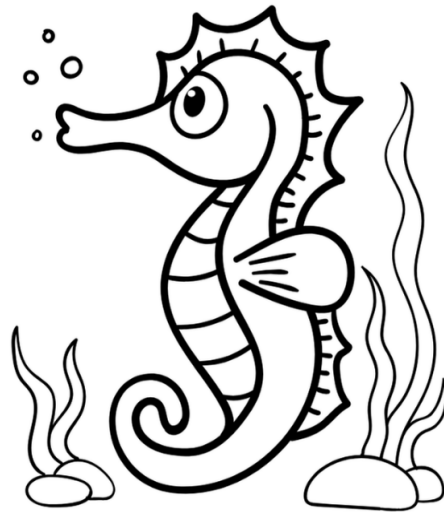


JUST HORSING AROUND



CBFS SUMMER CAMP 2025

Chincoteague Bay Field Station Summer Camp Parent Guide



Greetings from Chincoteague Bay Field Station!

On behalf of Chincoteague Bay Field Station, let me welcome you and your child to camp!! This is always an exciting time for us, as we transition from our field trips with the School Programs to our amazing camps. If this is your first camp with us ... welcome! To all of you returners ... welcome back! We are excited to be sharing a summer of science, fun, and new friendships with each and every one of you.

Children and educators from all over the country come together in our ~~summer~~ sessions to discover and celebrate the natural environments around them and to share ideas and passions for the sciences with each other. We offer endless possibilities for exploration, new accomplishments, and fun.

We hope that you and your child are as excited as our staff about the upcoming summer, and we look forward to meeting you!

Lexi Overdiek
Education Director
Chincoteague Bay Field Station
757-824-5636 x110
educationdirector@cbfieldstation.org

Important Information

Chincoteague Bay Field Station

34001 Mill Dam Road

Wallops Island, VA 23337

Office Phone: (757) 824-5636, ext.100

After Hours Emergency Phone: (757) 854-8312

Email: info@cbfieldstaion.org

Opening Day Check-In: Sunday, 3:00 - 4:30

Closing Day Check-out: Friday, 3:00 - 4:30

Program Contact Information:

Lexi Overdiek- Education Director

757-824-5636 ext. 110

Claire Teachey- Program Coordinator

757-824-5636 ext. 109

Email: spsc@cbfieldstation.org

Field Station Staff

Senior Staff

Lexi Overdiek- Education Director
757-824-5636 ext. 110
educationdirector@cbfieldstation.org

Claire Teachey- Program Coordinator
757-824-5636 ext. 109
programcoordinator@cbfieldstation.org

Aimee Beardmore- Assistant Program Coordinator
757-824-5636 ext. 106
apc@cbfieldstation.org

Hayden Shepley- Assistant School Programs Coordinator
757-824-5636 ext. 103
schoolprogramsac@cbfieldstation.org

Seasonal Staff

Field Station Educators
educators@cbfieldstation.org

Summer Camp Counselors
campcounselors@cbfieldstation.org

Each overnight summer camp will generally have 4 camp counselors and 3 educators. Counselors will stay in the dorms with campers and lead activities, and educators are responsible for leading classes. These staff members will be directly running the program and will all work with every camper. Additionally, senior staff will be overseeing the camp and are available for contact.

