

ALDERSGATE
Camp & Retreat Center

OVERNIGHT CAMPS FAMILY HANDBOOK

A sacred space,,
empowering all,
in faith and friendship
since 1945.



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PART ONE

GET READY



THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOUR FIRST WEEK AT ALDERSGATE

- Welcome to Aldersgate
- Sleeping Away from Home
- Meet Us Before Camp
- Getting to Aldersgate



HELLO CAMPERS & FAMILIES

WELCOME TO ALDERSGATE!

We are so excited that you will be part of our 81st anniversary this summer! Aldersgate is a loving environment where everyone is empowered to grow in their faith and make new friends in this sacred space.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS HANDBOOK:

This handbook is designed to give you all the information you need to be ready for your week at Aldersgate from schedules to health information and packing lists. There is a table of contents at the beginning of each section to help you find what you are looking for quickly and easily.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS???

Hopefully you'll find all the information you need to feel ready for camp but if you don't... ask! Email us at abby@campaldersgate.com with ANY questions at all so you feel ready and excited for camp!



John Dyer

Executive Director



Abby

James-Vickery

**Assistant Director,
Overnight Programs**



SLEEPING AWAY FROM HOME

can be difficult so here are a few tips to make it a little easier for campers and families...

1. **Practice staying out overnight.** Planning a night with a grandparents or friends is great practice for camp. Start with one night and work up to a weekend to be sure your camper can stay out for at least two or three nights.
2. **Talk about homesickness.** It is normal for people to miss the things they love about their homes and their families. Discuss coping skills for what your camper can do if they start to feel homesick. Some examples might include:
 - a. Writing a letter home
 - b. Write three good things about the day and three things they are looking forward to tomorrow
3. **Write a homesickness "antidote" message for them to open.** Good things to include are how proud you are that they are doing their best at camp, reminders about what they were looking forward to at camp, and things you are excited to hear about when they get home.
4. **Encourage your camper to talk to their counselor about their feelings.** Our staff are trained to help campers! We tell our staff that it is a partnership between families and counselors to help kids feel safe and comfortable before and during camp.
5. **Send letters!** Getting mail at camp is really cool and is novel to kids in our digital age. Get friends and family to chip in as well, or write letters beforehand and drop them off with one of our staff members before the beginning of their stay.
6. **Set goals with your camper.** Speak with your camper about why you believe camp will be a great experience for them and find out what they are excited about. Together, come up with a few goals for their stay at camp like make a new friend or try a new activity. If you plan goals before you arrive, share them with your camper's counselor so they can help your camper achieve them!



THE "GOING HOME EARLY" PROMISE

Telling a camper they can come home if they are "missing home" or "doesn't like camp" actually undermines their ability to overcome these challenges and sets the camp experience up to be a failure before they even arrive. Working through normal levels of homesickness builds resilience and self-confidence!

- Don't make this promise
- If homesickness continues over 24 hours or is affecting the camper's ability to participate in camp, a member of the leadership team will contact the family and discuss a plan. We work hand in hand with families to come up with the best solution and keep them involved every step of the way!



NIGHTLIGHTS

If your camper sleeps with a nightlight, practice sleeping without one. Camp is quite dark and even if there is a small nightlight in their cabin, it may be much darker than their room at home!

MEET US BEFORE CAMP



OPEN HOUSES:

We have Open Houses in the spring. Keep checking social media or call the office to find out when we will be offering Open Houses.

SET UP A TOUR:

Want to check out camp but can't come to an Open House? Call the office at (401) 568-4350

ONLINE:

Check out our website at www.campaldersgate.com

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date - the link are on the top of our website homepage!



GETTING TO ALDERSGATE

The address for GPS is 1043 Snake Hill Road. Some GPS systems have us listed in the town of Glocester, others have us listed in North Scituate. If your GPS lists both, either one should work!

Check out our website for specific driving directions from Providence, Worcester, Boston, and Hartford.



PART TWO

AT CAMP



WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU GET TO CAMP

- Arrival and Check-In
- A Typical Day at Aldersgate
- Living Spaces
- Food at Camp
- Departure



ARRIVAL & CHECK-IN

**Check in is at 4:00 PM on Sunday
Please do not arrive before 4:00.**

1

Park your car

As you pull into camp, a staff member will greet you just past the entrance. They will give you directions about where to park and remind you of any of this information just in case you forget!

