



Camper/ Parent Handbook

2015 Edition

Ooltewah UMC Campus
East Brainerd COC Campus
Hixson 1st Baptist Campus
Middlebrook Pike UMC Campus
Farragut Presbyterian Campus

On Your First Day

Camp activities officially begin at 8:45 am and all campers should arrive by this time. Traffic is generally the heaviest between 8:15-8:30 am. If you arrive during this time, please be patient as we work to show new campers where their belongings go.

Sometimes the first day causes a little anxiety for some campers, and we want you to feel comfortable leaving your child. If parting seems difficult, please don't be alarmed or feel guilty. This is one of the great educational benefits of camp that helps children learn to effectively deal with transitions. Any tears or apprehensions are generally gone within ten minutes of the time that the parents leave.

Upon arrival, you can drop off through the drive through or feel free to park and walk your child inside. At our drop off location, cars will be greeted and checked in by our morning team and we will show campers and parents where belongings should be placed.

Morning Drop Off

For the convenience of our camp families we provide drop off from 7:30-8:45am. **Camp activities officially begin at 8:45 am, and we expect everyone to be at camp by that time.** Each morning at 8:45 am, we will have small group and large group kick off time that includes taking attendance, songs, skits, morning announcements, and Bible Devotion/Memory verse time.

For your child's benefit, please arrive on time. It is often difficult for late campers to adjust to the camp day, and it is also disruptive for all the campers in the group. This time is vital for setting the tone of the camp day and getting ready for what fun activities the camper will participate in during the day.

Never drop your child off at camp unattended. Our facility is large and all campers need to be supervised for safety and security reasons. If your child is going to be absent, especially for multiple days, we appreciate a call to inform us of the absence.

We lock the door from 8:45 AM – 4:30 PM. No one can enter camp during these times without calling. If you arrive at camp after 8:45 am, call or text the on campus number (below) and bring your child in to check in with a staff member. Depending on the time, we could be in multiple places (small groups, Awaken, or games in Gym).

Camp Cell Phone #s

Ooltewah Campus (423-400-1504)

Hixson Campus (423-503-9066)

East Brainerd –(423-771-5608)

Middlebrook Pike Campus (865-386-0779)

Farragut Presbyterian Campus (865-247-3762)

Praise and Worship

We start every morning with a Praise and Worship time. We want the kids to have fun, learn Bible stories and verses, sing, and be energized. We want each camper to grow through their own faith and spirituality throughout the summer. We consider this a partnership with the parents. We want parents asking their campers at pick up: “What was your memory verse today, or What song did you sing today during Awaken?” Any questions about Awaken time or our Bible stories, feel free to speak with your camp Director.

Afternoon Pick UP

Camp activities end at 4:15 to 4:30 PM. Parents can pick up campers between 4:30 pm – 5:45 pm daily. **Late Fee: after 5:50 pm \$1 per minute. Example (If you arrive at 5:55 pm, you owe a \$5 late fee per vehicle. You can add that with your next check or pay right then)**

If you need to pick up your child before 4:15 pm, please call or text the camp director or leave a written note with the director at morning drop off. We will have your child ready for pick up at the welcome center at the specific time. To avoid interrupting camp activities, please plan to only pick-up early in “have to” situations such as doctor’s appointments, tutoring, etc.

Traffic Rules

When driving on Camp Big Fish, please do not exceed 15 MPH, and always be on the lookout for children, parents, and staff. Please only use the drive through if dropping off or picking up. If you need to park and come inside, please park in designated area to come inside.

In the event of heavy rain, we will post a sign to possibly do drop off or pick up through an underpass or portico entrance.

Security at Pick-up

At Camp Big Fish, the safety and welfare of our campers is our number one priority. On your child's registration form there is a place to list the names of anyone (as well as mother or father) who is authorized to pick up your child. For the convenience of all parties involved, please be sure the proper names are listed for your camper. **We will issue your family a pick up card for 2 vehicles. Write your campers name on this card and use in the windshield. This is how we will do pick up at all camps.** If a person picks up without that card, they should expect to show photo ID to pick up the camper

Parents may add names to this list anytime by leaving a signed, written note with the director at morning drop-off. On the note, please specify if this is a one-time pick up or if you would like the person added to your list.