Field Station Rules and Information for Participants

1. Please respect others as well as their rights and properties.
2. Please follow all safety rules and make a special effort to be safety conscious.
3. Report any illness, accident, etc., immediately to your camp counselor and educator so that appropriate action may be taken.
4. NO Cell Phones or other handheld electronic/internet devices.
5. NO alcoholic beverages, smoking, or drugs are permitted on Field Station property (including campus, boats, and vehicles) at any time. Violation will result in dismissal from the program without refund.
6. Do not leave station without permission from your educator.
7. Please do not remove anything from the lab.
8. No intervisitation allowed between dorms.
9. Avoid excessive noise. ALL campers must be in their dorms by 10:00PM. Quiet hours are from 10:00PM to 7:00 AM.
10. Campers are responsible for damages to the dorm or facilities and will be billed for these damages and subject to disciplinary action.
11. A clean-up period will be conducted before you leave. Campers are responsible for cleaning all areas used during their stay. Instructors will hold a cleaning and damage inspection on the last day of the program.
12. Keep perishable items (food, shells, organisms) out of the dorms. All biological samples should be kept in the labs.
13. Do not wash mud or sand down any drains. Please use the hose to get the majority of the mud off of yourself/your clothes and then the designated outside showers for rinsing off. Use clothes lines to hang wet, dirty clothing. Wear your swimsuit in the outdoor showers.
14. Do not wear swimsuits or muddy clothes into the cafeteria.
15. Shoes must be worn at the field station and on field trips at all times.
16. Please make a special effort to use the sidewalks and stay off the grass in heavy use areas.
17. Campers are allowed in the following buildings only: assigned dorm units and lab, cafeteria during regular meal hours, and the Ship Store. No food or drink may be removed from the cafeteria. Do not enter or stay beyond meal times.
18. Meal Times
 - Breakfast: 8:00-8:30AM
 - Lunch: 12:30-1:00PM
 - Dinner: 5:15-5:45PM
19. The Field Station will not be held responsible for any lost or stolen items.
20. This is your field experience. Please participate and contribute questions and ideas to make the program enjoyable for you and your fellow campers. Take care of yourself: drink water, wear sunscreen and correct clothing etc. and most of all...Have Fun!

Chincoteague Bay Field Station (CBFS) COVID-19/Illness PROTOCOLS

Summer Camps

- All members of CBFS staff are required to be fully vaccinated.
- Masks are optional in CBFS vehicles, classrooms, and housing areas.
- Living Quarters
 - Wearing a mask is now optional at CBFS. It is up to the parents and campers' comfort to wear masks in common and living spaces.
- Each group will have designated tables in the dining hall denoted by signs. Participants are only permitted to sit at their designated tables and practice social distancing as much as possible.
- If campers exhibit any symptoms of illness they will be tested and/or quarantined. Parents/guardians will be contacted, if illness doesn't subside within 24 hours the camper must be picked up from camp.
- Depending on nature and severity camper may be required to quarantine until parents/guardians are able to pick up their camper.
- Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will be sent home immediately. NO EXCEPTIONS!
- Illness that may result in immediate removal from camp:
 - Fever that persists for more than 24 hours
 - Persistent diarrhea and vomiting
 - Signs of highly contagious diseases (i.e, strep throat and the flu)
 - Pink eye
 - Rashes that persist for more than 24 hours
 - Obvious signs of infection
 - Any other signs and symptoms of communicable diseases at the discretion of CBFS staff
- CBFS will deep clean the residence hall between sessions and will clean frequently used areas at least once a week.
- Social distancing is practiced as much as possible on campus.
- Shared equipment, common surfaces, and vehicles will be sanitized after each use.

Directions

From the South

Headed North from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, drive 73.5 miles on Route 13 (Lankford Highway). Turn Right on VA-175E at T's Corner in Oak Hall. Drive for 2.7 miles. Turn left onto Mill Dam Rd. (just after the Sunoco gas station), drive for 0.6 miles before arriving at the Chincoteague Bay Field Station on the Left.

From the North

Headed South from Salisbury, MD, drive approximately 35 miles on Route 13 (Lankford Highway). Turn Right on VA-175E at T's Corner in Oak Hall. Drive for 2.7 miles. Turn left onto Mill Dam Rd. (just after the Sunoco gas station), drive for 0.6 miles before arriving at the Chincoteague Bay Field Station on the Left.

Once On Campus...

Check-in runs from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm in the lobby of Red Knot Residence Hall (map below). Field Station staff will be there to help answer any final questions you might have and to settle your camper in!