2

Drop off your luggage

Bring your bags to the "luggage drop off" zone where staff will mark it with your name and take it to your cabin.

3

Check in at 4:00 PM

Head inside the Great Hall to check in. This is where we will double check that you have completed all your paperwork and take your picture.

4

Complete wellness check

All campers will have their temperature taken, be checked for lice, be asked how they are feeling and if they have been exposed to any illnesses so we can be on the lookout for symptoms. Their allergies and medications will also be verified.

5

Meet with camp nurse

We are so lucky to have an incredible nurse with us all week! If you have any allergies, health concerns, or medications, you will speak with our camp nurse.

- ALL medications, including ointments & vitamins, must be handed in to the camp nurse upon arrival at camp.
- ALL medications must be in the pharmacy bottle. We cannot accept medications in pill boxes or envelopes.
- Prescription medications must have the original label that states the camper's name, dosage, and frequency.
- Emergency medications (inhalers and Epi-Pens) may remain with campers during the week but the camp nurse needs to see them at check in for documentation.
- Please do not send "as needed" over the counter medications with your camper. If you have allowed it on your camper's health form, our camp nurse will administer acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antihistamines, calamine lotion, and antacids if needed.

6

Camp Store

Stop by our camp store and check out our merchandise! Camp store will be open on Sunday and Friday when parents are present.

That's it! Help your camper move into their bunk and meet their counselor before heading home.

OUR SUMMER STAFF



Aldersgate stands out because of its exceptional counseling staff! What makes them so great???

CAREFULLY SELECTED

All of our cabin counselors are 18 or older and have completed one year of college or work experience. After completing an extensive application, they are interviewed in person or by video call if distance does not allow in person meetings. Before hiring, all staff must pass a background check and at least two references.

COACHED IN COACHING

Staff are trained to coach their campers through positive words and actions that help campers come to solutions on their own, rather than doing it for them or giving them the answer right away. They are also encouraged to be aware of their own feelings and needs and express them, when appropriate, in front of campers as to be positive role models for these behaviors.

EXTENSIVE TRAINING

During our week long training session, staff learn hard skills like CPR, First Aid, and safety procedures. They also learn how to care for your campers physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Our staff are trained to make sure your camper has the best week of their summer.

VARIED PERSPECTIVES

While some of our staff attended Aldersgate as campers and later went through our Counselor-In-Training and Junior Staff program, this is not a requirement. In fact, it is very important to Aldersgate that our staff bring many different life experiences and backgrounds so our campers have the opportunity to learn and grow.

Aldersgate has a long history of international counselors - in 2025, we had staff from China, Hungary, Germany, Mexico, Northern Ireland, Italy, South Africa, and England.

A TYPICAL DAY AT ALDERSGATE

8:00 AM Breakfast

8:45 AM Capers

Each cabin is randomly assigned a camp cleanup task with our famous "capers wheel."

9:30 AM Morning Worship

Our daily all-camp worship is a high-energy experience with lots of singing and interactive elements.

10:00 AM Morning Activities

Campers enjoy the same activity each morning of the week. Depending on the camp you sign up for, this could be science, arts and crafts, archery, or much more!

NOON Cabin Regroup

Campers meet back up with their counselor and cabin mates to clean up, chat, and play games before lunch.

12:30 PM Lunch

1:30 PM FOB

FOB stands for "feet on bunk," our rest hour. Campers are encouraged to take a nap or do another quiet activity on their bunk. This is a great time to write a letter home, do some summer reading, or make a friendship bracelet.

2:30 PM Afternoon Free Choice #1

3:30 PM Canteen

Campers have the opportunity to buy a snack at our canteen and catch up with friends.

4:00 PM Afternoon Free Choice #2

5:00 PM Dinner

5:30 PM Faith Chat

Campers work together to explore faith to build something to contribute to our Thursday evening worship.

6:30 PM Cabin Time

Counselors plan a special activity for their cabin to do together.

7:15 PM Evening Activities

Each night, there are different activities for campers such as an all-camp game, staff show, or campfires.

9:00 PM - 10:30 PM Lights Out

Campers have different bed times depending on age group.



LIVING SPACES



Retreat Center

Our Retreat Center build a close-knit community of campers that live in dormitory style rooms, with some of the best views of the lake on camp.