It is not uncommon for campers to car pool or to go home with friends at the end of the day. We must have written permission if your child is going to be picked up by another camp parent unless they are listed on the permanent pick up form.

On the registration form, we have also included a section for parents to add anyone who is NOT authorized to pick up your child. We red flag these situations and make sure our staff is aware. If that person shows up to pick up your child, we will immediately call the parent/ guardian to make them aware. We will not release the child, call the immediate point of contact and possibly call local police to help if the problem escalates.

Personal Information

Parents please be up front and open with our staff with any knowledge about a camper's learning difficulty, ADHD, or a recent loss or major change in the family or child's life. This will help our staff be sensitive to your child's need for patience, understanding, and reassurance – particularly in the first few days of camp. This is especially true for children who have attention problems or who are nervous about new situations. Many parents fear that a camp will not accept their child if that are completely forthcoming about these situations, yet children need us to be partners with the parents in planning for a safe and successful summer. Please be open with us, and let's work together to create a positive camp experience for your child.

Medication from Home

If your child needs to take any medication while at camp, please follow these steps:

- 1- Completely fill out the Medical Release / History on the Registration packet. List any side-effects and who to call if we have any questions
- 2- Send medication to camp in the original prescription bottle with the child's name and doctor's name. By law, we may not administer any prescription medication unless it comes from the correct bottle with the child's name on it.
- 3- All medication (even aspirin and over-the-counter products) must be checked in at the camp office. No children are allowed to keep medication with them at camp. Please see someone in the office for special circumstances involving asthma inhalers or severe allergies to bee stings or certain foods.

It is not uncommon for some of our campers to take medication for ADHD. We realize that often it may seem like children don't "need" this medication during the summer because it is a time to be free, have fun, and use energy without having to concentrate in the classroom. Although camp is not school, it is extremely important for children to focus and be able to follow camp rules. It is important that all campers are able to act in a safe manner at all times.

Payment Schedule

Each weekly session in which your child is registered must be paid in full by the Friday before the week begins. Please drop it in the tuition mailbox or hand to drop off / pick up CBF staff.

Please be sure your child's name and campus is on the check – especially if the child's last name is different from what's on the check. Also note the dates of the week you are paying for on the check memo. No campers may attend the next week until tuition is paid in full. There are no refunds for canceling a week once camp starts.

- Cash Payments: Put in Envelope with this on outside:
 - Camper's Name, Amount Paid, Campus, Week payment is for.

Tuition Late Fee:

All tuition is due prior to the week the camper is attending. **If tuition is not received by Wednesday of the current week, a \$10 late fee will be added and will be added again for each Wednesday missed.**

Note: At any time past 3 days of missed payments, CBF has the right to refuse to accept your child from entering campus until Tuition is paid.

Any special situations regarding payment need to be discussed with each campus director. Each director has final say on payment, fees, and acceptance in for the day for missing tuition families.

All parents are required to sign the Tuition contract in the application that states, "Payment for the 7-11 weeks of camp signed up for is due whether the child attends the full 7-11 weeks or not." If payment is not received, Camp Big Fish reserves the right to involve a 3rd party collection company (at the parent's cost) to recover any unpaid tuition. If parents only register for 6 or less weeks, their weekly rate will be the 7 week minimum tuition divided by the # of weeks they signed up for.

If a check is dishonored or returned for any reason, there will be a \$20 processing fee which will be added to your tuition. If this becomes a problem, we will ask the parent to only pay future payments in cash or a cashier's check or possibly part ways with CBF if the problem continues.

There are no refunds for sick days, absences, Holidays, prepayments, or payment in full options.

Holidays we will observe 2015

May 25th – Memorial Day

Change in Weeks

If you need to change a week of attendance, please email or call the camp director prior to camp starting. We cannot guarantee a change in weeks once summer starts due to staffing issues, field trips, etc. There is no additional cost to add weeks (if space is available) to your summer. We would just like as much notice as possible.

Visitors

Parents are welcome to visit camp at anytime. For security reasons we ask that all visitors check-in at the camp office with a director. We ask that parents limit the time of the visit to a few minutes or to view a special show or project. Parents should not plan to hang out or participate with their child's group....especially following drop-off and morning opening.

