

## **2008 Smirkus Camp Handbook: A Reference for Parents and Campers**

The Circus Barn, Inc. is happy to welcome you to Smirkus Camp 2008. Circus Smirkus is a nonprofit organization founded in 1987 to introduce kids to traditional circus arts and to cultivate an appreciation for them. At Smirkus Camp we emphasize the concentration and commitment required to pursue any art form in a casual and noncompetitive environment, while encouraging realistic goal setting and striving for accomplishment. Our goal is to teach circus and life skills to campers while providing a safe and fun place for kids to be themselves.

We hope this handbook helps parents to have a safe and fun experience while their children are at camp. And helps campers to experience a camp session full of mail and clean socks! Here's how:

**Send mail to:**           Your Child's Name  
                              Smirkus Camp @ Sterling College  
                              Craftsbury Common, VT 05827

We encourage letter writing to and from camp. The best method for sending letters and packages is through the U.S. Postal Service. FedEx and UPS is not guaranteed delivery on specified date to Smirkus Camp, as it is signed for by Sterling College and can take an extra day to reach us. Please send all camper mail to the above camp address, as sending mail to The Circus Barn in Greensboro will delay its arrival into your camper's hands. Mail that reaches camp after the recipient has left will be returned to sender. Packages can be sent to camper's home via COD upon request.

### **Pack these items:**

- Sleeping bag or twin-sized bedding (sheets and blanket)
- Pillow
- Twin-sized mattress cover (required by Sterling College)
- Towel and toiletries (soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc)
- Closed-toed shoes or sneakers (for running and unicycling and stiling...)
- Clean socks and underwear for every day at camp (it doesn't hurt to bring extra ☺)
- Clothing for every day at camp (long workout pants, shorts & t-shirts)
- Raincoat or poncho (in the likely event that it rains)
- Swimsuit (for pie day festivities and water days, if applicable)
- Prescription medications (in camper's name only) to be given to nurse at registration
- Black pants, leggings or shorts to use as a costume piece for the end of session performance\*  
Advanced Campers should also bring a black t-shirt, tank top or leotard  
\*Not required for Smirkling Camp.

### **Other things you can pack, but are not necessary to purchase if you don't already own:**

- Ballet or dance shoes for tightrope wire, leotards and yoga pants for aerials
- Juggling equipment (clubs, balls, rings, diabolos, torches...) and/or unicycle
- Costume items for nightly dinner dress-ups (ex: superhero, pirate,
- Stationary items for writing home, playing cards and/or book for reading during quiet time
- Musical instruments (not to be played during quiet time)
- Oscillating fan, night light and your favorite teddy bear
- Camera, flashlight, CD or mp3 player

**Please refrain from bringing the following items:**

Candy, sugary snacks, soda, cell phones, electronic games (Gameboy, PSP, etc), portable TV and DVD players, computers, refrigerators, knives, money, pet snakes, etc. These items will be confiscated and returned at the end of the session.

Please be prepared for a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions. Vermont is known for its unpredictable weather: be prepared for hot, cold, wet, dry and everything in between. We require long leggings or workout pants for participating on aerial equipment. Clothing that is too baggy (extra large shirts) or too tight (jeans) will hinder progress on most equipment.

Campers bringing juggling knives, torches or other flaming objects, as well as fuel must check their props with the coaching staff at registration. These items will be stored in the training area and only used under coach supervision.

**Campers are not allowed to keep any medications in their rooms or on their person.**

All medications, prescription and over-the-counter, must be given to the camp nurse at registration and will be given to the camper as prescribed or as needed. This includes but is not limited to inhalers, vitamins, homeopathic remedies, cough syrups and pain relievers. A medical kit with all camper medications and basic first aid supplies is with the camper group at all times.

**Camper Responsibilities:**

Campers are expected to be mindful of the following rules and responsibilities:

1. Be respectful! Be kind to your fellow campers and their stuff, the camp staff, Sterling College, the circus tents & equipment and most importantly, yourself! Please refrain from inappropriate language and subject matter.
2. Be known! Your counselor needs to know where you are at all times, please ask them if it is okay for you to go somewhere (if you aren't sure, ask!). When visiting, doors must remain open and all feet should be on the floor - one visitor per camper per room please.
3. Be clean! Shower regularly, wear clean socks and underwear on a daily basis, use soap! Your rooms and dorms should be kept clean and orderly as well, so as to not attract skunks, raccoons and bugs.
4. Be healthy! Campers are expected to eat 3 well-rounded meals every day in order to participate in the circus activities. Please keep the candy and sugary snacks at home. Get plenty of sleep; bedtime is set to ensure the proper amount of rest to participate in the rigors of circus training. Please report all injuries or illnesses to your counselor or the camp nurse as soon as possible.
5. Be safe! If you aren't sure about something, please ask a counselor or coach. Follow the above responsibilities and everyone will have fun at camp!

