



# Parent Handbook 2025



# WELCOME TO RYDE LAKE CAMP 2025



## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS and CAMPERS

### MAKE SURE YOUR CAMPER IS HEALTHY AND WELL-RESTED

The camp routine is busy and physically demanding. Make sure your camper arrives well-rested and healthy. This plays a big part in ensuring that they have a great week. The wake-up buzzer sounds at 7 am and other than a rest hour after lunch, campers are on the go all day.

Those few nights before camp are not the best time to have a sleepover! If your camper is feeling unwell during those few days before the start of camp, please contact Franny (the camp director) to discuss the situation.

**KEEPING HEALTHY AT CAMP** If there have been any changes in the info you provided on your camper's **health form**, please inform the camp office before or on arrival at camp. This info is important in ensuring we meet the needs of your camper.

**ALL MEDICATIONS** (including meds such as vitamins and Tylenol) **must be handed in to the nurse at the dining hall on arrival.** Medications must be in their original container and clearly labeled with the camper's name.

Medications are given after each meal and at bedtime. If your camper's routine medication time cannot fit into this schedule, let the nurse know on arrival at camp and we can adjust the times.

**EPIPENS AND INHALERS** – Parents, if your camper has an Epipen or inhaler, please touch base with the nurse on arrival regarding these items. If your camper normally carries these items with her, we suggest that this practice continues at camp. Be sure to send a fanny pack specifically for that purpose.

Ryde will also have inexpensive fanny packs for sale at arrival time.

### **WHAT WE'RE DOING TO KEEP EVERYONE HEALTHY**

- encouraging good handwashing before meals and throughout the day
- encouraging hand sanitizer use - available at each sleeping cabin, the dining hall and other program areas
- promotion of good ventilation with ceiling fans and open windows in all buildings
- outdoor programming as much as possible

**TUCK** – A favourite time of the day! Campers may spend the equivalent of 50 cents on treats at “tuck” time, held after lunch, before heading off for Rest Hour. Tuck is the camp version of shopping at the store for treats. This amount is included in the camper fee. Please do not send cash with your camper. Treats include: fresh fruit, chips, licorice, assortment of penny candy, granola bars.

### **RYDE LAKE CLOTHING, water bottles, mugs, bucket hats, bathing caps, fanny packs and other items**

- are available for purchase on arrival / departure days only, payment is by cash or e-transfer  
- all campers and staff wear a white bathing cap while in the water, this is a safety precaution due to the darkness of the lake water and helps the lifeguards in keeping an eye on everyone in the water  
Water bottles and white lycra bathing caps will be available for purchase at camp for a nominal cost.

**CAMP PHOTO / T-SHIRT** - Each camper receives a camp photo and T-shirt. The cost is included in your camper fee. The entire camp wears their t-shirt for the camp photo taken on Monday just before dinner and for the last night banquet on Friday.

*Don't forget to pick up your photo at check out on departure day.*

**LOST and FOUND** - All unclaimed items are stored for two weeks after your last day at camp. After that they will be donated to a charity. Please call if you have lost an item and we will attempt to locate it. On departure day, check out the 'lost and found' table. It's worth a quick look!

**LABELS** Please label items and clothing to avoid loss.

A Sharpie marker works well to add your camper's first name and last initial on the clothing label or using masking tape on items such as water bottle, bathing cap, camera, insect repellent, sun screen and luggage. If you prefer purchasing labels, Mabel's Labels has a camp program and your purchase helps Ryde too. Check out [camps.mabelslabels.com](http://camps.mabelslabels.com)

**MAIL** - Campers definitely look forward to receiving a few letters during the week.

We suggest 3 or four letters during the week This helps to keep all campers in the cabin on the same playing field. Please do not send any edibles or gum.

Mail often takes more than a week to reach camp and goes to our post office box in town which is checked every few days.

**There are two options for sending mail:**

**Option 1 is recommended!**

**1. Write your letters ahead of time and drop into the "red mailbox" on arrival day (it will be located close to the check-in table) We will be happy to distribute it during the week.**

Note your camper's name on the envelope and the day of the week you would like them to receive it.