Waterfront Cabins

By the lake, the Waterfront Cabins are centrally located so that you can be in the midst of it all. Each cabin, includes a bathroom, and everything you need to feel at home and get ready for another amazing day at camp.



Woodside Cabins

Past the amphitheater are our Woodside Cabins. These cabins are reserved for our most experienced campers. With their own GaGa pit, campers can enjoy having their own community space. Showers and bathrooms are a short walk away at our newly renovated bathhouse.

Friend Requests

If you are coming to camp with a friend and would like to be in the same cabin, we honor one cabin mate request. Please remember that both families must make the request and that campers must be within two years of the same age.

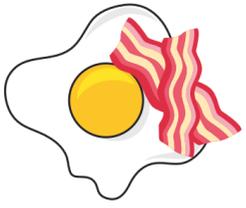
Please note that most activities at Aldersgate are split into three age groups (7/8, 9/10, 11-13, and 14-16) so if your camper may be "bumped down" an age group if they want to be in the same cabin as a younger friend.

We have many all-camp activities and opportunities to hang out with other cabins so campers will still get to see their friends even if they are not in the same cabin.

Who will I live with? Campers are in cabins based on age. We split our campers into four age groups: 7/8, 9/10, 11-13, and 14-16.

Who will my counselor be? You will meet your counselor on the first day of camp. Counselors are carefully matched to the age group they are working with. Every cabin has a senior counselor that is responsible for the well-being of all the campers. You may also have a CIT (Counselor-in Training) in your cabin.

How will I make friends? Our counselors plan special get-to-know you and teambuilding activities so you start to find common interests and feel comfortable right away. Friendships made at Aldersgate are built to last.



FOOD AT CAMP

- Campers sit with their cabin counselor at each meal. This helps cabins to bond and also makes sure that campers receive meals that meet their dietary needs and are eating consistently throughout the week.
- We start each meal by singing grace (an Aldersgate tradition for generations!) and there are often songs and games while campers are waiting for meals or done eating.
- Picky eater? We encourage campers to try new foods but if they don't like the main entree, there is a fruit/cereal bar at breakfast and a salad bar at lunch. We also offer sunbutter & jelly sandwiches.
- Fruit is available throughout the day for campers who get hungry between meals.
- Dessert is served at dinner and snacks are served in the evening.



ALLERGIES & DIETARY NEEDS



Aldersgate prides itself on being able to meet most dietary needs!

Our kitchen makes a vegetarian and gluten-free option at every meal for those campers and staff who have identified these dietary needs. We do not serve anything that contains peanuts or tree nuts.

If your camper has a dietary need, please let us know **at least two weeks before camp**. If you are concerned about our ability to meet your camper's needs, just give us a call = we will be happy to partner with you!

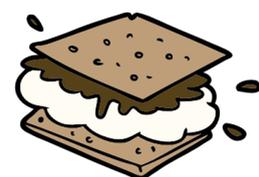
CAMP CANTEEN

Each afternoon, we open our camp canteen. Campers are allowed to grab and snack and hangout with their friends.

Campers will receive one snack and one drink (juice or water) each day.

Last year, our canteen offered, popsicles, freeze pops, ice cream sandwiches, fruit snacks, Cheez-Its, Goldfish crackers, Rice Krispie treats, and graham cracker cookies.

We plan to have similar offerings this year!



DEPARTURE

Pick-up is at 4:00 PM on Friday

1

Sign out your camper

After parking, head toward the table in the road to sign out your camper. **You will need photo identification with you.** (If you do not have photo ID, let us know this at drop off!)

2

Check in with camp nurse

If your camper had medication this week, pick it up from our camp nurse. They will be at the same table as the sign out.

3

Head to closing campfire

Campers will be having a closing campfire at the waterfront. You are welcome to join to sing one of your old favorites or learn a new camp song!

Once campers have been signed out, you can take them home right away or let them show you around camp and tell you all about their incredible week!

Don't forget...

- Luggage will be organized by cabin - don't forget your pillow, water bottle, and all your bags!
- Check out the camp store!



