?

Safety and staying healthy are the priorities at Kabeyun. Common ailments at camp range from bug bites and poison ivy to infections, from “the sniffles” to strep throat, from bumps and bruises to a broken bone. Whatever the case, we’re prepared – the staff is trained to recognize day-to-day maladies and get them the help they need, nurses have stocked the Health Center with remedies and are caring and professional, and camp systems are in place to handle the unexpected and unfortunate.

- **If he’s feeling run down, or he’s got something minor that needs attention...**
 - + Cabins and activity areas all have first-aid kits. Often, a counselor can take care of what comes up.
 - + The Health Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and one of our nurses is always in camp. If he needs to be seen, he can ask any counselor to take him to the Health Center, and if the nurse is out and about in camp, they’re always reachable via our walkie-talkie network.
 - + The nurse will do those things that a parent would do – get him some water, take his temperature, disinfect and bandage a cut, treat with over-the-counter medications, etc. If he needs to take it easy for a bit, the Health Center has beds so he can rest until he’s ready to get back out there.
- **If he’s coming down with something...**
 - + The Health Center’s set up for extended stays, usually a matter of getting a good night’s sleep. The nurse will make him comfortable, arrange for a counselor from his cabin to bring down a toothbrush, a water bottle, a book to read, and whatever else will help him to relax and recuperate.
- **If he needs to be seen by a pediatrician...**
 - + Kabeyun has a standing relationship with **Wolfeboro Pediatrics at Huggins Hospital – (603) 569-7620**. If the nurse determines he needs a doctor or prescription to help him heal, we can make same-day appointments throughout the week. We also schedule appointments with local dentists and orthodontists, if necessary.
- **If it’s the weekend and the doctor’s office is closed, or if it’s an emergency...**
 - + The Huggins Hospital emergency department is just eight miles away. For non-emergencies, a Kabeyun staff will transport him to the local urgent care clinic or hospital. Otherwise, we’ll call an ambulance.
- **If he’s out of camp on a trip...**

- + Trips staff hold at least Wilderness First Aid certification, and many are First Responders or EMTs. They'll have his medical, insurance, and contact information, and they'll get him to help. They carry a first-aid kit and are capable of providing meaningful care. As soon as they return to camp he'll go straight to the Health Center to be evaluated.
- + Trips always have evacuation routes and the nearest hospitals mapped out in advance. In an emergency, they're ready to take swift action.

→ **We'll contact you...**

- + **If he stays overnight in the health center**, with an email if it's not serious, or a phone call if the nurse wants to discuss his condition.
- + **If he needs to be seen by a doctor**, with a phone call before the appointment and a follow up when he's back at camp.
- + **If he's seen at the emergency room**, with an immediate phone call and updates along the way until the situation is resolved.
- + **If an issue arises for him on an out-of-camp trip** that necessitates cutting the trip short and returning to camp or evacuating to a hospital, again with an immediate phone call and updates throughout.
- + When we contact you by phone, it's natural for you to want to talk directly with him, and just as normal for him to want to talk to you. That's fine, and often helpful. Remember, though, that while sometimes your voice and encouragement will help, it can also add homesickness to whatever else he's struggling with. It will be important to stay upbeat and positive, remind him that the nurse is giving him the same help that you would be, and avoid making promises like "if you're not feeling better soon we'll come get you." Let us be the ones to tackle that question if it comes up, though we'll definitely consult with you first in that case.

The bottom line is this – our program is designed for adventures that are both fun and safe. If he's not healthy, he can't have those fantastic experiences! If things come up that need attention, rest assured, we'll be on it and keep you in the loop.

WHAT ELSE?

At the risk of overwhelming you with information, let's tackle some other common questions that don't necessarily require long and involved responses.