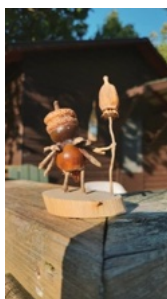
OR

**2. Send via Canada Post.** If using this option be sure to mail your letter the week prior to camp. Often your camper will arrive home before the letter reaches Ryde. If that is the case, rest assured we will re-direct it to your home. If you do choose to send your letters via Canada Post, they should be addressed as follows:

**Ryde Lake Camp**

**(Camper Name)**

**Box 1120 Gravenhurst ON P1P 1V4**





### HOW TO CONTACT US DURING CAMP:

Please call us directly at **705-394-5959** or email at [office@rvdelakecamp.com](mailto:office@rvdelakecamp.com)

Phone calls, texts, or emails will be answered as promptly as possible, usually within an hour and definitely before the end of the day (8 pm).

**CAMPERS AND THE PHONE** - Campers do not have access to the phone. Experience has shown that campers often become homesick after talking to their parents, even if they haven't been experiencing any homesickness. If you would like to know how your camper is doing, feel free to call and speak with the camp director at any time. If a message is left, we will return your call before day's end.

**HOMESICKNESS** - This is a normal reaction to being away from the comforts and routines of family life. Many campers experience some degree of homesickness, and is usually quite mild. It is not only restricted to younger campers but also older campers too.

#### **There are a few things that you can do to help:**

- Talk about the possibility of homesickness before camp, mention it in a positive way: that it is normal and reassure your camper that with the help of the staff, you are confident they will be able to cope with it.
- Send along a familiar source of security, ie. blanket, stuffed animal, pictures.
- When you write letters to your camper, make sure you do not stress how much you miss them but rather make your letter positive with specific questions about their cabin mates, friends, and activities. Do not tell them how much you and the dog are missing them! Lol.
- Don't tell your child that she can call and come home if she doesn't like it. Campers who are told this have an extremely hard time getting over their homesickness. Fun and independence are rarely gained and the camper is left with feelings of failure. Staff are trained to help with homesickness.
- Be positive in your message. For example, rather than saying before they leave, "I don't know what I'll do without you". But rather reinforce how proud you are of them attending camp and you will look forward to hearing about it soon.
- We're here to help! Don't hesitate to speak to the camp director or assistant directors about any concerns

### CAMPER CABINS AND OTHER TIDBITS TO KNOW...

The camper cabin is your camper's home for the week. Campers are assigned to cabins according to their age.

There are 6 to 8 campers and 2 leaders per cabin. Both leaders sleep in the cabin each night.

If campers need to use the washroom during the night, in the case of the younger campers, a leader will accompany them. If the campers are older, they may go in pairs with another camper.

Campers sit with their cabin for most meals. Some activities are done as a cabin group, other activities are chosen by each camper. There are some camp-wide activities such as after-lunch singsong, evening campfires, evening programs and waterfront time. This combination gives campers the opportunity to get to know their smaller cabin group, while camp-wide activities give a good feeling of being a part of something bigger.



## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DETAILS

[Map and Directions](#) can be found on the [Contact Us](#) page of the website.

### ARRIVAL – SUNDAY at 3 pm

We will be waiting eagerly to welcome you at 3 pm!

The staff will be involved in preparations right up until that time, so please try to avoid an early arrival, though we understand that sometimes it is difficult to predict driving times and traffic. If you do arrive early, you are welcome to do a walk-about of the site while waiting for check-in to start.

#### **On arrival:**

1. **Check-in takes place at the Dining Hall.** Staff will be in the parking area to direct you where to go. Campers will pick up their Ryde t-shirt and have the opportunity to purchase any Ryde items. If you need a white bathing cap, they will be available too. Payment is by e-transfer, cash, cheque.
2. The **camp nurse** will be on hand to collect medications and speak with parents about any concerns.
3. After check-in you will head down to the cabins, meet the cabin leaders and help her settle in. If you're new to Ryde, there will be staff who will guide you to your cabin.
4. **At 3:50** you will hear the sound of the buzzer. This is the signal for campers to head back to the dining hall for the Welcome Meeting and the time for parent goodbyes.

### DEPARTURE - SAT at 9:30 am

1. Campers and their luggage will be waiting for you at the Dining Hall area. Be sure to head inside to officially check out your camper, pick up your camp photo and any medications.
2. The “Ryde Store” will be open for items you may like to purchase. Payment by e-transfer, cash, cheque.