Nearby Hotels for Parents

Fairfield Inn and Suites, Chincoteague, VA P: (757) 336-0043 (15 minutes away)

Hampton Inn and Suites, Chincoteague, VA P: (757) 336-1616 (15 minutes away)

Comfort Suites, Chincoteague, VA P: (757) 336-3700 (15 minutes away)

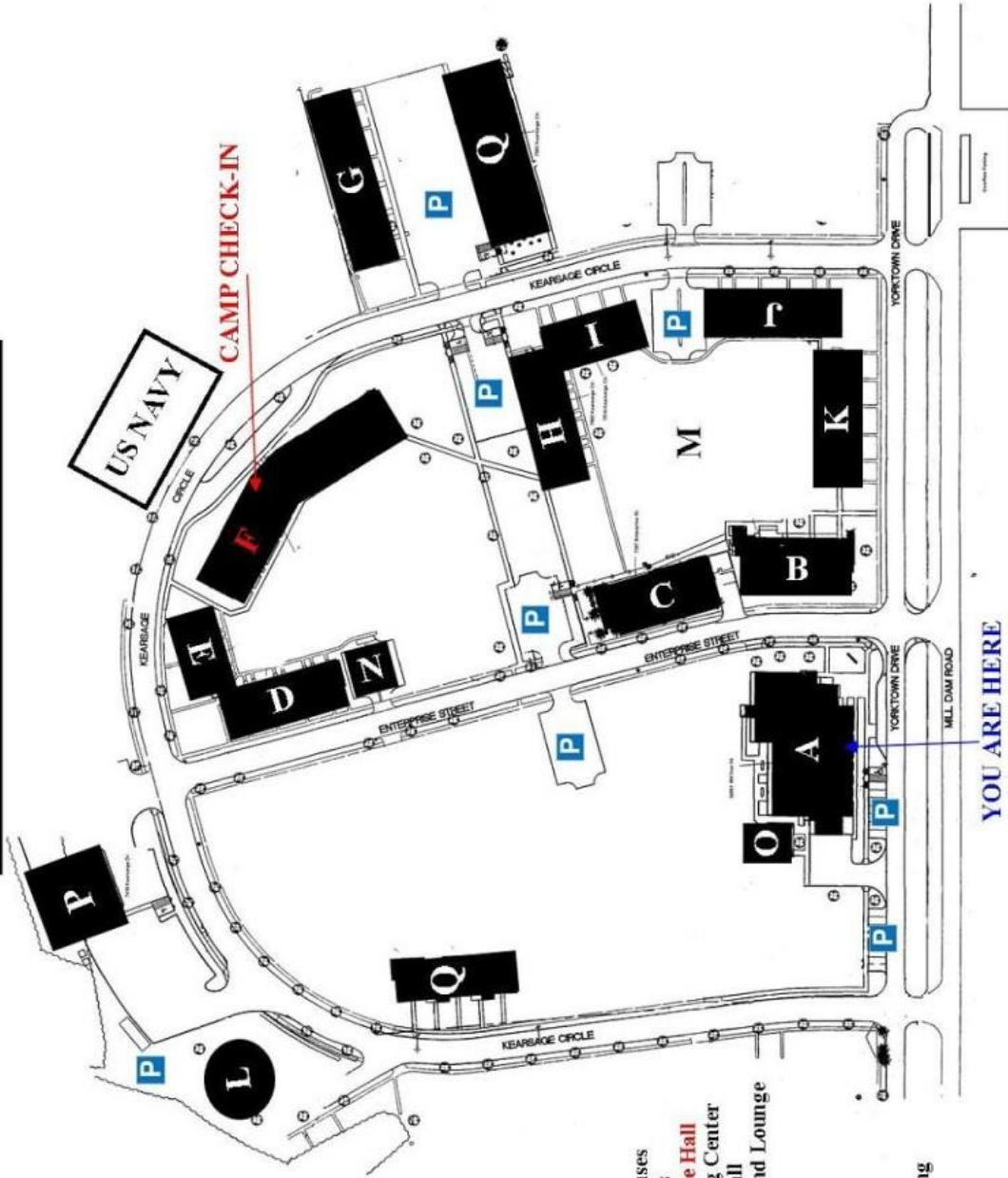
Waterside Inn, Chincoteague, VA P: (757) 336-3434 (15 minutes away)

Best Western, Chincoteague, VA P: (757) 336-6557 (20 minutes away)

Holiday Inn Express, Pocomoke City, MD P: (410) 957-6444 (20 minutes away)

Bed and breakfast facilities on the Eastern Shore can be found through Virginia's Eastern Shore Bed and Breakfast Association (www.coastalvirginiabnb.com).

