



10 Important Questions To Consider When Selecting A Summer Camp

Below you'll find Camp Kinneret's answers to these questions.

1. What Is The Camp's Philosophy?

- We are a "Child Centered" camp focusing on children first and activities second.
- Our focus is always on camper involvement and camper experiences rather than camper entertainment.
- Physical and emotional safety are our top priorities. We believe that camp is a place where campers of all ability levels should feel comfortable playing together and trying new things with the support of fellow campers and staff (regardless of their previous experience or skill level).
- Camp Kinneret's program is designed to provide children with opportunities to develop self confidence, teamwork and leadership skills under the direction of focused, dedicated staff.
- When children feel safe and cared for at camp, they have fun playing, laughing and learning together with their friends and counselors. Each summer creates memories that they carry with them for their lifetime.

2. What Is The Makeup And Size Of Camp Groups Each Day Of The Week?

- Children entering 1st grade and above are scheduled with 13-14 campers in each group each day of the week. (We don't have big groups on Mon-Wed-Fri and small groups on Tue-Thur to average 13-14. This is the actual number of campers enrolled each day to ensure quality small groups every day of the week.)
- Camper groups for children entering PK & Kindergarten have 10-12 campers enrolled each day.
- Camp groups remain the same for each full session of 4 or 5 weeks. (We never permit short term enrollment that can be disruptive to the group as campers come and go from one week to the next.)
- Once in a group, campers participate with the same campers and counselors for the full session. (Usually the full summer for campers that are attending both sessions.)
- Campers may attend 2, 3, 4 or 5 days/week.
- Each group has both a senior counselor of college age or older (see below) and a high school training intern or co-counselor.

3. Who Are The Camp Directors And Assistant Directors?

- Harold Gordon has been one of Camp Kinneret's directors since 1982.
- Ryan Rosen joined Harold as a director following the 2007 season. Previously he served as the pool director for 3 years and Assistant Camp Director for 3 years before moving to sister camp Sunny Skies Day camp for 2 summers as director.
- A Leadership Team comprised of 5 additional experienced camp and education professionals supervise all aspects of camp and serve as resources for campers, staff and parents.

4. What Are The Qualifications Of The Camp Staff Members?

- All senior staff members have completed at least one year of college.
- Co-counselors are a small group (less than 15% of the staff) who are entering college freshmen. These are typically individuals who have completed our high school leadership training program. They are paired with a senior staff member.
- We look for staff who are kind, caring, compassionate, fun, welcoming and mature individuals to be positive, supportive, friendly role models for our campers. A large percentage of our staff are pursuing careers in teaching, social work, psychology and other people focused professions.

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5. How Are New Staff Members Interviewed and Selected?

- All new applicants participate in small group interviews of approximately 6-10 people led by members of the Leadership Team. Applicants are required to demonstrate teaching, leadership, communication and conflict resolution skills as part of our evaluation process. *(In 2010, our Leadership Team interviewed more than 270 applicants for the 25-30 available positions.)*
- Successful group interview participants are individually interviewed in a 45-60 minute interview with at least one of the Directors (Ryan or Harold).
- References - At least 3 references are personally called as part of our evaluation process. *(We don't accept written letters of recommendation.)*
- A background check is conducted on all new and returning staff under final consideration.
- All staff participate in a random drug testing program throughout the summer.

6. How Much Training Do Staff Members (New & Returning) Receive?

- All new and returning staff participate together in four full days of training and orientation prior to the first day of camp. We feel it is important for returning staff members to refresh skills and be role models to new staff during training and throughout the summer.
- Required weekly evening staff meetings throughout the summer for the entire staff provide for on-going training and planning.

7. How Are Staff And Counselors Supervised?

- Each staff member is supervised by a member of the camp Leadership Team. Leadership Team (LT) members are around camp at all times throughout the day and provide assistance and support whenever needed. When not needed, LT members jump in and play with groups and get to know the campers!

8. How Is The Bus Ride Supervised?

- In 2002, Camp Kinneret pioneered the local use of large school buses driven by professional school bus drivers to enhance camper safety. (These buses all have air conditioning and seat belts too!)
- **We require staff to be part of our bus program and pay over 50 staff members to ride our 8 buses.** *(Many camps offer their staff the opportunity to save gas and car miles by riding the camp bus; however, because we believe that safety, supervision and fun on the bus are so important to the camp experience, this is a requirement for our staff.)*
- Each Camp Kinneret bus has a minimum of 4 and an average of 6 paid senior staff members who are hired to ride each bus along with the campers and high school interns each day.

9. How Does The Swim Program At Camp Work?

- Every Camp Kinneret camper is evaluated 1:1 by a certified lifeguard on his/her first day of camp.
- There is a certified lifeguard to camper supervision ratio of 1 certified lifeguard for every 11-12 campers. *(Counselors are in the pool playing with the campers or on deck guarding for extra supervision!)*
- Campers swim every day at camp and receive a brief group lesson in addition to free swim time.
- Swimmers are grouped into ability level color coded groups and all campers are required to wear wrist bands whenever they're in the pool area to ensure that all staff can easily identify every camper's water safety level.

10. Why Should A Camp Be Accredited?

- The ACA sets the national standards for camp operation. Accreditation requires on-site visits and evaluation by outside camp professionals trained to evaluate camps in areas such as safety, health, program, staff qualifications, emergency management, transportation and training.
- Camp Kinneret has been an accredited member of the American Camp Association (ACA) for over 40 years.
- The ACA sets the national standards for camp operation. Accreditation requires on-site visits and evaluation by outside camp professionals trained to evaluate camps in areas such as safety, health, program, transportation and training.
- Camp Kinneret directors Harold and Ryan are active professional camp directors involved in both the American Camp Association and the Western Association of Independent Camps.