PART THREE

EMPOWERING ALL



WHAT THE CULTURE IS LIKE AT ALDERSGATE

- ✓ The Aldersgate Legacy
- ✓ Unplugged Environment
- ✓ The Four S's
- ✓ Behavioral Expectations
- ✓ Aldersgate Dictionary



THE ALDRSGATE LEGACY

Whether this is your first summer or your tenth, you are now part of a special legacy. **2026 is Aldersgate's 81st anniversary!** For generations, campers have been coming to Aldersgate and experiencing many of the same things you will this summer.

Aldersgate is owned and operated by the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church who purchased the land from Grace Episcopal Church in 1944. **The first summer of camping was 1945.**

Our mission is to be **a sacred space, empowering all in faith and friendship to change the world.** All of the decisions we make as an organization honor that mission and the history of Aldersgate.

The next few pages will give you more information on the current culture at Aldersgate so we can continue to provide a safe, empowering place for our community.





DISCONNECTING CREATES STRONG CONNECTIONS!

ALDRSGATE IS AN UNPLUGGED ENVIRONMENT

Unplugging allows our campers (and staff!) to reconnect with nature, God, and themselves. It also allows them to make new connections with others.

Technology is amazing but so is the ability to take chances and make mistakes. Many campers say they love Aldersgate because they can really "be themselves" here - something they are afraid to do in front of their "school friends" We see this more and more as young people document their lives online. So many young people are afraid to try something new and have it documented forever on social media. Camp gives them a space to be silly, play, try something new and maybe even fail and try again in a safe, supportive environment.

Though being unable to instantly contact your camper might be challenging, parent's confidence in their camper's ability to adapt to a new environment, connect with others, and advocate for their own needs is liberating for them. Of course, if you have any concerns, you can always call camp and we will let you know how your camper is doing!

Having a conversation about the reasons behind being unplugged at camp and making sure electronics are left at home are your contributions to their success!



THE 4 S's

With the help of their counselors, campers learn how to use the 4 S's to make decisions and solve problems. As a group, they create a **CABIN COVENANT** based on these 4 S's to provide guidelines for living in community all week.

Is it **SAFE**?

Does it **SERVE** others?

Is it good environmental **STEWARDSHIP**?

Does it build **SELF-ESTEEM**?



BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

We have a few behavioral expectations for all campers that are requirements for attending Aldersgate.

Please review these with your camper before arriving so they know what is expected from them and others.



FOOD AND DRINKS

No camper may have candy or other food in their possession at camp. We ask that parents respect this policy, as all food arrived with or sent to camp will be disposed of immediately.



BOUNDARIES

Campers are not allowed to enter other cabins or staff-only areas. Campers may not leave their cabin after lights out.



POSSESSION OR USE OF SUBSTANCES

Smoking of any substance (including vaping) and/or the possession of alcohol or drugs INCLUDING MEDICATION that has not been turned in to the nurse, is considered major misconduct. *



BULLYING

Disagreements can happen when people are living in community and staff are trained to help campers work through conflict. However, bullying is a pattern of harmful words or actions and/or intimidation. If this occurs, especially after staff intervention, it is considered major misconduct.*



ASSAULT

No camper will physically or verbally abuse any other camper, CIT, volunteer, or staff member. This is considered major misconduct.*

What if my camper sees or hears something going on?

It is very important for campers to speak up if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable! All staff is trained to listen and support campers who come forward with important information about what is going on at camp.

***These major misconduct incidents cannot and will not be tolerated by Aldersgate. Campers who make choices that threaten the safety of themselves or others will result in that camper going home immediately.**

No refunds, reductions, or allowances will be provided for late arrivals, early departures, dismissals, or withdrawals, including cases of homesickness or behavior unsafe to themselves or others.

ALDERSGATE DICTIONARY

Here are some words you might hear around camp that are special to Aldersgate.

Cabin Time: special time spent with your cabin group - usually not actually spent inside your cabin, this is a time where your counselor will plan something special for your group

Canteen: a mid-afternoon break where our snack shop is open and everyone at camp has time to chat, play games, and relax together

Chaplain: a pastor or seminary student who is a resource for campers and staff in their spiritual formation at camp

Capers: As part of living in community, we are all responsible for keeping our spaces clean. Campers help by tidying and cleaning different common spaces of camp

CIT: stands for counselor-in-training; our CITs are 17 years old and are part of a three week leadership training program that prepares them to be counselors next summer



Faith Chat: staff present a skit about the day's theme and then lead discussion in age groups

FOB: Feet on Bunk; our rest hour after lunch each day

Gaga: an Israeli dodgeball game played in a diagonal pit. We have three gaga pits at Aldersgate because it is so popular!