While we welcome visitors to our campus if your camper is having an issue with another camper, refrain from addressing any other campers about said issue.

You must come to a staff member and make the issue known to a director first. The director can assist in setting up a meeting to get any pertinent persons involved from both families. This will prevent any campers from being addressed without their parent or guardian there with them and will help maintain a safe and fun environment for all. If this protocol is not honored then it can be grounds for immediate removal from the property, calling 911 and or possible cancelling of remaining weeks for that parent's camper(s) for the remaining weeks as well as loss of any tuition paid up to that point.

Discipline at Camp

Step 1- The child's group leader, or whoever sees the infraction, will talk to the individual privately encouraging a more positive way to act.

Step 2- The group leader has the prerogative to continue to deal with the problem as long as he thinks he can handle the situation. The group leader will use age appropriate time outs from current or future activities and incorporate the green, yellow, and red light discipline action.

Step 3-When the group leader feels unable to communicate with the child, the group leader will take the child to the camp director. At this meeting the child will be informed that if the negative activity happens again the parent or guardian will be informed and a meeting of all concerned will occur. Sometimes the Director will call the parent immediately and have the parent talk on the phone with the camper.

Step 4- If there is a severe problem, there are 2 options:

A) We might call the parent and ask them to pick up their camper immediately that day. If a child cannot calm down or is hurting another camper or himself or putting himself or someone in harms way.

B) Schedule a meeting of all parties involved, including a parent/ guardian. Appropriate disciplinary action will be discussed and plan of action put in place.

Step 5- If the child cannot adhere to the rules at this point, he/ she will be dismissed from camp. For minor infractions we follow a 3 strikes and you're out mentality. We will inform the parent if a child has a strike and also let them know that on their 3rd strike, they will not be allowed to attend again. For larger infractions, it is possible to part ways immediately. If we feel another camper, counselor, or your camper is unsafe at camp, we will ask to part ways immediately. Examples of this (fighting, bringing something inappropriate to camp, hurting themselves, another camper, or counselor, running away from group, completely uncontrollable for counselor or leader, etc) These decisions will be made by the Director and Owners of the camp. Physical punishment will **NOT** be administered.

Other reasons for parting ways with Camp Big Fish (one on one ratio rule)

If during the camp season, we notice that your camper is not participating well within a 10:1 or 12:1 group to counselor ratio, we will invite you in to discuss ways to help and improve. If your child constantly needs more 1:1 ratio attention (discipline, bathroom, uncommunicated issues, etc.), there can be an instance where we part ways.

When your child is receiving constant one on one attention, it is leaving 10-11 other campers in an unsafe environment not getting watched and interacted with properly. We will communicate with the parent and try everything we can (as long as other campers are safe and having fun too) to keep the child participating in camp activities, but if we cannot resolve these issues quickly that require direct one on one attention constantly throughout the camp day, we will have to part ways.

Swimming

Due to popular demand by both campers and parents, swimming will be one of our most enjoyable camp activities this summer. We will be swimming this summer at 1st Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Hixson Campus) and Southern Adv. University Pool (EB and OUMC campus) and Gulf Park Pool (Knoxville) once a week. Some camps split up and lower camp goes one day and upper camp goes another day.

There will be staff lifeguards on site. Our staff will be in the pool swimming and playing right along with the campers.

All shallow water is sectioned off. Any child who wants to swim in the deep end and / or go on the diving board must pass a swim test administered by the life guards on duty that day. If a child does not attempt the swim test or fails it, he/she will be given a red bracelet to wear while swimming and will have to stay in the roped off shallow section. Some pools require a camper to wear a life jacket if they fail a swim test. The OUMC and EB pool at Southern University have life jackets to wear, but we suggest sending your own the 1st few weeks.

One piece or tank-ini bathing suits are allowed as long as they cover the child's mid-section and other appropriate areas. 2 piece bathing suits are not allowed. If you have concerns about your child's swimming ability, please feel free to send a life jacket with your child on swim days. **Please make sure to apply sunscreen prior to attending camp on swim days and if possible a swim shirt. Please make sure to send your child with additional sun screen and water bottle on swim day.**

Field Trips

Throughout the summer we will be going on field trips. On field trip days, we will leave off site some time during the morning (usually 9am) and return in the afternoon. Campers should bring their lunches as usual unless we advise differently. **There will be 10-11 days this summer, we ask parents to send \$5 instead of their lunch. We will offer a special lunch for the campers on these days.**

Example: On the day we go to the Jump Park, send \$5 for lunch instead of a lunch box. We will go to a park afterwards, and serve pizza, chips, dessert, and a drink for the campers. We will make sure to inform parents in advance of these days.

