



# 2023

# Parent Handbook

**Celebrating 12 years**

Please read carefully for a number of important changes

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## Letter from the Directors

Dear Parents,

It is our great pleasure to welcome you and your children to the CGI Poconos family! Our camp was established with a vision to offer every Jewish child, regardless of background or affiliation, a place to experience the traditional values and soul of Judaism in a joyful, fun, and inspired community.

Over the past decade, we have seen more than 700 children benefit immensely from the immersive overnight camp experience and we are thrilled to have the opportunity to create an equally enriching and unforgettable experience for your children as well.

Our summer camp program is designed to provide a safe, supportive, and exciting environment for your children to learn, grow, and have fun. Our dedicated staff members are committed to ensuring that each child has a positive and engaging experience and that they leave with memories that will last a lifetime.

In this parent handbook, you will find important information about our program, including our policies and procedures, daily schedule, and contact information for our staff. We encourage you to review this handbook carefully and reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for choosing CGI Poconos for your children. We are excited to embark on this adventure with you and your family, and we look forward to creating lifelong memories with your children this summer.

Sincerely,

Gershon & Devorah Sandler  
Founders and Executive Directors

## Leadership Team

Gershon & Devorah Sandler  
Founders & Executive Directors  
[Gsandler@cgipoconos.org](mailto:Gsandler@cgipoconos.org)

Moussia Kraus  
Registrar  
[office@cgipoconos.org](mailto:office@cgipoconos.org)

Rabbi Moshe Browd  
Director of Growth & Operations  
[Moshe@cgipoconos.org](mailto:Moshe@cgipoconos.org)

Mrs. Menucha Isenberg  
Assistant Director

Mrs. Dini Druk  
Camp Director  
[Dini@cgipoconos.org](mailto:Dini@cgipoconos.org)

Mrs. Nechama Dinah Lipskier  
Program Director

Mrs. Malka Jacobson  
Learning Director

## Required Forms

To ensure that your daughter can attend camp, the following forms must be completed online by **May 1, 2023**. Forms can be accessed via the Companion app or your CampMinder CampInTouch account.

☐ 1) Camper Application (online)

☐ 2) Bunk Request (online)

See more info regarding bunk requests on page 22.

☐ 3) Camper Profile (online)

☐ 4) Cell Phone Policy and Agreement (Online)

See more info regarding our cell phone policy on page 11.

☐ 5) Health History (online)

See more info regarding health care in camp on page 14.

☐ 6) Immunization (pdf to print, complete, and then upload online)

☐ 7) Parent Authorization (pdf to print, complete, and then upload online)

☐ 8) Physician's Exam (pdf to print, complete, and then upload online)

☐ 9) Transportation (online)

See more info regarding transportation on page 17.

## **New: Companion App**

One of the many things we are working on for summer 2023, is striving to bring parents closer to their camper's experience. This summer we're using an amazing new app called Companion to help us do just that.

The best things about it? It helps with all of your pre-camp preparations and you get fun updates and photos of your camper right on your phone. Companion makes you feel closer to your camper's experience than ever before.

Companion can be downloaded via google play store and apple app store.

The Companion app can be used to:

- Fill out and submit forms
- View photos, and receive a push notification when your camper is spotted, via face recognition.
- Easily send emails to your camper
- Receive updates and messages from CGI Poconos during camp, and year round.

We look forward to sharing the experience of camp in a new, modern way this summer!

## **About Camp Gan Israel Poconos**

Camp Gan Israel in the Poconos is a unique overnight camp that attracts campers from over 26 states and 8 countries. For the past 11 years, we have been providing a top-quality camping experience infused with Jewish values. Our single-gender sessions create a relaxed and supportive atmosphere, where campers can develop new skills and build long-lasting friendships without the pressure of social expectations.

Our mission at CGI Poconos is to offer Jewish children and teens an exciting and captivating overnight camping experience in a picturesque woodland setting. We provide a dynamic curriculum that allows campers to learn about and fully experience Jewish life in an informal and engaging way. Our nurturing

environment enables children and teens to internalize the values they need to thrive as adults.

