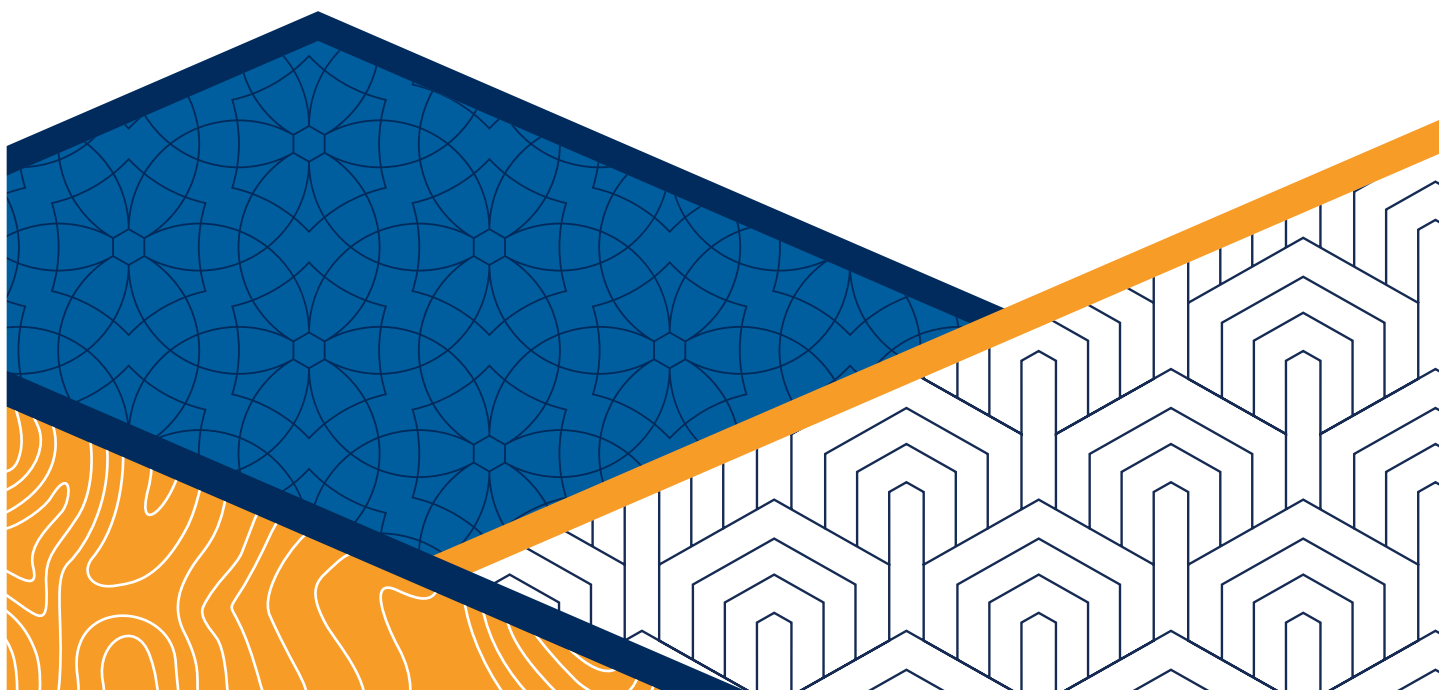




PREPARING FOR CAMP: BEYOND THE PACKING LIST

Even the most experienced campers love receiving the camp packing list. It's a sign that camp season is arriving, and that soon they will be enjoying campfires and capture the flag with their friends once again. But is a packing list all they need to prepare?





A good climbing instructor will always inspect three things before a camper begins to climb: helmet (on, snug, and buckled!), harness (tight, straps double backed, connections locked), and heart (how is the climber? Scared? Excited?). Amidst all the technical aspects of packing (don't forget that sleeping bag!), it can be easy to neglect the most important part – the camper themselves. This year, in addition to a packing list, consider sending some of the following tools to help campers—and their families—prepare for camp.

- **STAFF BIOS:** Short introductions of key staff members
- **VIDEO OVERVIEW:** Provide a video walk through of key building and activity areas, but also take a few moments to introduce the camp theme, share your prayers and desires for the camp season, and give families a few questions to talk through together.
- **PRE-CAMP BIBLE READING PLAN:** Provide some verses or reading plans that are connected to your camp theme. Encourage them to share reflections as comments on social media posts!
- **GOAL SETTING TOOL:** A simple, one page “fill in the blank” form that campers fill out ahead of time and bring with them on their first day, this tool could be helpful for campers as they prepare, and for counselors as they seek to make the most of their time with campers.
- **BEHAVIORAL COVENANT:** Send parents and campers a list of behavioral expectations to talk through and sign. This can help ensure that all campers feel welcome and may help to reduce bullying.
- **PARENT PRAYER JOURNAL:** Design and send parents a prayer journal that includes a few pre camp prompts, a prompt for every day of camp, and a few post camp prompts.

Preparation for camp can extend far beyond the contents of a suitcase to address the camper's emotional and spiritual needs. By providing resources like pre-camp Bible plans, staff introductions, goal-setting tools, and behavioral covenants, you equip the entire family to engage fully with the experience before they even arrive. This intentional pre-work not only eases anxiety and promotes safety but also ensures that when campers step onto the grounds, they are ready—mind, body, and spirit—to receive the deep, transformative impact that a week at camp is designed to deliver.



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