CBFS Campus MAP



Map Key

- A..... Education Center
- B..... Salicoma Suites
- C..... Dining Hall
- D..... Terrapin Townhouses
- E..... Coquina Commons
- F..... **Red Knot Residence Hall**
- G..... Loblolly Learning Center
- H..... Horseshoe Crab Hall
- I..... Limulus Library and Lounge
- J..... Blue Crab Hall
- K..... Lady Crab Hall
- L..... Campfire Ring
- M..... Sports Field
- N..... Basketball Court
- O..... Pompano Pavilion
- P..... Maintenance Building
- Q..... Staff Housing

Packing for Camp

If possible, campers should use a large duffel bag for packing. Place a list of items inside of the duffel bag so that educators can help campers maintain their possessions. Every camper should bring:

- Reusable Water bottle
- Sunscreen (reef safe; <https://savethereef.org/about-reef-save-sunscreen.html>)
- Bug spray (deet and deet free; <https://www.nbcnews.com/select/shopping/best-insect-repellents-ncna1271196>) **Please note that we prohibit deet bug spray at some of our field sites**
- Plastic bags to put dirty/wet items
- Sleeping bag or twin bed linens
- Pillow and pillowcase
- Washcloths and Towels (at least 3: one for using outside and two for showering)
- Toiletries (shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, hairbrush, deodorant, etc.)
 - Please include a shower caddy/container so camper can easily bring toiletries to and from bathroom to limit items left in shared spaces
- Flashlight
- Clothing for six days (plus a few extras)
 - Shirts
 - Shorts
 - Long pants (required for getting into the marsh)
 - Underclothing
 - Swimsuits (at least 2, 1 to get muddy)
 - Closed-toed athletic/tennis shoes (Required for our boat trips)
 - Secure shoes that have laces that can get muddy (for the marsh)
 - Secure shoes that can get wet (sandals with straps, Chaco's, water shoes, etc; Crocs are not considered field shoes)
 - Flip-flops/Crocs (for changing into after class/walking around campus not acceptable for field classes)
 - Sweatshirt and raincoat (or any other layers they might need)
- Optional Items
 - Disposable camera
 - Books, comics, or magazines
 - Rainy day games, cards
 - Stationery/stamps

Items Not Allowed at Camp

- Cell Phones *** If you and your camper are more comfortable with them having access to their phone, please get in contact with CBFS staff prior to arrival. On check-in day they will check it in with their camp counselor and will have access to do check-ins with you during approved times. They will not be permitted to have their phone during program activities. If a camper is found with a cellphone that hasn't been checked in with their counselor, it will be confiscated and kept with their counselor until check-out. ***
- Smart watches are susceptible to the same rules as cell phones. We do not want your campers' items to be broken or lost while at camp, as well as limiting communication with others to fully immerse them in camp experiences.
- Handheld electronic/internet devices (In addition to these items being costly and unsecured at camp, the content of material accompanying them is often not suitable to be shared with other

campers.)

- Weapons of any kind including but not limited to, firearms, explosives, bows, knives, and other blades.
- Recreational or Illegal drugs/alcohol
- Nut products (Some campers experience severe food allergies. We encourage food-free care packages.)

Chincoteague Bay Field Station is not responsible for any lost or damaged personal items in the camper's possession.

Non-Discrimination and Inclusion Statement

Chincoteague Bay Field Station (CBFS) is dedicated to providing outstanding multi-disciplinary, educational and research opportunities for all and does not discriminate in providing services on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification or expression, or any other basis proscribed by law.