At CGI Poconos, we focus on creating a fun-filled and supportive environment that allows campers to build new skills and form meaningful friendships. Through our program, participants naturally connect with their spiritual heritage and build a strong Jewish identity that fosters a sense of belonging and provides inspiration for their journey through life. Our staff is dedicated to ensuring that each camper has a positive and memorable experience at CGI Poconos.

### **About The Facility**

Nestled in the heart of the picturesque Pocono Mountains, CGI Poconos offers a one-of-a-kind camping experience on an expansive 85-acre property just minutes away from the Delaware Water Gap Recreation Area. Surrounded by lush woodlands, our facility offers an idyllic setting that allows young people to fully immerse themselves in the beauty of nature and explore the great outdoors.

At CGI Poconos, we take pride in offering our campers a wide range of top-notch facilities and amenities to ensure that their stay is both comfortable and enjoyable. Our camp boasts a stunning lake perfect for boating. Our sparkling pool offers a refreshing dip and is perfect for swimming lessons or just cooling off on a hot summer day.

We also have ample sports facilities including soccer fields, basketball and tennis courts, and volleyball courts to keep campers active and engaged. Our sports programs are designed to encourage campers to develop their skills and foster a love for physical activity. Additionally, our arts and crafts program provides a creative outlet for campers to explore and express their artistic side.

Additionally, our camp features a beautiful 4000 square-foot gym, a thrilling ropes course, a challenging climbing wall, and lovely paths and camping areas nestled deep in the woods, providing an unparalleled outdoor experience for our campers.

The cabins and buildings at CGI Poconos are thoughtfully designed to blend seamlessly with the natural surroundings, offering campers a comfortable and inviting retreat. Our camper cabins are spacious, well-appointed, and meticulously maintained to ensure that campers enjoy a restful night's sleep after a day of outdoor adventures. Each cabin features a cozy covered front porch, an open area with comfortable wooden bunk beds along the walls, and shelves next to each bed to store personal belongings. For added comfort, each cabin also includes air conditioning.

In addition, each cabin has its own private bathroom located at the back, which includes two sinks, two toilets, and two showers - each with a private changing area. These well-equipped facilities ensure that campers can maintain good hygiene and privacy throughout their stay at CGI Poconos.

## **The Divisions At Camp**

CGI Poconos offers a variety of programs for girls of different ages. Our 4 divisions provide unique and memorable experiences for campers and help them build lifelong friendships.

### **Junior Camp**

The Junior Camp division is designed for our youngest campers, ages 8-11. It offers a wide range of activities, trips, and programs that combine fun with Jewish values and traditions. Our Junior Campers have the option of attending for either one or two sessions, allowing them to experience camp at their own pace.

### **Bat Mitzvah Division**

The Bat Mitzvah Experience (B-Me) division is a specially designed program for girls ages 11 years old. It combines all the fun of traditional overnight camp with special activities and trips that help deepen their understanding of entering adulthood. Our B-Me campers gain new perspectives on themselves and their place in the world, building confidence and developing lifelong skills.

### **Pioneers**

Building on the B-Me Experience, the Pioneers division for girls ages 12-13 offers a unique camping experience that caters to tweens. Along with classic camp



activities, the Pioneers participate in special trips and overnight camping, providing them with opportunities to bond with their peers while exploring new adventures and challenges.

### **Teen Camp**

For our oldest campers, CGI Poconos offers the Teen Experience, designed for girls ages 13-15. This culminating program provides a spectacular, action-packed summer, with in-depth instruction in all activity areas, life skills development, and leadership training. Our Teen campers leave CGI Poconos with a newfound sense of confidence, independence, and leadership skills, prepared to take on the world.

In each of our divisions, CGI Poconos provides a fun, safe, and welcoming environment where girls can learn, grow, and thrive. With our unique blend of fun, adventure, and Jewish values, we offer a summer camp experience like no other.

