

# Parent's Q & A About 4-H Camp

Camp is a special opportunity for kids to learn new skills, try new activities, make friends and be a part of a "camp family" group. We look forward to having your child participate in camp this year. To help you and your camper prepare for this adventure is a list of frequently asked questions about camp.

Where is 4-H camp???

4-H Camp is located at Rock Springs 4-H Center. The ranch is south of Junction City off of Highway 77.



How do campers get to camp???

Parents will need to take and pick up their campers. Pooling rides with other club members can be very helpful.

My camper has never been to camp and doesn't know where anything is.

Campers and counselors are to stay together at all times, so they will go to horseback riding together, to meals together, to the swimming pool, etc. And all of the activities are designed for teams of campers and their counselor. A copy of the map of camp will be given to each camper prior to camp.

What do campers do at 4-H camp???

Campers, along with their living group, participate in a wide variety of activities while at camp. The traditional activities include: Canoeing, Horseback Riding, Crafts, Swimming, Archery, Rifle Range, Leadership Adventure Course, Prairie Learning Center, and Outdoor Education Adventure. Other activities include Fishing, GPS, Stream Study, and Disc Golf. In addition, campers will attend two track sessions on the 2<sup>nd</sup> morning. These consist of games, crafts, and educational programs.

Should I send snacks??

We don't encourage it. Rock Springs prepares 3 well balanced meals a day. And if kids have too much snack food, they fill up on sugary items instead of more healthful choices. The snack bar is available every morning and afternoon for the "munchies". Snack food also encourages mice, bugs and other critters into the cabin too. If you do send a snack, consider something that can be shared by all the campers in the cabin.

Who will my child be staying with???

Eight campers and one or two counselors will be assigned to a living group. This will be their home for the 4 days of camp. The campers are from several counties in a Camp Group. Campers are housed by grades. For example, 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are together and 7<sup>th</sup> grades are together. However, sometimes we can put two grades together, such as 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grades or 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grades. We don't house 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> together because of the wide span of interests between their ages. One of the goals of camp is to help campers meet new friends and thru the living groups is one way of doing this.

What about calling home??

Experience shows that calling home can make home sickness worse. The best thing you can do to help your child have a positive experience is to encourage them to get involved with their living group right away. We also emphasize this with the counselors. If there is a need for your child to call, we will help them make that call. Do not send cell phones to camp. Rock Springs is in a valley and cell phone coverage is limited. The camp phone number will be given to parents prior to camp in cases of emergency use.

Who are the counselors??

Older 4-H members serve as the camp counselors. They must have completed their Freshman year of high school to be a counselor. Usually we will pair a first time counselor with an experienced counselor. Counselors must complete the same VIP training as adult volunteers. In addition, they arrive in camp early to go thru an additional training session dealing specifically with camp.

My camper is a little nervous about being away from home.

What should I do?

Prepare yourself and the camper for that new experience. Help him or her to understand that those feelings are normal. Your positive attitude will also help as you talk about their feelings. Talk about the feelings of excitement, making new friends and exploring new places. Do not dwell on how much he/she will be missed. When seeing a child off, or leaving him at camp, be positive about his going and having a fun time. Tell them you love them and that you will look forward to hearing all the stories about the fun things he/she did at camp. Encourage them to participate in all the camp activities. The more involved they are, the less home sick they will tend to be.

What is the difference between Rookie and Regular Campers?

Rookie campers are 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders. They arrive at camp at the same time as the regular campers. However, they only stay for one night and go home after 1 ½ days of camp. Regular campers are 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 7<sup>th</sup> graders. They are at camp for 2 - ½ days and 2 full days.

How much money should I send?

Activities with fees are very minimal. Most spending occurs on snacks and souvenirs. Prior to camp, families will receive a price list for the snack bar and crafts. This will give you an idea of the cost of items. Talk with your camper and plan what their daily budget should be. \$12-25 should be very adequate. Counselors will help the campers keep track of their money. Sending smaller bills (\$1's and \$5's) is preferred, to prevent the camper from losing change from a \$20 as they travel around camp.



What about camera's??

Disposable cameras are great. Be sure to write the campers name on it so that if it is lost, it can be returned.

Should I label clothing and other items??

It's usually a good idea for towels, sleeping bags, pillows, fanny packs, jackets or any important item of clothing. Lost and found items are announced at each meal time and there is a lost and found table in the dining hall where campers can claim items. Consider sending old towels and pillow that you don't mind getting lost. Stuff will get lost. With 8 campers sharing a small room, things tend to get mixed up and packed in the wrong suit case.

What if my child gets sick???

We have nurses on duty 24 hours a day at camp. There is also an EMT on Rock Springs Staff. The nurse will administer any treatment and can take care of cuts, scrapes, sprains, chiggers, sunburn, etc. As per your directions on the health form, the nurse can also give ibuprofen and other over the counter medications. If there is need for additional treatment, the agents will call you and we will take the camper to the Junction City Hospital Emergency Room. Should this be needed, we will stay with them at all times and keep you informed of the situation.

What do I do with my child's medicine??

All medicine should be checked in with the nurses when you arrive at camp. Parents will complete a form which gives dosage instructions and other pertinent information. All medicines should be in the original container, with the medicine name and dosage label. The nurse will log this into the book and then will make sure that medication is dispensed as required. We do not want counselors or campers to have this responsibility to remember to take medications on a regular basis. Any leftover medication will be returned to the camper at breakfast the last day of camp.

What about inhalers and EPI pins?

Campers should carry these at all times at camp so that they are available when they are needed. They should not be checked in with the nurse or left in the cabin.

Sometimes when my child is in a new situation or really tired they wet the bed. How is that handled?

This isn't unusual and it's a subject that we cover in counselors training. The counselors will discreetly place the sleeping bag near the door of the cabin. They will let one of the Butler County adults know about the situation. We have access to a washer and dryer and can take care of the bedding and replace it by bed time. It will be handled in a low-key way, without any fuss or attention.



I heard that campers do KP. What's that all about??

Camp meals are served family style. In order to make camp meal time work, living groups take turns setting and clearing the tables. The kitchen staff gives all the directions and other adults at camp help out too. Each group only has to do KP one time during camp. It is worked into their individual schedules so that they do not miss any planned camp activities.

What do campers do about storms??

There are assigned storm shelters in all locations throughout camp. The Rock Springs Staff is in constant contact with officials about weather situations. In the event of severe weather, Rock Springs Staff members go to each cabin/living group and move them to shelter. Storm sirens are also used. During the day, staff members at each venue practice storm safety procedures and would move the group to a safe location. In addition, counselors each know their assigned shelter.



What are the safety precautions taken at camp?

For horseback riding, all campers wear RSR helmets. In addition, they should wear long pants (sweats are fine) and closed toed shoes (sneakers are OK – flip flops are not). At the rifle range, protective eye wear is provided by the camp and required to be worn. All campers wear RSR life jackets when canoeing. And any camper who wants to go in the deep end of the pool, must demonstrate to the life guard that they can swim the width of the pool. Those that qualify will be given wrist bands which show that they can go off the diving board in the deep end. All other campers will be required to stay in the shallow 4' part of the pool.

Are there other adults at camp??

Each county sends several adults. There is one adult for every 20 campers at camp, sometimes more. The adults are assigned sleeping quarters in each of the living areas and will assist campers and counselors as needed.