Health Lodge: home base for our camp nurse and where campers go for their bedtime medications

High Ropes: part of our Challenge Course that contains the higher elements such as our zipline and rope ladder. These are focused on individual challenge and achievement.

Low Ropes: part of our Challenge Course that contains the lower elements such as Whale Watch and Nitro Crossing. These are focused on teamwork & group achievements



PART FOUR

HEALTH CARE



IMPORTANT HEALTH INFORMATION

- Health History Form
- Medication
- Water Bottles
- Basic First Aid
- Contagions & Head Lice
- Allergies
- Illness at Camp
- Ticks & Mosquitos



HEALTH HISTORY FORM

Our American Camp Association (ACA) Accreditation requires all campers to have a new health history form each year. **This form is online in your CampBrain account.** Please fill this form out as early as possible so that our camp nurse can become familiar with your camper's needs.

- There will be an extra fee of \$25 charged to your account if this is not filled out two weeks prior to the start of camp.
- An additional \$50 fee may be added to your account if you arrive to camp with these forms still not filled out.

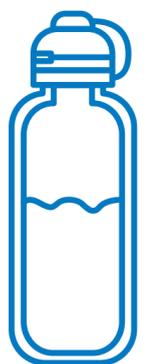
The online form can be filled out by the parent/guardian and does not require a doctor's signature. **All campers need a signed physical and vaccination form from their doctor. We accept all state school physical forms.**

MEDICATION

- ALL medications, including ointments & vitamins, must be handed in to the camp nurse upon arrival at camp.
- ALL medications must be in the pharmacy bottle or pill box. We cannot accept medications in pill boxes or envelopes.
- Prescription medications must have the original label that states the camper's name, dosage, and frequency.
- Emergency medications (inhalers and Epi-Pens) must remain with campers during the week but the camp nurse needs to see them at check in for documentation.
- Please do not send "as needed" over the counter medications with your camper. If you have allowed it on your camper's health form, our camp nurse will administer acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antihistamines, calamine lotion, and antacids if needed.

WATER BOTTLES

Staying hydrated prevents headaches, stomachaches, and fatigue. Campers need to drink more water at camp because they are active and outdoors most of the day. **All campers are required to bring a reusable water bottle with them to camp.**





BASIC FIRST AID

All of our Counselors are First Aid, CPR, and AED certified. If your camper gets a bump or scrape, counselors will take care of it right away! They let the nurse know any time they administer first aid so they can follow up with campers later.

ILLNESS & HEAD LICE

When it comes to preventing contagious illness and head lice, our Aldersgate families have been our best partners. Our camp community has benefited from families keeping their camper home for one day at the start of camp or asking to switch to another session.

In support of your efforts, we provide a **wellness check** when campers arrive. All campers will have their temperature taken, be checked for lice, be asked how they are feeling and if they have been exposed to any illnesses so we can be on the lookout for symptoms. Their allergies and medications will also be verified.

- **IF LICE OR NITS ARE FOUND,**

Campers must return home in order to have treatment done. ALL lice must be killed and removed before coming back. A verification of hair will be done upon return to camp. (**Helpful hint:** Check your camper at home about a week before camp so if they do have lice, they can complete treatment before camp begins.)

- **IF CAMPER HAS AN ELEVATED TEMPERATURE,**

Our camp nurse will make a determination about camper's health based on actual temperature, exposure to illnesses, and current condition. Camper may be asked to return home. They may come back to camp when their temperature has returned to normal and they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

ALLERGIES

Be sure to indicate on the health form any allergies our staff should be aware of, especially food or bee sting allergies. Indicating this prior to check-in on Sunday helps our staff prepare more effectively for the safety of your camper. Campers with Epi-Pens and rescue inhalers are required to have them at all times. Please send a backpack or carrier if this is applicable to your camper.



ILLNESS AT CAMP

Our camp nurse is available to campers 24 hours a day. The nurse administers medication and provides any care beyond basic first aid.