## **Communication**

### **Communicating with us prior to camp**

We understand that sending your child away to camp can be a big step, and we want to assure you that we are here to support you every step of the way. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Moussia, our camp registrar and office manager, with any questions or concerns you may have before camp. She can be reached via phone or email and will either assist you directly or direct you to the right person.

845.425.0903 Ext. 2

[office@cgipoconos.org](mailto:office@cgipoconos.org)

### **Communicating with us during Camp**

We want you to feel confident that your child is safe and happy while at camp, and we encourage you to reach out to us at any time. The camp office is open every day from 9:00 am until 6:00 pm. Our office staff will take your message and pass it along to the appropriate member of our Leadership Team. We do our best to return parent phone calls as quickly as possible on the day they are received. You can also send a WhatsApp message to the camp phone number, and we will respond as soon as possible. If the matter is urgent, please call.

Camp Phone Number: 845.425.0903

### **Camper Phone call Policy**

At Camp Gan Israel Poconos, we understand that communication between parents and campers is important. However, we also recognize that excessive communication during the camp session can impede the adjustment process and detract from the immersive experience that our campers enjoy. Therefore, we have established a weekly phone call policy that allows campers to stay in touch with their families while still fully participating in camp life.

Campers are allowed to call home once a week, starting approximately one week into camp. We will notify you via email of the day and time to expect the call. These calls are kept brief to help campers maintain focus on their camp activities and allow them to fully engage in the camp experience. We encourage parents to use this opportunity to check in with their children and show their support, but we also ask that parents refrain from discussing any issues that may negatively impact their camper's experience at camp.

### **Birthday Phone Calls**

If your daughter has a birthday during the camp season, please call the camp office a couple of days before the birthday to arrange a time to speak with your daughter on her birthday.

### **Sending Letters and Emails**

Please write letters and send e-mails to your daughter throughout the session. Receiving mail from home is vital in helping your daughter adjust to camp. You can send emails via the Companion app or via your CamplnTouch account.

Letters should be sent to the following address:

Camp Gan Israel Poconos

Attn: [Camper's Name]

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Dingmans Ferry, PA 18328

The campers as well are encouraged to send letters home during camp. Please send stationary and stamps with your daughter so she can write you letters and hand them to the office to have them mailed out.

## **Rules And Policies**

### **Introduction**

We know that sending your child away to camp can be a big decision, and we want to assure you that their safety and well-being are our top priorities. In this section, you will find important information about our policies and procedures, which are designed to create a safe, inclusive, and enjoyable environment for all campers. We encourage you to read through this section carefully. Our goal is to work in partnership with you to provide your child with a memorable and positive camp experience.

### **1. Respecting personal space**

At CGI Poconos, we firmly believe in respecting each individual's personal space. To maintain a safe and harmonious camp environment, we have a strict policy prohibiting anyone from crossing into another person's personal space, whether it be for playful or other reasons. It is crucial that all campers adhere to this rule and show respect towards their peers and the camp staff. Any instances of disrespectful or inappropriate behavior towards others will not be tolerated at any time and will result in immediate consequences, which may include disciplinary action and even expulsion from camp. It is essential that all campers recognize and uphold the importance of personal boundaries and treat everyone with kindness and consideration to ensure a positive and enjoyable camp experience for all.

### **2. Camp property**

Respecting camp property is crucial for all campers. Any form of defacement, such as graffiti or any other means, not only causes damage but also shows a lack of respect for the camp and its facilities. Campers who engage in such behavior will be held accountable and billed for any damages they cause.

### **3. Gratuities (tipping)**

At CGI Poconos, we have a strict no-gratuities policy for all our staff. We encourage parents to show their appreciation for our staff in other ways, such as by providing positive feedback, writing thank-you notes, or making a donation to CGI Poconos Scholarship Fund in honor of a special staff member. We strive to create a positive and supportive community at camp, and we believe that this policy helps to promote fairness and equal treatment for all our staff members.