Opening Day

Opening Day is an exciting time for everyone involved! Campers get to move into their dorms, meet their fellow campers, and start learning about the interesting environments they will be visiting throughout the week. As parents, you too get to meet your child's counselors and get a first-hand look at where your child will be creating memories throughout the coming week. Campers can check in at the Red Knot Lobby on **Sunday between 3:00 and 4:30**. Participants must be signed in at the start of each camp session by the person dropping them off and signed out by a legal parent/guardian, or other authorized person on their registration form.

Field Station staff will be on site to answer any questions you may have, go over any important medical information for your child, and distribute schedules and information sheets. These sheets include information on contacting your child during the week, emergency contact information, and reminders about closing day.

Once your child is checked in, they will meet their camp counselor who will help move them into their dorm. You are welcome to accompany your child to help them get settled into their new home for the week. By 4:30 parents should depart. Campers will then begin their Opening Day activities.

Campers are required to be checked-in by a parent or guardian. Campers are not allowed to check themselves in, even if they are 18 or older.

Closing Day

On Closing Day, campers head out to Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge for a day at the beach! After a day swimming, picnicking, and having fun in the sun, the group will return from the beach to clean and check out of their dorms. They will be back on campus around 2:30pm. **Pick-up begins at 3:00pm and lasts until 4:30pm**. If you are running late just give us a call at the office phone number!

Participants will only be released to authorized and confirmed persons pending the person's name and signature given during Opening Day. In emergency situations students may be released to an adult not listed as an approved sign-out on the registration form, at staff discretion, if and only if a listed parent or guardian can be contacted at a listed number to give a verbal confirmation to camp staff. In the unforeseeable event you could be late picking up your camper please call the office phone number listed on Page 2.

After you return home and have had time to talk with your camper about camp, we will be sending

out a quick online survey for you to fill out. Please take a few moments and give us your feedback! If your child loved their experience here, please share information about the possibility of coming here for a field trip with their science teacher.

Typical Daily Schedule

7:30 am Rise and Shine

8:00 am Breakfast

9:00 am Morning Class

12:30 pm Lunch at the cafeteria

1:30 pm Afternoon Class

5:15 pm Dinner

6:30 pm Evening Programming

8:30 pm Cabin Time and Field Games

10:00 pm Lights Out

If you and your camper would like to view a sample schedule, head to the website to get an idea of how each day is set up. Please note that each week varies based on staffing and resource availability. A tentative schedule will be sent out a week prior to camp to allow you and your camper to think about class selections. During check-in, campers will register for the classes they would like to participate in for the week. All classes are first come first serve; we do have limited availability in a few, but some classes are offered more than once throughout the week. Field Station Educators and Camp Counselors will be available to answer questions you may have.

Meals

Our dining hall staff provides campers and staff members alike with a healthy variety of delicious meals. From grill-outs to hot breakfasts, fresh fruits and veggies to after-dinner treats, the dining hall always has something hearty and nutritious to munch on. Is your child a vegetarian or does he or she have any other special dietary needs? CBFS works hard to accommodate dietary needs, restrictions, and allergies. If any adjustments need to be made just let us know! We are happy to accommodate your campers' dietary needs to the best of our abilities. When registering your child, make sure to mention any dietary needs, restrictions, and allergies. Food Service will prepare alternative entrees only for campers who inform CBFS staff of their restriction prior to the start of their week at camp. Food Service will do its best to accommodate allergies. Alternative options will be made for a participant if the meal contains the allergen. CBFS campus including the Dining Hall is not a peanut-free campus, however, we are working to remove all nut products from our Dining Hall. We ask that you do not send your camper with any nut products. If your child has a severe peanut allergy, please contact the Education Director to discuss your options.

Dorm Assignments

Campers are assigned to dorms by gender and age level. Dorm assignments will be given upon arrival on Opening Day. If you have a housing request for campers, we will be happy to try and accommodate your request. Please contact us at least 2 weeks prior to camp about any housing requests or concerns.

