



CAMP  
SOUTHERN  
GROUND

# SUMMER CAMP

## 2025 FAMILY HANDBOOK



100 Southern Ground Parkway | Fayetteville, GA 30215  
[www.campsouthernground.org](http://www.campsouthernground.org) | (678)561-9600

Dear Friends,

Welcome to another exciting season at Camp Southern Ground! We're thrilled to have your family join us as we create meaningful, fun, and transformative experiences for your children. Here at Camp Southern Ground, our mission goes beyond just providing a great summer camp experience; we're dedicated to helping your children grow in character and confidence, all while making friendships and memories that last a lifetime.

At the heart of what we do is our unique "5-Character Culture" model, which shapes every aspect of camp life. These five key values—**Curiosity, Friendship, Teamwork, Responsibility, and Independence**—are the foundation for the skills and the mindset that your children will develop and strengthen during their time with us.

**Curiosity** sparks the sense of adventure that drives campers to explore new activities, ask questions, and discover more about themselves and the world around them. Whether it's trying a new sport, learning about nature, or engaging in creative arts, we encourage campers to approach each day with an open mind and a love for learning.

**Friendship** is at the core of the camp experience. Building bonds with children from diverse backgrounds helps campers grow in empathy and understanding. Our inclusive environment fosters a sense of belonging, making sure that every camper feels seen, heard, and valued. As Zac Brown, our camp's founder, beautifully puts it, "Inclusion is what makes camp special. CSG is a place where everyone can be themselves and find belonging, no matter where they come from."

**Teamwork** teaches campers how to collaborate and support one another, whether it's during group activities, team sports, or cabin chores. Through working together, campers learn the value of cooperation and trust in a way that's both fun and rewarding.

**Responsibility** is fostered as campers take on new challenges and care for themselves, their peers, and the environment. From keeping their cabins clean to being accountable in group settings, they learn that their actions have a positive impact on the world around them.

Finally, **Independence** is cultivated through the freedom to make decisions and take risks in a safe, supportive environment. Campers leave feeling more confident and empowered, ready to take on new challenges beyond the gates of Camp Southern Ground.

We can't wait to sow the seeds of belonging and self-reliance while enjoying playful moments of adventure with all of our Campers! Thank you for your support and trust. We are grateful for the partnership that we share in helping to grow goodness in our Campers, our communities, and in the world beyond the gates of Camp Southern Ground!

Yours in Camp Spirit,

Matthew "Matty" Cook,  
Camp Director  
Camp Southern Ground



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# The Basics



## Counselors and Staff

Camp Southern Ground carefully selects young men and women for their interests and commitment to working with children in the outdoors. Each staff member must meet a high standard of dedication and skill. Staff go through multiple rounds of interviews and submit several references before being offered positions. Staff members attend staff training designed by camp professionals to prepare them for the camp experience which emphasizes counseling skills, group dynamics, safety procedures, and activity skills. Staff who help run our program areas receive specialized training tailored specifically to running our program areas.

## Community of Camp

Camp Southern Ground offers a secure and welcoming community. Each child is placed in a same-gender, similar-age “tribe”. Tribes sleep in our state-of-the-art lodge with indoor bathrooms and showers. Each room contains 4 bunks (8 beds) that will host 6 children and 2 staff members. We know that living in close quarters allows for an experience of group cohesion, which promotes life skills in sharing, cooperation, and compromise.

Campers will try new activities, broaden their interests, make friends, express themselves, and feel a special sense of belonging. They gain the pride of being supportive members of their tribe group. We ask that you offer encouragement to your child around issues concerning the camp community, adjustments, and conflicts, should they develop. A roommate request can be made in the camper application. We will do our best to honor mutual roommate requests.



## Electronics Policy

Camp Southern Ground has a no electronics policy during our all our sessions that includes cell phones, tablets, iPads, mp3 players, cameras, etc. Camp is the perfect setting for children to disconnect from technology and focus on relationship building and being 100% present at camp.