### **4. Electronics: CGI Poconos has a “No Electronics Policy”**

At CGI Poconos, we strongly believe that camp is a unique environment where children can learn and develop important life skills such as independence, resilience, and the ability to build strong relationships. Therefore, we have a strict policy against bringing cell phones or any other electronic devices to camp.

We understand that parents may want to stay in touch with their children, but we encourage parents to use regular mail, email, or the camp's website to communicate with their campers. Our aim is to provide an immersive and distraction-free environment that enables campers to experience camp fully and build lasting relationships with their peers.

If a camper brings a cell phone or any other electronic device to camp, it will be held in the camp office until the end of the camp session. Please note that we will not be held responsible for any damage or loss of any electronic device at camp. Additionally, any electronic devices found in a camper's possession during camp will be confiscated and NOT returned.

We also prohibit the use of other electronic devices such as laptops, iPads, Nintendo, Gameboys, DVD players, and any other similar items. The only electronic items of this type that we will allow at camp are basic audio-only iPods or CD players (so that campers can listen to music during rest hours and/or at bedtime). Please note that CGI POCONOS cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to these items.

In addition to electronic devices, please do not send any of the following items to camp: dart guns, water guns, knives (including Swiss Army/Girl Scout knives), laser pointers, and lighters. These items can be dangerous and cause a hazardous situation at camp. If any of these prohibited items are found in camp, they will be collected and returned to the camper at the end of camp. Please do

not either send any expensive cameras, expensive watches, or expensive jewelry. Please note that the camp cannot assume responsibility for the loss or damage of campers' personal property.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us provide a safe and enjoyable camp experience for all campers.

## **5. Food Policy**

It is not permissible to send food or drinks to camp. This policy is in place for several important reasons.

Firstly, bringing food or drink into camp can attract rodents and other pests into the bunks, which can pose a health risk to our campers. We work hard to maintain a clean and hygienic environment for our campers, and allowing outside food or drink into the bunks can undermine these efforts.

Secondly, allowing outside food or drink can create feelings of jealousy or exclusion among campers. We strive to create a supportive and inclusive environment at camp, and we want all of our campers to feel equal and valued. By providing all of our campers with the same nutritious and balanced meals and snacks, we help to ensure that everyone is on a level playing field.

Lastly, allowing outside food or drink can interfere with our careful monitoring of allergies and dietary restrictions. We take the safety and well-being of our campers with allergies or dietary restrictions very seriously, and we work closely with parents and campers to ensure that their needs are met. Allowing outside food or drink into camp can make it difficult to track and manage these needs, which can pose a risk to our campers' health.

Any food or drink that is brought to camp, will be held in the office and returned at the end of the session.

We try to have a diversified menu at each meal, and in the case of a camper not liking anything served at a meal, there is always an option of bread and spreads to accommodate them.

We understand that campers may have various food allergies, intolerances, and special dietary needs, and we strive to accommodate them to the best of our ability. If your child requires special food arrangements, we encourage you to contact us and discuss your individual situation with our staff. We want to ensure that every camper can enjoy our meals safely and without worry, so please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

## **6. Packages**

CGI Poconos has a No Package Policy. We ask that you kindly stick to emails and letters. Please call our office to make arrangements if your child requires a necessary item. Please advise friends and relatives of this policy.

## **Health Care**

At CGI Poconos, we take the health and safety of our campers very seriously. Our state-of-the-art health center is staffed with highly experienced and qualified medical professionals, including a nurse and an assistant, who are dedicated to providing our campers with the best possible care.

We understand that some campers may have special medical needs, and we are fully equipped to handle them. Our health staff is trained to administer necessary medications and provide ongoing care during sick calls and emergencies.

In the unlikely event that a camper falls ill, we will promptly notify the parent or guardian and keep them informed of their child's condition. Our priority is to ensure that every camper receives the highest level of medical attention and care during their stay at CGI Poconos.

## **Medical Form**

The Health Department of the State of Pennsylvania requires that we receive a completed and signed Medical Form for every camper who participates in camp activities. By law, we cannot permit campers to participate in camp activities until we receive the required form.

