

2010 Smirkus Camp Handbook: A Reference for Parents and Campers

The Circus Barn, Inc is happy to welcome you to Circus Smirkus Camp's 20th Birthday Celebration! Circus Smirkus is a non-profit 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 @ Lyndon Institute
 PO Box 127
 Lyndon Center, VT 05850

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 Lyndon Institute and can take an extra day or two 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 Lyndon Institute)
 - Towel and toiletries (soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, etc)
 - Closed-toed shoes or sneakers (for running and unicycling and stiling – not Crocs)
 - 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 & a sweatshirt)
 - Raincoat or poncho (in the likely event that it rains, rain boots are also recommended)
 - Swimsuit and towel (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*
Intermediate & 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, decades)
- Stationary items for writing home, playing cards and/or book for reading during quiet time
- Musical instruments (not to be played during quiet time in your own room 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, Lyndon Institute, the circus tents & equipment and most importantly, yourself! Please refrain from inappropriate language, touching and/or 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 be safe and 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 Lyndon Institute 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, injuries, illnesses, 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 or your child might have.

Camp Office Information:

Summer Camp Office (June 13 to August 15)

Phone 802 735-4388

Email camp@smirkus.org

Circus Smirkus Headquarters

Phone 802 533-7443

Fax 802 533-2480 (attn: Smirkus Camp)

Email 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 the summer office phone number. 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 the summer office.

Staff Tips:

The Smirkus Camp Staff are happy to accept tips in various forms: chocolate chip cookies, peanut butter cookies, oatmeal cookies, sugar cookies, brownies, birthday cake... Though if your baking skills are similar to those of the Co-Directors, we would also happily accept monetary donations towards either our end of summer Staff Dinner or to the Circus Smirkus Scholarship Fund.

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 the Individual Acts or Road Show sessions. Campers are not permitted to train in the circus tents during layovers.

Lodging, Airport and Shuttle Services:

For lodging, recreation options and transportation services in the area local to Smirkus Camp, please check out the following references:

State of Vermont Travel & Tourism Bureau (1-800-VERMONT)

www.vermontvacation.com

Lyndon Area Chamber of Commerce (802-626-9696)

www.lyndonvermont.com

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

www.travelthekingdom.com

When booking flights to and from Smirkus Camp, please be aware that the Burlington Airport is between 2 and 2.5 hours from camp. It is recommended that you allow at least 3.5 hours between the end of the camp session and the time of departure.

We are working with On The Go Transportation Service of Hinesburg, VT to get you the best shuttle service to and from Smirkus Camp. To arrange transportation with one of their certified drivers from the Burlington Airport, Bus or Train Station, please contact Cherrie Willette at (802)-343-1520 or via email at onthego@gmavt.net.

Directions:

Smirkus Camp is held on the campus of Lyndon Institute in Lyndon Center, located in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. Camp is **not** held in the same location as Circus Smirkus Headquarters (the Circus Barn, Inc) in Greensboro, Vermont.

Use 168 Institute Circle, Lyndon Center, Vermont 05850 as the address when obtaining directions from www.maps.google.com, www.mapquest.com, GPS systems, or other on-line services.

From the Greater Boston Area:

Take I-93 North to I-91 North. Follow I-91 N to Exit 23 (Lyndonville).

From Montreal and points North:

Take Rte 10 East to I-55 South. When you cross the border, I-55 becomes I-91 South. Follow I-91 S to Exit 23 (Lyndonville).

From Burlington, VT and points West:

Take I-89 South to Montpelier (exit 8). Take Rte. 2 East to I-91 North. Follow I-91 N to Exit 23 (Lyndonville).

From I-91 Exit 23 (Lyndonville):

Turn right onto Rte 5 North and almost immediately turn left onto Back Center Road just before the Colonnade Motor Inn. Follow for 1.5 miles to an intersection with Center Street (Rte. 122). Go straight at stop sign and continue for approximately one block, at which point you are at the Lyndon Institute Campus.

Please call the office at 802 533-7443 ext. 23 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!