Any cell-phones or other forms of technology brought to camp will be confiscated and it will be the responsibility of the camper/ family to retrieve their devices at the of the session during the check-out process.

We encourage families to talk with their children about the importance of letting their counselors know how they are feeling and answer questions honestly. Camp staff will call home for urgent situations, if needed.



## Food & Beverage Policy

All meals are served in the Dining Hall. In order to minimize the possibility of outdoor creatures and rodents, no eating or drinking is allowed in the lodge. Help us avoid problems with animals by not sending any food, snacks, or treats with your child. If your child has a special diet, we will accommodate those needs on a case-by-case basis. Please contact us and tell us how we can help with your child's needs.



## Care Packages and Camper Mail

We welcome families to send their child a small note or gifts from home. The best way to ensure your child gets their package or letters during their session is to leave them with CSG Staff during the check-in process. We ask that families send no more than one package per week and to not send any food. Nutrition is an important part of camp and your child will be fed amazingly (including snacks and sweet treats). Families will have the opportunity to send Camp Mail through our camper email address. Emails are printed and delivered every evening.

# Medical

Camp Southern Ground has a team of nurses on-site 24 hours a day as well as staff who are trained in CPR and First Aid. Campers are supervised 24 hours a day and all health care and medication administration is overseen by our Medical Director and Nursing Director. The Camp Nurses treat campers under the authority of the Camp Doctor, according to "Standing Orders", which are the procedures for the treatment of reasonably anticipated illnesses and injuries. If your child requires more detailed medical treatment, you will be notified and your wishes carried out. In the event of an emergency, your child will be transported to the nearest hospital. A member of our Leadership Team will stay with your child and act as their advocate until you are notified and can arrive to proceed with treatment decisions.



## Medication Management

All medication brought to or sent to camp will be kept in the Health Center and administered by our nursing staff. Medications must be in original packaging, complete with the child's name and doctor's instructions. We ask that you only send essential medications to camp. CSG has a supply of over-the-counter (OTC) medications and can provide those with written authorization. If your child takes medication to help them cope and excel in school settings, we strongly advise you to provide your child's medication to our camp nurse.

## Medical Costs & Forms

In some emergency situations, there may be costs incurred for the proper care of your child. Physician care, hospitalization fees, emergency transportation, and other related expenses are your sole responsibility, and you will be billed by either Camp Southern Ground or the treating organization. We require that all campers have up-to-date medical records on file. Basic medical forms including a form signed by your primary care physician are required each year for all campers.

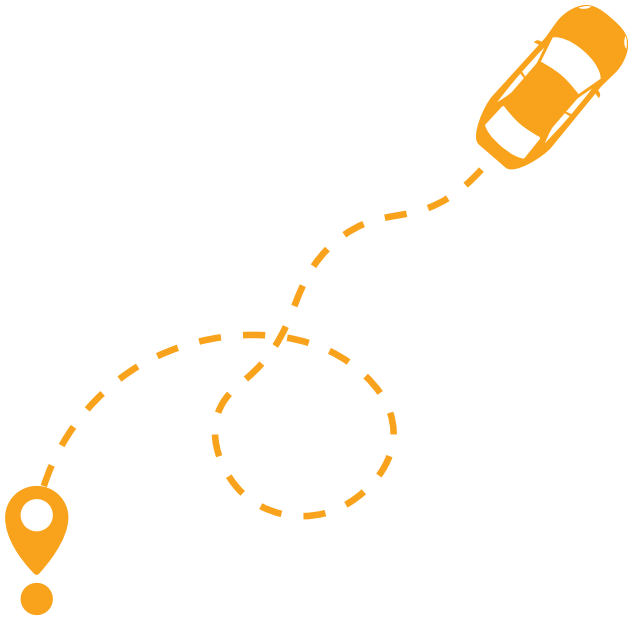


# Arrival & Departure from Camp

## Sunday Drop-Off

Campers are to arrive between **2:00 PM and 4:00 PM** on the Sunday of their session. If your child is scheduled to attend a session and does NOT show up on the first day, we will contact you to ensure they are safely in your custody. Campers and their families will walk through a few check-in stations before saying goodbyes outside the lodge.