Check the 2015 Summer Schedule for what Field Trips are on what days at www.campbigfish.org

Transportation

During our swim days and field trip days, we will be transporting campers to and from these off campus facilities. We will utilize a school bus for our transportation needs off campus. Our bus drivers are owner / operator for the Hamilton County and Knox County school systems. They drive for other summer camps in the area and have driven for many years at previous summer camps we have worked at and directed.

Lunch and Snacks

Campers will need to bring a lunch from home daily. Refrigeration is not available. We ask parents to send a sack lunch or a lunch box with a freezer pack.

Sandwiches, chips, fruit, raw vegetables, cheese slices, fruit drinks, and sport drinks are all good to send for your camper's lunch. We discourage sending sweets, pizza lunchables (lower campers), go-gurts (lower campers), soft drinks, and heat up ravioli type lunches. **A microwave is not available to us.**

Strongly discourage bringing peanut products or peanut butter and in some cases a whole campus or individual group could be peanut free due to other campers possible allergy issues. Each campus or specific homeroom group can decide to go peanut free completely. It is up to that camp's director.

Make sure the camper eats breakfast prior to arriving at camp. Lunch will be around noon each day.

Afternoon snacks will be given around 3:00 pm daily. We will be having a wide variety of snacks including popsicles, fruit, goldfish, kool-aid, and many other types. Please make sure to fill out the food allergy section very well and verbally inform a director of any allergy issues that you might see around Lunch or Snack time. If you want to send an additional snack for snack time, feel free to...or if you have allergy questions/ concerns about our snack, please provide your child with their own snack to bring daily. We purchase our snacks from GFS and Sams and try not to purchase snacks with peanuts directly in the snack.

We also recommend bringing your water bottle to camp. In addition to plenty of water breaks at our drinking fountains located throughout the property, campers are allowed to frequently fill their personal water bottles and carry them throughout the camp day.

What to Wear

We would like to see all campers wear shorts, T-shirts, socks, and tennis shoes.

For reason of safety, all campers must wear closed-toe shoes that provide adequate support and stay on the foot while running. No flip flops, sandals or tevas will be allowed for camp activities and we strongly discourage Crocs as they are not acceptable for most activities.

Campers will have to wear their socks and tennis shoes to and from the swimming pool as well. Skirts and dresses are not appropriate for camp.

A sweatshirt or jacket is advised for cool mornings and ponchos or raincoats for wet days. We will spend more time indoors during rainy days, but an extra pair of socks is recommended for these days. Younger campers (pre-K) might want to bring an extra set of clothes with them and put their name on the tags of their cloths.

Camp T-Shirts and Merchandise

One camp T-Shirt will be given to your child prior to the 1st week of camp. They will need to wear their camp shirts on any days that we go Field Trips and swimming. (basically any time we go off campus).

You can purchase an extra T-Shirt's for campers or parents for \$10 or extra water bottles for \$7 through our camp office and/or director.

Items from Home

Campers can bring backpacks, water bottles, books, bandanas, sunscreen and clothing items. **Please put your child's name on all items from home.** We recommend that younger campers bring a small blanket or extra towel for rest and reading time. We cannot guarantee the safekeeping of extra items and are not responsible for the loss or damage of the items. For swimming days, they should bring swimsuit, towel, water bottle and sun screen.

There are also items not allowed at Camp Big Fish. The forbidden items include pocket knives, weapons, trading cards, toys, chewing gum, candy, and electronics (cell phones, IPAD, DS, IPOD, cell phones, video games). **If your camper brings an electronic device with them, we will take it up and leave it turned off in the Director's desk until pick up time**

Communication

We enjoy being able to see our camp parents every day. That is one of the great benefits of running a day camp. Besides speaking with you directly every day, we will also communicate through the use of handouts, emails, and our white board outside pick up location. We will strive to tell you the good and the not-so-good about each week and your feedback is always welcome. In addition to casual conversations, we will be issuing a questionnaire or two during the summer and we encourage you to leave comments in the tuition box. Let us know what we are doing well and what you would like us to work on. Please help us continually strive to be the best.

