

Parent Letter and Camp Policies regarding Cell Phones, the Internet and other Technologies.

Dear Parents,

We have always taken the safety and well-being of our campers...your children...very seriously. After all, giving your children over to the care of other people is perhaps the greatest act of trust you as a parent can engage in. We want to do everything humanly possible to earn and keep that trust.

We also know that we cannot do this without your help. With more and more children using the Internet, cell phones, and other technologies at younger ages, we appeal to you as parents to partner with us to ensure that your children continue to have the safest, most wholesome experience with us at camp as possible.

Please read our letter carefully. It will help you understand the challenges some technologies pose to the continued health and safety of our camp community. Please also review with your child the enclosed policies regarding the Internet and social networking sites. As always we invite you to call us if you have any questions or concerns about any of these issues.

Cell Phones

As you know we have a "no-cell-phone" policy at camp. Aside from the fact that cell phones are expensive and can get lost or stolen, and that the physical camp environment is not kind to such items, there is a fundamental problem with campers having cell phones at camp, and that is trust. When children come to camp, both you and your child are making a leap of faith by temporarily transferring their primary care from you as their parents to us and their counselors. This is one of the growth producing yet challenging aspects of camp. As children learn to trust other caring adults, they grow and learn, little by little, to solve some of their own challenges.

We believe their emerging independence is one of the greatest benefits of camp. It is one important way your child develops greater resilience. Contacting you by phone essentially means they have not made that transition. It also prevents us from getting to problems that may arise and addressing them quickly. Sending a cell phone to camp is like saying to your child that you as a parent haven't truly come to peace with the notion of them being away from you and in our care.

We agree to tell you if your child is experiencing a challenge in their adjustment to camp. You can help by talking to your child before they leave for camp and telling them that there is always someone they can reach out to, whether it be their counselor or camp director. We are all here to help. But if you don't trust us, your children certainly won't!

Another problem with cell phones at camp is that many of them have built-in cameras. It has happened at many camps that children have secretly taken photos of other campers or staff during changing or bathroom use and uploaded them to the Internet. We choose to avoid these unfortunate byproducts of cell phone use by prohibiting cell phone use at **Club SciKidz Camps**.

iPods, Tablets & Video Download Devices

These devices are also not allowed at camp for the same reasons that we are prohibiting cell phones. These devices have the capability to download and store in a private manner and are easily available to sexually explicit, degrading, foul and vulgar content, which is highly inappropriate at camp.

Working Together

We see many positive, exciting ways for youngsters to enjoy the healthy benefits of the Internet and other technologies. As advocates for children we want to work with you to keep those experiences safe, healthy, and positive. That is why we have taken the time to write these policies and urge you to talk to your children, both about camp and their online activity in general.

Thank you for your help with this matter. And we wish you and your children a terrific camp season!

Bob & Sue Hagan
Club SciKidz/Tech Scientific