Please schedule your daughter's checkup in the spring. The medical form is due on May 1st along with the other forms. If there are any changes in your daughter's health after you have submitted the form, you must notify our office or submit a new form prior to camp.

It is important that your physician sign the form and provide his address and office phone number in legible form.

Please note: The medical form must be dated within a year from the start date of camp. We will not be able to accept medical forms older than June 27, 2022.

The Department of Health also requires that the dates of all immunizations be entered on the medical form. The statements: "All immunizations are up-to-date" or "This child is in good health" are not acceptable to the Department of Health.

### **Required immunizations**

1. Diphtheria and Tetanus: Campers must be fully immunized against Diphtheria and Tetanus with the basic series of three injections and boosters. Campers should have a booster dose of Tetanus Toxoid every ten years.
2. Poliomyelitis: All campers must have received the complete series of oral polio vaccines (Sabin).
3. Measles: An inoculation of live attenuated measles virus vaccine is required for all children who have not had measles. It is important that this inoculation be given a minimum of two weeks prior to camp so that the protection it provides will be fully active.
4. Typhoid-Parathyroid: This vaccination is optional. Some recommend that children 11 years of age and up receive Typhoid immunization. If already immunized, a yearly booster dose is needed for continued immunity. Check with your physician to find out his/her recommendation.
5. Mumps Vaccine: Mandatory for campers who have not had the mumps.
6. Infectious Hepatitis: If camper is/was exposed to Infectious Hepatitis, gamma globulin should be given promptly after exposure. CAMP MUST THEN BE NOTIFIED IMMEDIATELY!

### **Medication**

It is imperative that you fill out the medical form completely; listing any and all prescription drugs your daughter needs to take during camp. Remember to send

an adequate quantity for the entire session(s) she is attending. All prescription medication must be clearly marked with her name and instructions that must include quantity, time of day to be taken, and special instructions such as with, or prior to, meals.

If your camper requires over-the-counter or non-prescription vitamins or medication, please also note this on the medical form and also enter the quantity, time of day, and special instructions for them. All over-the-counter medication should be clearly marked with your daughter's name and instructions.

Our policy is to keep all medication, with the exception of inhalers, in the health center. Please instruct your daughter to give her medication(s) to the nurse upon arrival. Please inform the Director if your daughter needs to have her inhaler available at all times.

### **Dental Checkup**

We recommend that all campers visit their dentist for a routine check-up and cleaning to ensure their dental health is in top shape for their active days at camp. While there is no mandatory form required, it is important that each camper receives a clean bill of health from their dentist.

For campers undergoing orthodontic treatment, we ask that parents please communicate any special instructions to our staff to ensure proper care is taken during their time at camp. Our trained staff will work with each camper to make sure they are comfortable and cared for during their stay at camp.

### **Communicable Diseases**

In order to maintain a healthy environment at camp, it is important for all campers to be checked for communicable diseases before their arrival. We kindly ask parents to check their daughters for the presence of head lice during the two weeks prior to departure and again immediately before camp begins. Upon arrival in camp, our experienced nurse will conduct a thorough check of each camper for lice to ensure that our bunk areas remain lice-free. In the event that lice are found, parents have the option to take their child home for treatment or the nurse can provide treatment for a charge.



Additionally, we ask parents to check for and treat any ingrown toenails and/or plantar warts prior to camp to prevent the spread of infection. Please notify the camp immediately if your daughter has been exposed to any communicable disease within the three-week period prior to their camp departure day. By working together, we can ensure the health and safety of all campers at CGI Poconos.

### **Ticks, Mosquitos, and Poison Ivy Control**

At CGI Poconos, we take the health and safety of our campers seriously. That's why, since 2022, we have partnered with Ivy Oaks Analytics, a leading public health company based in Pennsylvania, to control ticks, mosquitoes, and poison ivy at our summer camp. Ivy Oaks has a proven track record, having worked with over 125 top summer camps.