Because our counselors are assigned to work shifts, they are sometimes not here when parents drop-off or pick-up. If your schedule does not match with that of your child's counselor, that is not a problem. Speak with one of the directors and we will schedule a specific time for your child's counselor to either come in early or stay late so you can talk with him / her.

In situations involving illness or injury at camp, we try to contact parents if the child is uncomfortable or unable to continue the camp day. In the event of a sudden illness or serious accident at camp we will use our best judgment in securing immediate emergency treatment for the camper as outlined in our Registration packet's medical release form.

Your Child's Group

Behind the scenes a lot of time is spent placing your child into his/her group. We take into consideration factors like the child's age / grade, the boy to girl ratio, how many weeks the camper is coming, and other group dynamic variables. We place children in Cabin settings where there are 2 groups rotating together throughout the day. If your camper is not in an individual group with one of their friends, there is a good chance they are in the same "cabin" group with them.

Campers are placed into age-specific groups based on grade level. The program is structured so that as the campers get older and continue coming to Camp Big Fish over the years, they will continue to have new experiences and challenges. Because of this progression and the developmental stages of children, we do not move campers to groups outside their age /grade range.

There will be some times throughout the day that all campers will be in a large group setting such as morning drop off play time, Awaken sing, lunch, swimming, bus rides, etc., but we keep them with their age group most of the day.

Any questions about groups, email or talk with the on campus director. If a problem persists, please involve the owners of CBF.

Lice Control Policy

We rarely see lice issues at camp, but if we do, we will inform camp parents immediately during drop off or pick up times.

If a Child or Staff are found to have lice, we will ask that they be sent home for the day and asked not to return until all lice is treated and all nits removed.

Lost and Found

We have a lost and found area at camp. It is highly recommended that you label all items (clothing, towels, lunch boxes, water bottles, camp T-Shirts, etc) with your child's name. We make every effort to keep all campers' belongings in their backpack or with them. At the end of each week, we will display the found items. At the end of summer we will take any remaining items will be donated. Please make a quick check of your child's backpack at the end of the camp day before leaving. Lost items are much easier to recover on the same day they are lost.

The Staff

At the heart of our camp program are the individuals who have energy, enthusiasm, and the desire and ability to work with children. Each year we select only the most qualified and mature staff members to work with our campers. This dynamic group of individuals will be responsible for your child's safety as well as his/ her fun. We take great pride in saying we have the best staff in the area. For a person to become a member of the Camp Big Fish staff, they have to:

1. Pass the initial screening of applications
2. Participate in up to three interviews
3. Successfully complete our orientation and training program
4. Demonstrate a good attitude and strong work ethic
5. Pass a background check
6. Never settle for less than excellence
7. Above all- have a genuine love for our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Quick Reference Check list

Did you remember to send?