They will contact you if your camper:

- has any symptoms that require them to stay at the health lodge
- shows symptoms of stomach bug or other contagious illness
- has an elevated temperature that accompanies other symptoms or does not go down after rest, hydration, and/or OTC medication
- is injured
- requires health care off-site

Please be aware that if your camper is too ill to participate in camp activities or may be contagious to others, you will need to come pick them up. We do not take campers to the doctor unless it is an emergency situation. Campers can return if there is no fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or other symptoms for 24 hours.

TICKS & MOSQUITOS



Lyme disease and other insect-borne illnesses are a risk for anyone who ventures outside. Please follow these precautions:

- send your child with insect repellent that deters ticks
- teach your child about doing tick self-check (*NOTE: our staff cannot do tick checks due to child safety policies*)
- check for any bites or rashes that appear after camp and immediately consult your pediatrician if you have a concern

Our staff will encourage campers to take showers each night and do self-checks. Staff reminds campers to put on bug spray, especially when in the woods and will model this behavior for their campers.

If we discover a camper is bitten by a tick while at camp, the nurse will notify you.



PART FIVE

ODDS & ENDS



WHAT WE HAVEN'T COVERED IN ANY OTHER SECTION!

- Packing List
- Payment Information
- Sending Mail to Camp
- Family Cheat Sheet
- Frequently Asked Questions



PACKING LIST



CLOTHING

- 6 pairs underwear
- 6 pairs of socks
- 6 tee shirts
- 1 long sleeved tee shirt
- 1 warm sweatshirt or jacket
- 1 rain jacket or poncho
- 3 - 4 pairs shorts
- 1 - 2 pairs pants or jeans
- 2 pairs pajamas/something to sleep in
- 1 - 2 bathing suits
- 1 pair running shoes (NOT converse or crocs)
- Another pair of closed-toed shoes
- Shoes to wear in shower or on waterfront (you always have to wear shoes except when you're in the water!)

LINENS

- Pillow and pillowcase
- Sleeping bag and/or warm blanket
- Sheets if you want them (twin size)
- 1 - 2 towels for showering
- Beach Towel

OTHER REQUIRED ITEMS

- Reusable water bottle
- Hat or bandana
- Insect repellent that contains DEET
- Sunscreen
- Flashlight
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, shower supplies, other hygiene products)

SUGGESTED EXTRAS

- Backpack
- Sunglasses
- Book, journal, or quiet activity for FOB
- Hairbrush & elastics
- Something you want to tie-dye
- Self-addressed, stamped envelopes to write letters home!

LIVING ARTS SPECIFICS

- Plain black tee shirt
- Plain shorts (black, jean, or khaki)
- Musical Instruments or craft supplies to share with your cabin (optional)