- **Can we request that our camper be (or not be) in a cabin with specific other campers and/or counselors?**
 You can ask, but we don't make any guarantees. There are optional fields on the Camper Questionnaire form where you can name **one** (just one) camper he'd like to share a cabin with as well as **one** (again, just one) camper he'd prefer not to share a cabin with. We try to accommodate these requests, however sometimes there are conflicting interests involved, and we reserve the right to use our experience and judgement to determine what's in the best interest of the camper, the cabin, and camp as a whole. Part of the camp experience includes meeting and overcoming challenges, and the cabin community can be one of those challenges. For more on this, please read this post on our blog: <https://kabeyun.org/resources/the-blog-of-the-west-wind/cabin-life-friendship-growth-and-sometimes-discomfort>.
- **Will you be posting photos online during the summer?**
 No. It seems like it would be an awesome way to peek in on him, see him surrounded by friends with a big smile on his face, doing all the things he was excited to do. The live-stream of pictures from camp, however, isn't something we've done and we have no plans to do it. We're focused on the here and now of camp, and committing to regular updates of the photo gallery means dedicating resources where they could otherwise be applied towards safety, activity, and fun. We do employ a photographer, who will discreetly document the summer so we can share thousands of pictures at the end of the summer. At that point you can look through

them together, and he can add the color and context that helps you understand what's happening in each photo. Trust us – if we post pictures during the summer, you'll spend the time he's away glued to the website, poring over each upload, debating how to interpret what you're seeing, concerned that his shirt looks dirty, or wondering why you're not seeing more of him. Relax, enjoy your summer, and look forward to letting him tell you about his adventures when he gets home.

→ **He loves to read and we're sending him with books, but what what if he runs out?**

We've got a library! It's a mish-mash of books that have been donated over the years, and if he's into the Hardy Boys, we've got a world-class collection. If he gets through all of the books he packed and needs more, he can grab whatever he needs from the library and return them... whenever. He can even bring a book or two home with him at the end of the summer if he wants, and return it next year.

→ **What about phone calls? Can we call and talk to him? Can he call us?**

Phone calls aren't encouraged, but they aren't prohibited. The camp phone rings at the dining hall during meal times (8 a.m., 1 p.m., and 6 p.m.), so if you call and he's not out on a trip, he can come to the phone. The counselor who answers the phone will check with the director or assistant director first, and in some cases where we know a phone call might be disruptive or upsetting, we'll let you know. What we recommend is this:

- + Check with Ken by calling or emailing him in advance, to make sure a phone call's a good idea.
- + Don't overdo it. One phone call during the summer, that's okay. But once a week? That's too much. Remember, there are lots of kids at camp at any one time, and we only have the one line. Keep the conversation brief – he's missing the meal and potentially activity choosing while he's on the phone.
- + Be prepared for homesickness to set in while he's on the phone and afterwards, and recognize that sometimes a sudden and unexpected live connection to home can throw him off. Trust that it's not necessarily representative of how things are going, and know that we'll anticipate the potential fallout and work to set things right, quickly.

→ **Can we arrange to have him catch a ride to camp with another family we know that lives close by? Can his grandparents pick him up on pickup day? Can he go out during changeover with another camper's family?**

Only a parent or legal guardian can transport him to and from camp, or take him out of camp on changeover day (for 7- and 8-week campers). However, if you need to make other transportation arrangements or you would like for someone else to have your permission to take him off-site for any reason, please contact the office – we have a simple form to authorize this. Please give us at least 24 hours' notice, so we have time to get the paperwork in order.

→ **What if he has his birthday while he's at camp?**

We'll have a rousing birthday celebration at camp! Your son can have his first pick for activities throughout his birthday and his cabin mates will help him celebrate with cake, candles, and song. We invite you and others to send birthday cards, but please stick to our no packages policy and save the presents for when he returns home. We promise your son is having a special day without unwrapping tangible birthday gifts while he's here. Remember, sending him to camp is a pretty terrific gift you've already given him!

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Thanks for taking the time to familiarize yourself with some of the essentials for camp parents. If this is your first time sending your son to camp, or even if it's not and you have questions or concerns that haven't been addressed here, don't be alarmed! There's a TON of information on the Kabeyun website, kabeyun.org, so if we haven't covered it here, browse around online and see if you can find guidance there. There's a "Common Questions" section that can be helpful, and there are posts in the "Blog of the West Wind" that include thoughts on the zero-technology policy and our philosophy on tipping counselors at the end of the summer (hint – please don't).

If you've read this handbook end-to-end and still have questions or concerns and want to talk, absolutely reach out by email or phone at any time. It's full-on spring now, so we're all camp, all the time, and we always love hearing from you!

Ken's Email – ken@kabeyun.org

Office Phone – (603) 875-3060
forwards to Ken's cell phone during the off-season