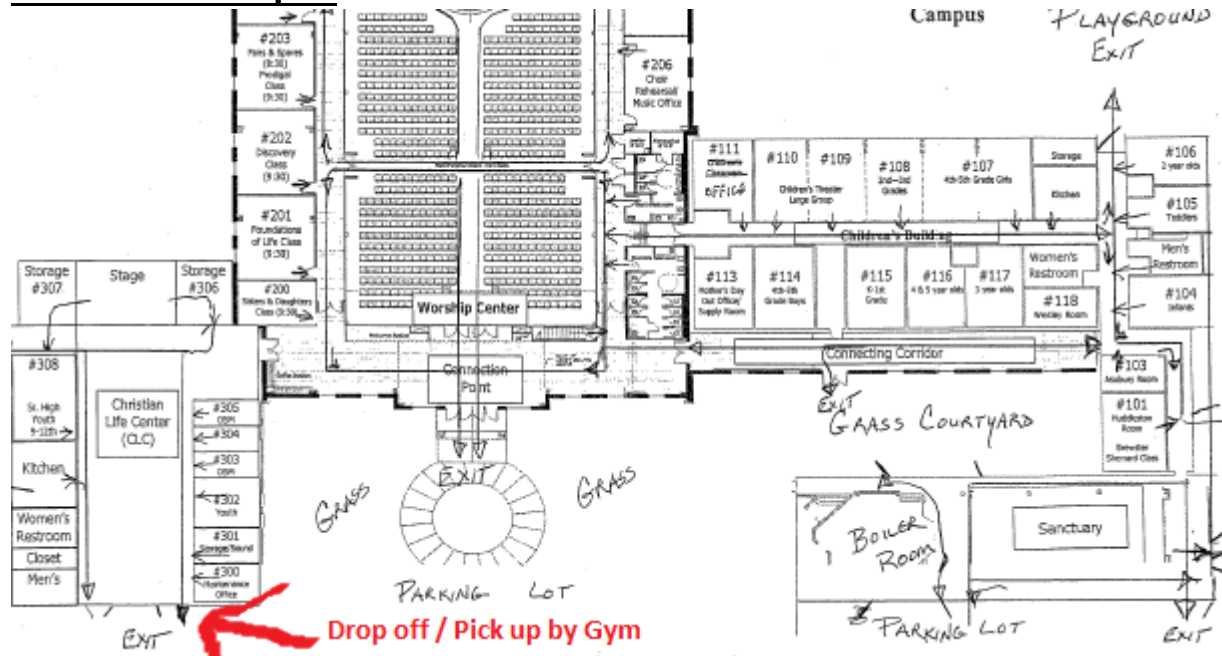
- Tuition for this week?
- A healthy Lunch / water bottle
- Closed-Toed Shoes
- Swimsuit and towel for swim days
- Sunscreen
- A jacket or sweatshirt for cool mornings
- A book and/or blanket for rest and read time
- A poncho and extra socks for rainy days
- Label all items with your child's name

Campus Maps

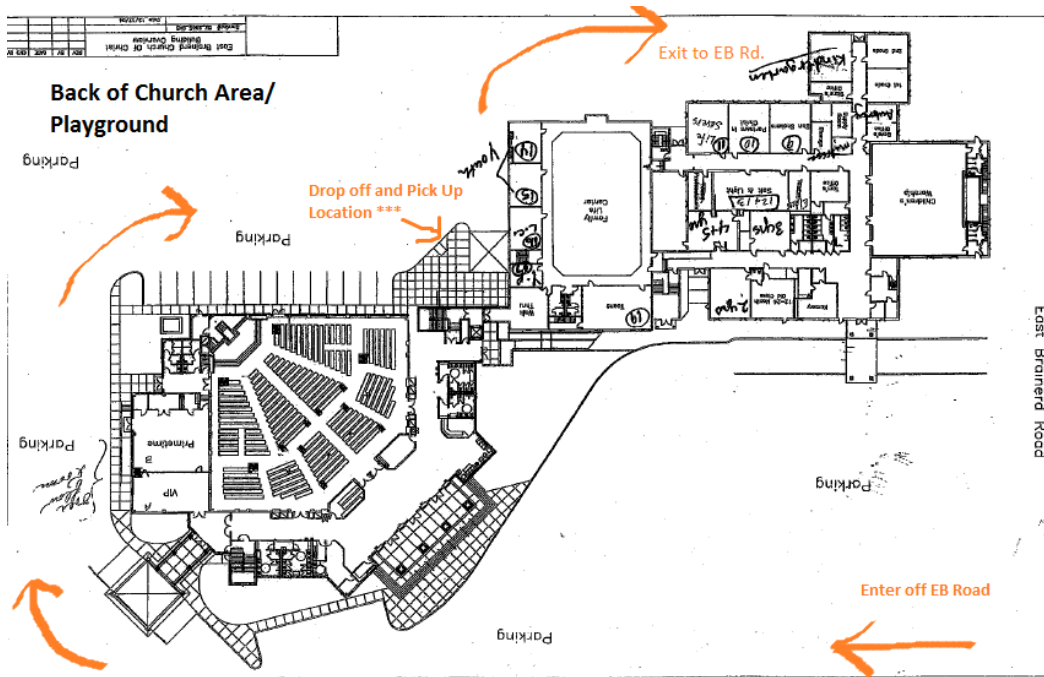
Knoxville Middlebrook Pike



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