Camper Code of Conduct

Each member of the Chincoteague Bay Field Station camp community is expected to conduct him/herself according to the highest standards of conduct, attitude and morality while participating in a

program with CBFS. The Camper Code of Conduct sets forth CBFS's expectations for the behavior of our campers. It is predicated on an "honor system" that stresses personal responsibility, mutual respect, and trust. Any camper found to be in violation of any portion of the Code of Conduct while attending CBFS either on or off campus, would be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The Camper Code of Conduct covers, but is not limited to, the following issues:

- 1) Alcohol and other drugs
- 2) Sexual harassment and Sexual behavior
- 3) Verbal, emotional, and physical harassment and Bullying
- 4) Personal Presentation and Inappropriate language
- 5) Off-Campus Behavior
- 6) Curfew and Boundaries
- 7) Honesty

Drugs and Alcohol

Chincoteague Bay Field Station strictly prohibits the possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs in any form and by any means. The use of such substances while at camp (either on or off camp property) by any participant will be grounds for immediate dismissal.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Behavior

Chincoteague Bay Field Station intends to provide an environment free of sexual harassment and sexual behavior. Sexual harassment is prohibited by state and federal laws and includes prohibited conduct by males toward females, females toward males, females to females, males to males, campers to campers, staff to campers, campers to staff, and staff to staff. Behavior that constitutes sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, pressure for sexual activity, demeaning sexual propositions, exposing oneself, making sexually explicit or suggestive remarks about another person, sexually oriented jokes or personal questions, and other verbal content or physical contact that results in an individual feeling uncomfortable or threatened. Sexual behavior between campers or between a camper and staff member is strictly prohibited.

Verbal, Emotional, and Physical Harassment and Bullying

Harassment and bullying or intimidation by campers toward other campers or staff will not be tolerated. Harassment and bullying are viewed as an expression of power over or against another person. Behavior that constitutes harassment and bullying includes comments which are demeaning with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, color or disability, hazing, stalking, or other intimidating conduct; uninvited or unwanted physical conduct (e.g. hitting, grabbing, pushing, and pinching); pressuring others to perform demeaning, humiliating or dangerous acts.

Personal Presentation and Inappropriate language

All campers are expected to maintain commonly accepted standards for appropriate dress. Overly revealing clothing or clothing containing inappropriate pictures, language, symbols or suggestions is disallowed. Chincoteague Bay Field Station reserves the right to require a change of clothing if such clothing is deemed not to be in accordance with this policy. Campers are prohibited from using profane and/or vulgar language.

Off-Campus Behavior

Chincoteague Bay Field Station expects campers to conduct themselves with propriety both on and off campus. Campers are expected to follow the same rules and conduct while they are off campus. Campers may not leave the camp property except on organized camp trips or with their parent(s) or guardian(s).

Curfew and Boundaries

It is the responsibility of each camper to make their whereabouts known to their counselors at all times. Campers are expected to adhere to bedtimes/lights out as defined for each age group. Unsupervised departure from cabins after lights-out is strictly prohibited.

Honesty

It is the expectation of Chincoteague Bay Field Station that all campers and staff will respond honestly and completely to any inquiries regarding possible violations of the Code of Conduct.

Discipline

On Opening Day, campers will discuss the camper code of conduct and rules for their time at the Field Station. These rules are strictly enforced to promote the security and happiness of every camper or participant coming to campus. If there is an ongoing behavioral problem with a camper, the first step will be a discussion with the camper about their improper behavior and how to fix it. A verbal agreement of corrected behavior will be made between counselors and the camper. If the behavior continues, a written contract addressing the behavior of the camper and the consequences of their actions will be signed. Counselors will also contact parents/guardians to make them aware that there is an issue. If the improper behavior is not fixed, the camper will be sent home. Early dismissal from camp for behavioral issues will not warrant a refund. The same will be true of voluntary early departures. We have a zero-tolerance policy against physical abuse, verbal abuse or any kind of harassment. Any participant that engages in any form of harassment, aggressive physical contact or word use may be removed immediately from camp without other warnings. Any camper found to be in violation of any portion of the Code of Conduct while attending CBFS either on or off campus, would be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal.