ADVENTURE CAMP SPECIFICS

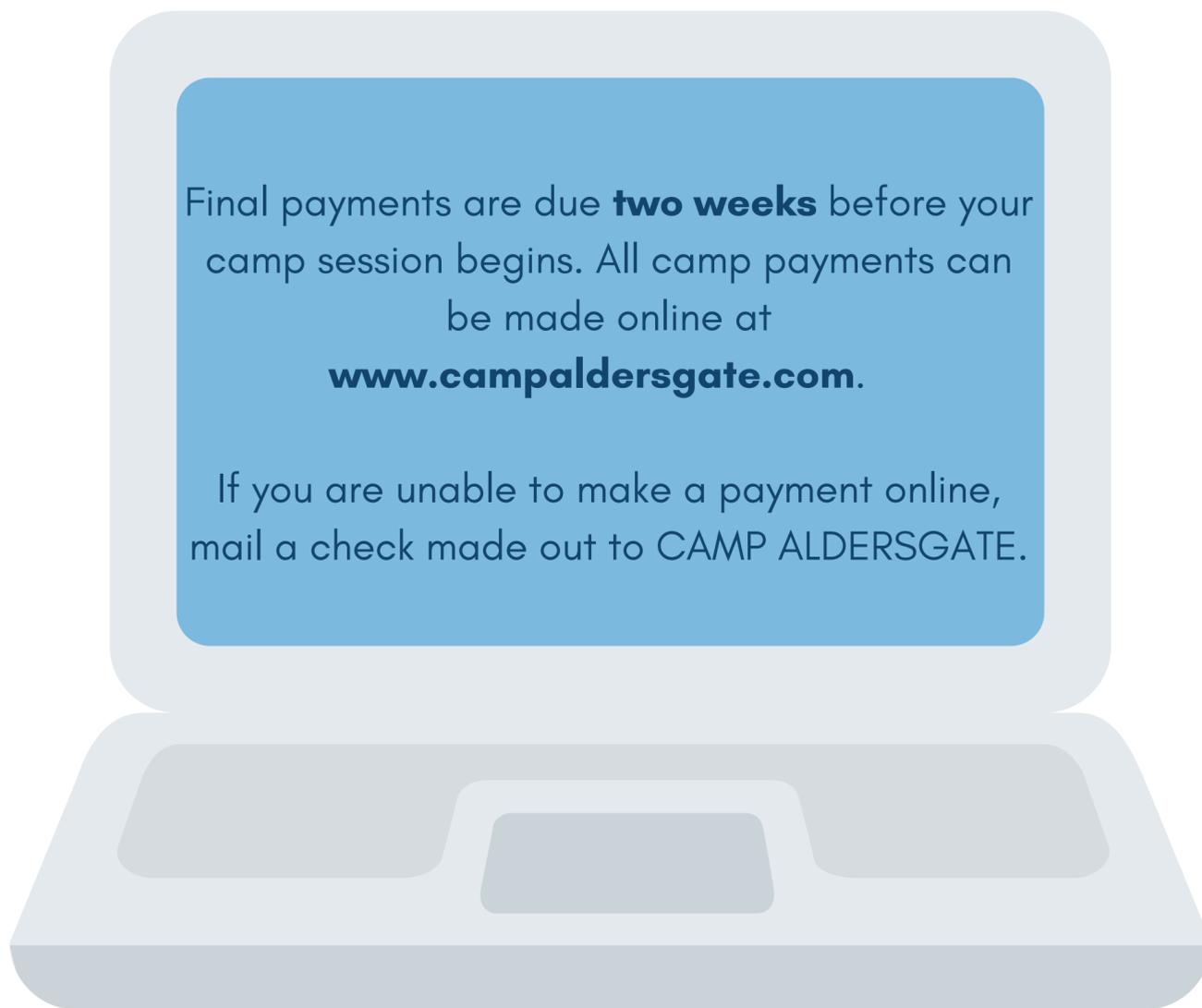
- Trailblazers, Pathfinders, Navigators, and Challenge Camp campers NEED a sleeping bag (not sheets & blanket)

LEAVE AT HOME!!!

- Food/Candy
- Cell Phones
- ALL electronics
- Fishing Pole
- Bows & Arrows
- Fireworks**
- Drugs, Alcohol, or Associated Paraphernalia including vapes**
- Weapons (including camp knives and look-alike weapons)**

****Possession of these items is considered "major misconduct" and the camper will sent home.**

PAYMENT INFORMATION



RETURNED CHECKS

There is a \$25 fee for checks returned by the bank.

CANCELLATIONS

Cancellations must be received two weeks prior to the beginning of your camp session. **Any payments made will not be returned** as your space was held from others and costs were incurred (registration, staffing, program supplies, etc.)

If a child attends any part of a camp week, the full weekly fee is charged, and no refunds or credits are provided for absences, missed days, or closures due to unforeseen circumstances, such as power outages, inclement weather, or loss of amenities. If camp is unable to operate for safety reasons, families will be notified to pick up children as soon as possible, and no refunds or prorated fees will be issued.

We encourage you to send your campers mail throughout the week! Campers love to get handwritten notes and postcards from home. Mail can take a few extra days out here so plan ahead if you want them to receive mail the first few days of camp!

Please address your mail as seen on the envelope to the right!

Any mail received after your camper returns home will be sent to the address we have on file.

SENDING MAIL TO CAMP



FAMILY CHEAT SHEET

HEALTH

- ASAP:** Complete health form online. Visit your camper's doctor to get the health history & vaccination form signed
- Before camp:** Get refills for medication if necessary
 - Remember, all prescriptions must be in original bottles/boxes with camper's name, dosage, and frequency
- Two weeks before:** Call Aldersgate if your camper has food allergies or other medical needs that may need a special plan
- One week before:** check for head lice
- One day before:** check again for head lice
- Arrival at camp:** complete wellness check

ADMINISTRATIVE

- May 1:** Campership requests due
- A month before:** Start using the tips for sleeping away from home (if needed)
- Two weeks before:** Final payment due
- One week before:** Ask friends and family to write letters to your camper when they are at Aldersgate
- Two days before:** Check your camper's luggage to make sure they have packed everything they need!
- Arrival at camp:** Deposit money in camp store/canteen account (optional)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is my child ready for summer camp? If they have had a chance to learn about camp through a brochure, website, camp tour, etc. then you can ask them, "Would you like to go to camp?" If they say yes, they are probably ready. If they say no, wait another year.

