



## Choosing the Right Camp for You

### 10 Important Questions To Consider When Selecting A Summer Camp

We've compiled a list of 10 questions that we think will be helpful when determining which camp is the right one for your camper and family. We have provided Camp Kinneret's answer to each of the questions below.

#### 1. *What is the camp's philosophy?*

Camp Kinneret is...

- A place where creativity and expression are encouraged.
- A program in which teamwork and social interaction are the basics.
- A community where the courage to try is celebrated and the desire to succeed is supported.
- An opportunity for children to grow through accomplishment and respect.

#### 2. *What is the makeup and size of camp groups each day of the week?*

- Campers are grouped by the grade they are entering in the fall. All groups are gender inclusive.
- Camper groups of children entering preschool & kindergarten have 11-13 campers scheduled each day.
- Camper groups of children entering 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grade have 12-14 campers scheduled each day.
- Camper groups of children entering 5<sup>th</sup> grade and above have 12-15 campers scheduled each day.
- We don't have big groups on some days and small groups on others to create a false average. This is the actual number of campers enrolled each day to ensure quality small groups every day of the week.
- Campers participate with the same groups of campers and counselors for the full session of 4 or 5 weeks.
- Groups are composed of campers enrolled in different day combinations of 2, 3, or 5 days a week.
- Each group has a senior counselor of college age or older along with a co-counselor or high school training intern.

#### 3. *Who are the year-round staff and summer Leadership Team?*

- Year-Round Staff
  - Ryan Rosen, Director, has been with Camp Kinneret since 1995 where he started as a CILT
  - Jamie Porter, Co-Director, has been with Camp Kinneret since 2007
  - Amy Clark Wernick, Enrollment Coordinator, served as Camp Kinneret's director from 1996 – 1999 and has been the Enrollment Coordinator since 2016
  - Britt Rosen, Leadership Team member, attended Camp Kinneret as a child and has been year-round with Camp Kinneret since 2020
  - Lauren Wald, Leadership Team member, has been with Camp Kinneret since 2017
  - Brian Russo, Leadership Team member, has been with Camp Kinneret since 2015
- Summer Leadership Team
  - 4 or 5 individuals, in addition to our Year-Round team. They are experienced camp and education professionals who supervise all aspects of camp in the summer and serve as resources for campers, staff, and parents.

#### 4. *What are the qualifications of the camp staff members?*

- All of our senior staff is college aged or older.
  - A minimum of 85% of our staff is at least one year out of high school.
  - Co-counselors are a small group (less than 15% of the staff) who have just graduated from high school. These are typically individuals who have completed our high school internship program. As group counselors, they are always paired with another staff member.
- Certain staff members (such as lifeguards) have additional qualifications or certifications.
- We look for staff who are caring, compassionate, fun, patient, and mature individuals. They are expected to be positive and supportive role models for our campers. A large percentage of our staff members are pursuing careers in teaching, social work, psychology, and other people-focused professions.

**5.** *How are staff members interviewed and selected?*

- All new applicants participate in small group interviews of approximately 6-10 people. Applicants are required to demonstrate teaching, leadership, communication, and conflict resolution skills as part of our evaluation process. *(Each year, we interview upwards of 100 applicants to fill 20-30 open positions.)*
- Successful group interview participants are then individually interviewed by a director.
- At least 3 references are personally called and spoken with at length as part of our evaluation process.
- All returning staff members re-interview each year.
- A background check is conducted on all new and returning staff under final consideration.
- All staff members participate in pre-camp drug testing and a random drug testing program throughout the summer.

**6.** *How much training do staff members receive?*

- All new and returning staff participate together in five 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.
- The entire staff attends weekly evening staff meetings throughout the summer for ongoing training.

**7.** *How are staff supervised?*

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

**8.** *How is the bus ride supervised?*

- We believe that safety, supervision, and fun are essential to the bus ride.
- Bus staff members are specifically trained to create a safe, positive bus experience.
- 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.
- Bus staff members are in constant communication with the camp office and the Leadership Team throughout the ride to and from camp.

**9.** *How does the swim program at camp work?*

- Every Camp Kinneret camper is evaluated 1:1 by a certified lifeguard on their 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 assigned color coded wristbands based on their water safety level and all campers are required to wear a wristband whenever they're in the pool area to ensure that all staff can easily identify every camper's water safety level.

**10.** *Is your camp accredited? Why or why not?*

- Yes. Camp Kinneret has been an accredited member of the American Camp Association (ACA) since 1959.
- The ACA sets the national standards for camp operation. Accreditation requires on-site visits and evaluation by camp professionals trained to evaluate camps in areas such as safety, health, programming, transportation, and training. The American Camp Association collaborates with experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Red Cross, and other youth-serving agencies to assure that current practices reflect the most up-to-date and research-based standards in camp operation.