Refund Policy

Registration for a camp at Chincoteague Bay Field Station requires a \$200 non-refundable deposit. If you decide to cancel your registration prior to June 1st, you will be refunded all but the non-refundable deposit. CBFS is happy to accommodate a switch in a camper's session dates at no charge as long as the new session has availability. After June 1st, partial refunds may be given on a case-by-case basis. For cancellations two weeks or less before your camp start date, refunds will not be issued. Please contact a CBFS staff member if you would like to discuss an exception. Early dismissal from camp for behavioral issues will not warrant a refund. The same will be true of voluntary early departures.

Spending Money/Ship Store

Campers will not need any spending money for camp-related activities during the week of camp. However, if they would like to bring money for laundry, or for purchasing items in the camp store, they may. Counselors will set aside time for their campers to visit our Ship Store and will be told when that will happen. It is full of all sorts of goodies, including sweatshirts, hats, candy, toys and games, local art, postcards, etc. Campers are typically left with \$30-\$50 to spend at the ship store. The counselors will collect spending money on Opening Day and store it in a lockbox for safe keeping. Money will be distributed to campers at their designated ship store time, and any excess will be returned at pick-up.

Laundry/Lost and Found

Laundry is provided for campers at a cost of \$1.25 per load (in quarters) and can be done with permission from their counselor. Laundry detergent is not provided by CBFS. Any lost items are collected periodically throughout the week and sent to the front desk in the Education Center. Campers are welcome to check the lost and found at any point throughout the week to try and find misplaced items. The shipping of found items after the camper's departure may be arranged at your expense.

Visitation/Phone Calls

Due to issues with homesickness, we do not allow students to have their personal cell phones with them during the week. We keep your child focused on activities and involved with new friends, making a phone an unnecessary distraction. **Please respect our no phone policy. If you and your camper are more comfortable having access to a phone, please contact a CBFS staff member to discuss options at least 2 weeks prior to camp.**

We do not have a visitation day at the Field Station. However, we encourage parents to tour the facilities and meet the counselors on both Opening and Closing Days.

If there is an emergency and you need to contact your child while they are at camp, please call the office – (757) 824-5636 – during business hours (8:30 am-4:30 pm). If it is outside of those hours, and you are having an emergency, you can call our emergency on-call phone –(757) 854-8312 – to speak to a senior staff member.

Communication with your Camper

There is nothing like snail mail for a kid at camp! Mail is brought to campers every evening just before dinner and the excitement you can see in each child's eyes as they open their mail is unbeatable.

If you would like to send a letter / postcard to your child while they are here, please address it as follows:

Camper Name

_____ Summer Camp (which camp they are in ... Budding Coastal Explorers, etc.)

34001 Mill Dam Road

Wallops Island, VA 23337

You may also leave a note or postcard for your child at check-in. Counselors will deliver it to them later in the week.

Emails can be sent to campcounselors@cbfieldstation.org (ATTN: Camper's Name & Summer Camp) and will be printed out and given to your child before dinner as well.

Photo Updates

Interested in seeing what your child is up to during their week at camp? Feel free to check out current camp activities on any of our social media outlets. We will also be sharing a Google Album link with parents for each week of camp. **This will be distributed by end of business the Monday following your campers check in.**

Follow:**Facebook** www.facebook.com/Chincoteague-Bay-Field-Station**Instagram** @cbfieldstation**Weather Related Emergency**

Chincoteague Bay Field Station staff keep a close watch on any weather systems affecting the area. While we are a rain or shine program, we always have special indoor activities planned if the weather is deemed unfit or unsafe for outdoor activities. If boat trips are postponed, we will do our best to reschedule the trip during your program.