**Discipline Policy:**

We realize that children often exhibit uncharacteristic behaviors when they are in new surroundings. Inappropriate behaviors are addressed in the following steps:

1. Private talk with the camper and counselor/coach.
2. Camper sits out of activities for a designated time and makes restitution/apology as appropriate. Parent/guardian(s) will receive a phone call from the Camp Directors for serious problems (hitting, verbal abuse, ignoring safety rules, repeat offenses).

3. Discussion with key staff, Camp Directors and camper, followed by a phone call to the parent/guardian(s) by the camper.
4. Dismissal from camp.

**Dismissal from Camp:**

We expect campers and staff to behave courteously and respectfully towards each other and the circus equipment, as well as towards Sterling College staff and property. The following is a list of actions that will result in immediate dismissal from camp.

1. The possession and/or use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs.
2. Disregard for safety on or around the equipment and dorms.
3. Inappropriate actions towards other campers and/or staff (verbal and/or physical).

We make every effort to work with families to accommodate unusual circumstances (medications, recent death in the family, divorce, relocation, behavior extremes, etc.) but we cannot give your child the necessary support if we do not know the need. Please inform us ahead of time of any concerns you might have.

**Camp Office Information:**

Summer Camp Office (June 15 to August 16)

Phone 802 586-2555

Email [camp@smirkus.org](mailto:camp@smirkus.org)

Circus Smirkus Headquarters

Phone 802 533-7443

Fax 802 533-2480 (attn: Smirkus Camp)

Email [camp@smirkus.org](mailto:camp@smirkus.org)

Campers do not have access to telephones and are not allowed to call home. If you have concerns regarding your camper or need to relay a message to him or her, please call the Camp Co-Directors, Jessica Labun and Megan Rose at (802) 586-2555. Please be advised that we are usually with the campers and staff making sure that they are being safe and having fun. We do check messages several times a day and will return your call as soon as possible. If there is an emergency, please call Circus Smirkus Headquarters at (802) 533-7443 or leave a message at (802) 586-2555.

**Layovers:**

There is a layover option for campers who need to stay at camp between sessions (attending multiple sessions, flight takes off in morning, etc). Campers are expected to continue to follow the camp responsibilities during the layover period. Layover activities may include movies, swimming, games, meals at a local restaurant, attending local attractions, etc. The cost is \$75 per night and must be arranged prior to the start of the session. There is no layover available after Advanced Camp.

*Campers are not permitted to train in the circus tents during the layover period.*

**Lodging, Airport and Shuttle Services:**

For lodging and recreation options in the area local to Smirkus Camp, please check out the following references: State of Vermont Travel & Tourism Bureau (1-800-VERMONT)

[www.vermontvacations.com](http://www.vermontvacations.com)

Northeast Kingdom Travel & Tourism Association (1-800-884-8001)

[www.travelthekingdom.com](http://www.travelthekingdom.com)

The Highland Lodge in Greensboro, VT (802-533-2647)

[www.highlandlodge.com](http://www.highlandlodge.com)

When booking flights to and from Smirkus Camp, please be aware that the Burlington Airport is between 1.5 and 2 hours from camp. It is recommended that you leave at least 3 hours between the end of the camp session and the time of departure.

Circus Smirkus is no longer offering shuttle services to and from Smirkus Camp. The following are local shuttle services that can accommodate your transportation needs.

Lone Wolf Taxi (802) 922-3190 Bolton Valley, VT <http://vt.local.yahoo.biz/lonewolftaxi/>

A Taxi Service (802) 658-2299 Burlington, VT

Executive Transit of Vermont 1-800-388-0150 Burlington, VT

### **Directions:**

Smirkus Camp is held on the campus of Sterling College in Craftsbury Common, located in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. While not far away, camp is **not** held in the same location as Circus Smirkus Headquarters (the Circus Barn) in Greensboro.

Use 1354 North Craftsbury Road, Craftsbury Common, Vermont 05827 as the address when obtaining directions from [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com) or other on-line services.

From I-89 North:

Take exit 8 to Montpelier, VT continuing straight onto Route 2 East for 9 miles to East Montpelier. Route 14 North for 28 miles to Craftsbury...

From I-89 South:

Take exit 10 to Waterbury, VT turning left onto Route 100 North for 19 miles to Morrisville. Take Route 15A for 1.5 miles and turn right onto Route 15 East for 12 miles to Hardwick. Turn left onto Route 14 North for 7 miles to Craftsbury...

From I-91 North & South:

Take exit 21 to St. Johnsbury, VT turning onto Route 2 West for 11 miles to West Danville. Turn right onto Route 15 West for 13 miles to Hardwick, turning right onto Route 14 North for 7 miles to Craftsbury...

... Turn right onto South Craftsbury Road for 3 miles to Craftsbury Common. Look for the Smirkus Camp and Sterling College signs on the left.

**Please call the office at 802 533-7443 x23 prior to the start of camp if you have any questions or concerns that were not addressed in this edition of the Smirkus Camp Handbook.**

**Thank you from all of the Smirkus Camp Staff!**