If you arrive early at camp, please wait on the paved road outside the gate. Please do not block access to the gate entrance and do not follow authorized vehicles through the gate. Our security staff will open the gate when it is time for check-in to begin.



## Friday Check-Out

Check out for all sessions is on the Friday of each session and the gate opens at **11:30 AM**. Families are invited to attend our family luncheon and closing ceremony at **12:00 PM**. In order to pick up your child from camp, you must be listed as an authorized pick-up (parents included) and have a photo ID. We will not release your child without a photo ID.

## Travel by Air



### **Flying to Camp with Parent/Guardian:**

- Our preferred option is to see campers travel to camp accompanied by a parent/guardian who will travel with them to camp and attend the check-in process with their child before departing. Transportation to/from the airport is the responsibility of the family.

### **Flying to Camp Independently:**

- If over the age of 15, campers will navigate the airport and meet CSG Staff outside security in the baggage claim area. Families who utilize this option acknowledge that Camp Southern Ground is not responsible for your child until they find CSG staff in the designated pick-up location.
- If under the age of 15, campers will need to utilize the Unaccompanied Minor or Young Traveler program offered by most major airlines. All costs associated with these programs are at the cost of the family. With this option, CSG will meet your child at the gate and assist them through the check-in process at camp.

## Arrival and Departure Flight Windows

Sunday Arrival: **11:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

Friday Departure: **1:00 PM - 4:00 PM**

All flights must be booked within our travel window. Travel arrangements **MUST** be finalized no later than **May 16th** to ensure that transportation can be arranged to/from the airport. Families must complete the Travel Arrangements form, found on your Family Dashboard, with all flight information

**Airport Information:**  
**Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta  
International Airport**





# PACKING LIST

## Camp Southern Ground

### Clothing

- T-Shirts (7)
- Shorts (7)
- Underwear (7)
- Socks (7)
- Sweatshirt
- Long Pants
- Light Rain Jacket
- Swimsuit (2)
- Pajamas
- Sun/Baseball Hat
- Close-toed Shoes (Sneakers)
- Flip Flops/Crocs/WaterShoes  
(Only to be worn in shower or the pool area).

### Other Adventure Gear

- Sunglasses
- Reading Materials
- Notebook & Pen
- Blanket and Pillow (sheets provided)
- Water bottle
- Flashlight

### Toiletries

- Hairbrush or Comb
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Shampoo, Conditioner, Soap, Lotion
- Sunscreen
- Insect Repellent
- Bath Towel

### Packing Tips & Tricks

- Label everything with your campers first and last name.
- Pack outfits in ziplock bags labeled with the day of the week.
- Campers use shared bathrooms, sending toiletries in a separate bag is super helpful.
- Camp will provide towels for all campers at the pool, however, we do ask campers to bring their own towel for showers.
- Bring TWO swimsuits. You go to the pool everyday!
- Leave anything of value at home, including technology, cameras, etc.
- Bring something quiet to do during KBAR (book, journal, bracelet kit, cards)



# What Not to Bring to Camp

## 1 Food

Please do not send your child with any snacks or food to camp. We follow specific food guidelines will have a variety of food options for every meal. We also provide snack in-between meals and a few sweet treats, too. If your child has specific food considerations, please reach out to us.

## 2 Electronics

Camp Southern Ground operates as a tech free camp that includes cell-phones, tablets, iPads, cameras, and other electronic devices. We believe in fostering a strong sense of community and encouraging personal connections. To create an environment where campers are able to immerse themselves, we kindly ask that you do not send any electronics with your child.