Medications/Health Care

Campers are required to have a completed camp health form on file. Health forms can be found in this packet or on our website. Campers check in all of their medication with the counselors on Opening Day. Medication will be always kept in a lockbox with the counselors so that it is on hand when needed. On Opening Day, parents will fill out a medication form describing when their child should receive their medication. Counselors will distribute medication accordingly. Medication will be returned to parents/guardians during pick-up on Closing Day. All Field Station staff members are First Aid/CPR certified and carry a first aid kit with them wherever they go. Counselors oversee any minor treatments that a child may need during the week (cuts, blisters, sunburn, insect bites, etc.). In case of an emergency, the NASA medical team will respond as well.

First-Time Campers/Homesickness

Homesickness is a common occurrence in people of all ages. It is a natural response to being separated from the normal routine a child experiences at home and from loved ones with whom they find support. Parents/guardians can help their child adjust to camp by following simple steps outlined in an American Camp Association publication, written by University of California Psychologist Chris Thurber:

- Encourage your child's independence throughout the year. Practice separations; a sleepover at a friend's house can simulate the camp environment.
- Involve your child in the process of choosing a camp. The more that the child embraces the decision, the more comfortable the child will feel at camp.
- Discuss what camp will be like before your child leaves. Consider role-playing situations, such as using a flashlight to find the bathroom.
- Reach an agreement ahead of time regarding phone calls home. If your child's camp has a no phone calls policy, honor it.
- Send a note or care package ahead of time to arrive the first day of camp. Acknowledge, in a positive way, that you will miss your child. For example, you can say, "I am going to miss you, but I know that you will have a good time at camp".
- Talk candidly with the Camp Director to obtain his/her perspective on your child's adjustment.
- Don't bribe. Linking a successful stay at camp to a material object sends the wrong message. The reward should be your child's new-found confidence and independence.
- Pack a personal item from home, such as a stuffed animal.
- When a "rescue call" comes from the child, offer calm reassurance and put the time frame into perspective. Avoid the temptation to take the child home early.

- Don't feel guilty about encouraging your child to stay at camp. For many children, camp is a first step toward independence and plays an important role in their growth and development.
- Trust your instincts. While most incidents of homesickness will pass in a day or two, Thurber's research shows that approximately 7% of cases are severe. If your child is not eating or sleeping because of anxiety or depression, it is time to go home. However, don't make your child feel like a failure if their stay at camp is cut short. Focus on the positive and encourage your child to try camp again next year.

Chincoteague Bay Field Station Staff are well-trained at helping homesick campers adjust to life away from home. We keep them active and involved through team-building, field trips, fun games, etc. With your help, we know we can help your child have an amazing experience at camp.

Partnering with Parents

The staff here at the Field Station is dedicated to making sure that every camper coming through our doors has an enjoyable experience and learns something new during their time here. To ensure that every child gets the care and comfort that they need, we request that parents share appropriate information about their child that may impact how we instruct, work with, or care for that child. You may fill out any details you feel are important on our health forms. Feel free to attach an additional sheet if you need more space. There is also a fillable version of the form available on our website. This information will help the staff better prepare for your child's needs. Camp staff will review this information prior to camp check-in. All forms will be kept in our confidential files.

Letter to Counselors

Attached is a prompt for your camper to send a letter to their future counselors. They may use this prompt or write their own letter answering some of the questions we listed for them. This allows the counselors to learn a bit about your child before they arrive so that they are more prepared for homesickness, can work on creating free time activities your camper will enjoy, etc. It also allows your camper to feel more comfortable with and supported by their counselors from the moment he/she arrives on campus.

Letter to My Counselors

Dear Camper,

This is a confidential information form between you and your counselors. The purpose is to let the counselors know a little more about you before you arrive at the Chincoteague Bay Field Station. We hope you are as excited about camp as we are. We look forward to your arrival!

Best,
Summer Camp Staff

Name: _____

Camp: _____

Age: _____

First time at Camp? _____

I am coming to camp because...

Circle One: I am EXCITED / NERVOUS about attending camp this summer. Why?

I want to learn these skills at camp:

My expectations for my counselors are:

Describe yourself in a few sentences:

Is there anything else you want to share with us?

Signature: _____

Date: _____