If they say maybe or you are still unsure, here are some things to consider:

- Have they spent the night successfully at a friend or relative's house?
- Can they handle basic living skills on their own (washing up, brushing teeth, getting dressed)?
- Are they able to express their needs appropriately? Are they able to tell their teacher when they need to go to the bathroom, don't understand instructions, or feel uncomfortable in a situation? Campers need to be able to speak up when they need something from their counselor.

My child is shy, will they have a good time? You may be surprised to hear that many of our long-term campers and staff members are introverts. Camp provides an emotional safe space that provides a sense of connection that is not available in many places outside the home, which causes lots of "shy kids" to thrive.

Is Camp Aldersgate just for Methodists? No! Camp Aldersgate is open to all campers, regardless of their faith background. Campers from many faiths – and those without a church home – have found Aldersgate to be an excellent place to explore and strengthen their spiritual life. Aldersgate has a progressive Methodist theology, which emphasizes that everyone is created in God's image and is loved and accepted for who they truly are. Therefore, we are called to reflect that love and celebrate each other for who God has made each of us to be.

Is the information in the online registration system secure? Camp Aldersgate has partnered with CampBrain, a leader in the camp software industry, to offer online registration for camp. The information in the system is accessible only to the camper's parents and appropriate Aldersgate staff.

My camper is attending camp with some of their friends. Are we able to request that they all room together? If your camper is coming with a friend and would like to be in the same cabin, we honor one cabin mate request. Please remember that both families must make the request and that campers must be within two years of the same age.

Please note that most activities at Aldersgate are split into three age groups (8-10, 11-13, and 14-16) so if your camper may be "bumped down" an age group if they want to be in the same cabin as a younger friend. We have many all-camp activities and opportunities to hang out with other cabins so campers will still get to see their friends even if they are not in the same cabin.

Will I get to see where my camper will be staying? Will I get to meet their counselor? Yes! You will help move your camper into their bunk. At the cabin, you will meet some of the staff who will be in your camper's group for the week. Our staff love to meet parents so that they can get to know your camper from the start!

My camper is not a strong swimmer. Can they still go swimming in the lake?

Every Sunday we have a waterfront orientation where all campers learn the rules for the waterfront and boating procedures. All campers can swim in the shallow end and use canoes with staff. Campers who are 11 or older can boat with friends even if they do not take the swim test. Campers who want to swim in the raft area must successfully pass a swim test on Monday afternoon. Our swim test consists of swimming to the end of the swim area, treading water for a minute, and swimming back to the shallow end.

I think my camper left something behind at camp. Do you have a lost and found? Of course! If your item is labeled, we will call you to let you know that we have found it. At the end of September, we donate all items from the lost and found.

Do you offer camperships/financial aid? Yes - we believe that no child should be prevented from going to camp because their family cannot afford to pay for it.

Camperships are available for one week of overnight camp each summer, if needed. The campership request form must be filled out and submitted by May 1. Camperships are provided by people who recognize the value of Christian camping and whose lives have been deeply affected by Aldersgate. If you wish to make a donation to our campership fund, please visit our website at www.campaldersgate.com

What are the cancellation and refund policies?

If a child attends any part of a camp week, the full weekly fee is charged, and no refunds or credits are provided for absences, missed days, or closures due to unforeseen circumstances, such as power outages, inclement weather, or loss of amenities. If camp is unable to operate for safety reasons, families will be notified to pick up children as soon as possible, and no refunds or prorated fees will be issued.

No refunds, reductions, or allowances will be provided for late arrivals, early departures, dismissals, or withdrawals, including cases of homesickness or behavior unsafe to themselves or others.



Still have questions?

Email us or call the office!

We want to be sure that your family feels as prepared and excited for camp as possible!





ALDERSGATE CAMP & RETREAT CENTER

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