## 3 Money and Valuables

Campers will be living in a group environment and are asked to be careful with money and valuables brought to camp. It is our recommendation that these items be kept at home. Campers will not need access to money during their time at camp and CSG is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### You may know these things already, but our ACA Accreditation requires that we let you know the following:

- 1) The use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, illicit drugs, or alcohol is strictly prohibited for all adults, children, and staff while on camp property.
- 2) All sports equipment is provided by camp including basketballs, archery bows, and fishing poles. No need to pack those for camp.
- 3) Camp driving regulations require that vehicles remain on designated roads and parking areas. Please adhere to posted speed limits and drive cautiously. Passengers are not permitted to ride in the back of trucks or any area without a proper seat, and seatbelts must be worn by all occupants at all times.
- 4) Pets are not allowed at camp (no matter how cute your puppy is), however, we do welcome service animals.
- 5) Weapons of any kind are not allowed at camp, including pocket knives.

# Contact

## How we will contact you:

Phone calls, emails, and text messages are the main form of contact before, during, and after your child's camp session. It is essential that all contact information in your Family Dashboard is up to date to ensure there is no lapse in communication from camp. Given the number of campers we serve each session, most parents will not receive phone communication from us during their child's session. If you do not receive a phone call from us, assume that everything is going great and your camper is thriving at camp. If we do contact you, don't panic, we often call with small updates we want to loop you in on or questions about how best to serve your camper.



## How You Contact Your Camper:

Families are invited to send their child encouraging notes from home. On check-in day, you will be provided with an email address where you can send emails that are printed and delivered to your child each evening. The USPS mail delivery in our area is very inconsistent. We highly encourage families to leave letters and packages with staff at check in labeled with child's full name. You are welcome to send post cards and letters to your child at camp by using the following address:

**Your Child's Name**  
**c/o Camp Southern Ground**  
**100 Southern Ground Parkway**  
**Fayetteville, GA 30215**

## Emails:

In the weeks leading up to camp and during your child's camp session, Camp Southern Ground will send out communications through the database, CampSite. Please double check your email to make sure these emails are not marked as spam. We'd hate for you to miss important updates and reminders from camp! If you need any assistance with updating your information, please reach out to us.



## How You Contact Us:

**Camp Office:** (678) 561-9600

### **Camp Director:**

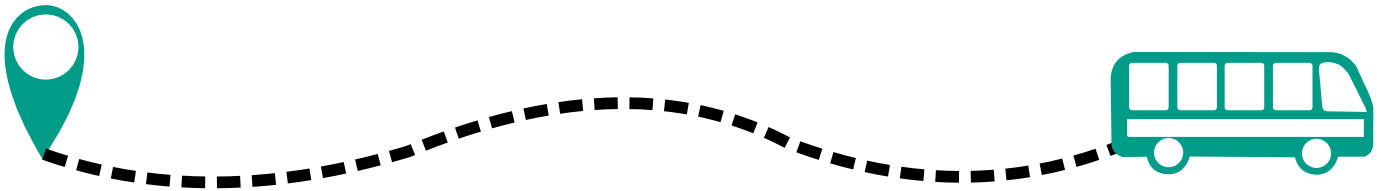
Matthew "Matty" Cook  
matty@campsonthernground  
(678) 561-9605

### **Admissions & Inclusion Manager:**

Melissa Zehe  
melissa@campsonthernground.org  
(404) 946-8151 (call or text)

### **Admission Assistant** (Seasonal May-July)

admissions@campsonthernground.org



## Directions to Camp



### Address:

Camp Southern Ground  
100 Southern Ground Parkway  
Fayetteville, GA 30215

All major GPS Apps will work!

If you are lost, please give us a call  
on our main phone number (678)  
561-9600.

If you have arrived at our back gate on Arnold Road, please follow the road back out to Ebenezer Church Road, make a right hand turn and our driveway is the next right turn.

# DAILY SCHEDULE

## A TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP

### Morning

8:00  
AM Breakfast



8:40  
AM Circle-Up



9:00  
AM Activity #1



10:20  
AM Snack Time



10:45  
AM Activity #2



### Afternoon

12:30  
PM Lunch



1:15  
PM KBAR



2:45  
PM Activity #3



4:00  
PM Snack Time



4:25  
PM Activity #4



### Evening

6:00  
PM Dinner



7:30  
PM Evening Program



9:00  
PM Night Routine



10:00  
PM Lights out!