## **PACKING LIST – THE MUST-HAVES!**

- 5-7 T-shirts
- 3-4 pairs of shorts
- 2-3 sweaters / sweatshirts
- 3-4 pairs of long pants
- 7-10 pairs of underwear
- 7-10 pairs of socks
- Pajamas (for warm and cool nights)
- 1 jacket
- Raincoat or rain poncho/rainboots
- Sturdy shoes, suitable for hiking/running
- Sturdy sandals or Crocks for general use
- Bathing suit
- Beach towel(s)
- white bathing cap (can be purchased at camp)
- Sunhat
- Sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Insect repellent
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Water bottle
- Comb/hairbrush
- Shampoo
- Soap, washcloth, towel
- Toothbrush/toothpaste/small plastic cup
- Deodorant
- Kleenex
- Sanitary supplies
- Sleeping bag
- Warm blanket
- Fitted sheet (to cover the vinyl-covered mattress)
- Pillow

## **OPTIONAL:**

- Inexpensive camera or an old cellphone (SIM card and all apps removed)
- A fanny pack or small backpack can be handy on hikes
- Flip-flops for **showers/waterfront purposes only**
- Addressed, stamped envelopes/writing paper (for letters home)
- Bag or basket to store/carry your toiletries to the Comfort Station
- Laundry bag - an extra pillow case works great!
- #6 knitting needles (if your camper is interested in learning to knit)
- Musical instruments – if you play the ukulele or guitar, please bring it along!
- Deck of cards/small board games
- Reading material for rest hour and/or bedtime – books, magazines
- Stuffed animal
- Afterbite or a similar anti-itch product
- Sharpie marker - (black or a dark colour is best) for signing camp shirts on the last day
- Swim goggles

## **Help us create a positive experience for everyone by NOT sending the following items to camp:**

- food or snack items (encourages critters in the cabins)
- all electronics including cell phones, laptops, iPads, portable music players, etc.
- walkie talkies
- expensive clothing and jewellery, do not bring anything of value that you would be upset about losing
- curling irons / hair dryers
- candles / lighters / matches
- make-up



## **HANDY PACKING TIPS:**

**Keep packing simple and realistic** – Please don't overpack! Space in cabins is limited. Luggage is stored under bunk beds. There is between 8-12 inches of space under the bunks. Suitcases, duffle bags, and low Rubbermaid containers work well. Include your camper in the packing process. It helps to reduce lost items and also increases the camper's sense of independence. Please try to avoid black garbage bags for laundry or sleeping bags, etc. When everyone's luggage is under the pavilion on departure day, every black garbage bag looks the same!

**Clothing** – Please don't buy new clothes for camp!

Bring comfortable well-worn items. Ryde is a down-to-earth, non-competitive environment where the norm is sweats, t-shirts, shorts/jeans. We advise against designer-type clothing or anything of great value.

**Rainwear** - Raincoat or poncho and rubber boots are absolutely essential. Rain or shine, camp life goes on!

**Bedding/ pajamas** - In addition to your sleeping bag, bring a twin fitted sheet to cover the mattress and a **warm** blanket. Warm pajamas are a must too! Might even need to slip on a hoodie for those extra cool nights. Even when it's warm during the day, summer nights in Muskoka can be cool.

**Footwear** - Sturdy, closed-toe shoes are a must for hiking and other outdoor activities. Sturdy sandals can also be used for general wear but please note that flip-flop type sandals are allowed **only** for waterfront time and showers.



## A DAY AT RYDE

7:00	<u>RISE and SHINE !</u>	*BUZZER
7:15	Polar Bear Dip (optional)	
7:45	Morning Watch - full camp meets at the top of the waterfront to start the day with Salutation to the Dawn	
8:15	<u>BREAKFAST</u>	*BUZZER rings @ 8:10 - followed by cabin clean-up
9:15 - 9:45	Discovery Time with your cabin - a short time to discuss the week's theme.	
9:55 - 11:05	Interest Groups - include kayaking, canoeing, crafts, ukulele, guitar, hiking, archery, aqua fitness, campfire building, nature activity, choir, yoga, drama, knitting, friendship knotting, dance . . . sometimes the camper chooses, other times it is a cabin activity.	
11:15 - 11:45	Waterfront Time - swim, kayak, enjoy the docks	
12:15	<u>LUNCH</u>	*BUZZER rings @12:10 followed by Singsong and Tuck
1:45 - 2:45	Rest Hour - quiet time	*BUZZER rings at end of rest hour
3:00 - 4:00	Interest Groups - as above	
4:15 - 4:45	Waterfront Time for everyone - swim, kayak, enjoy the docks	
5:15	<u>DINNER</u>	*BUZZER @5:10
6:30 - 7:30	Cabin Time - cabins choose their activity	
7:45 - 8:30	Evening Program - full camp	
8:30	Vespers / Snack	
9:30	Lights out for younger cabins	
10:00	Lights out for older cabins	