While we've never experienced issues with ticks, mosquitoes, or poison ivy at CGI Poconos, we feel a strong obligation to our camp community to do everything in our power to reduce the risks associated with these potential hazards. That's why we're proud to implement Ivy Oaks' process, which includes ongoing tick population measurements, landscape modification, natural control methods, and more.

We're confident in the effectiveness of this program, which is why we're one of the few camps nationally to have earned an advanced public health standards certification. Ivy Oaks will be treating our campgrounds before this summer to ensure the safety and well-being of our campers.

If you'd like to learn more about this program, we encourage you to visit [www.ivyoaksanalytics.com](http://www.ivyoaksanalytics.com).

## **Important information**

### **Transportation**

Please be sure to update your transportation form, informing us how your daughter will travel to and from camp.

## **Transportation to Camp**

### **Campers Arriving By Car**

Parents who are driving their daughter(s) to camp should plan to arrive at camp at 5:00 pm. Please understand that the reason for the late drop-off time is to allow all the campers flying in during the day, to arrive and start camp together with everyone else. To ensure a smooth transition for all campers, parents dropping off their daughters are encouraged to take a quick tour of the camp but not to stay more than 30 minutes. Parents interested in seeing the camp facility are welcome to do so when they pick up their daughter(s) at the end of the session.

**Camp Address: ————— Dingmans Ferry, PA 18328**

### **Shuttle bus from EWR**

Campers that live in the Tri-state area are offered to take a shuttle from Newark Airport to camp. If you have opted to use our shuttle service from Newark Airport to camp, we will share with you more information regarding drop-off location and time via email. There is a \$60 charge for this service.

### **Campers Flying To EWR (Newark Liberty International Airport)**

Please be aware that camper flight information is due at the camp office by May 1st. Camp Personnel will meet and greet your daughter at EWR - Newark Liberty International Airport upon her arrival. This is the only airport from which CGI Poconos can provide pickup (and drop-off) service.

Please be sure your daughter has her photo ID and a minimal amount of carry-on luggage. Consult your carrier for current baggage and travel requirements (i.e., size of carry-ons, plastic bags for liquids, etc.).

Please plan to arrive at the airport well in advance of the scheduled flight to enable your daughter to have a safe and enjoyable trip.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Please schedule your daughter's flight to arrive between 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm at EWR (Newark Liberty International Airport.) If a flight with an arrival time at EWR during this time period is not available, please call the camp office at 845.425.0903 and we will advise and assist you in finding an alternative.)

### **FLL group flight to EWR**

For campers flying from the South Florida area, we will be organizing a group flight to and from camp with a chaperone. If you would like your daughter to be on this flight, please select it on the transportation form and we will follow up with you with more information.

## **Outbound From Camp**

### **Campers Leaving By Car**

Please plan to pick up your daughter between 11:00 am and 12:00 pm on her departure day. Any other pickup times must be arranged in advance with the camp office.

Please be aware that the camp does NOT provide a shuttle service to Newark Airport on the last day of camp.

### **Campers Flying Out Of EWR (Newark Liberty International Airport)**

Please schedule your daughter's flight to depart between 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm from EWR - Newark Liberty International Airport – only. If a flight is not available from EWR during this time period, please call the camp office at 845.425.0903 and we will advise and assist you with finding an alternative.

### **Group flight to FLL**

If you have selected the group flight on your transportation form, we will follow up with you with more information.

### **Luggage**

We're excited to offer the Shipcamps program in partnership with Ship Camps and CampMinder. We know that traveling with luggage can be a hassle, especially for families who have to fly to camp. That's why we encourage our campers to take advantage of this convenient service.

With Ship Camps, you can easily ship your child's luggage to camp, without the need to check bags, wait for them at baggage claim, or carry them through the airport. This service has already been used by over 200 summer camps,

providing parents with an easy, affordable, and reliable way to get their child's belongings to camp.

To learn more and get started with Ship Camps, please click on the following link: <https://shipcamps.com/camp-gan-israel-poconos>

## **Laundry**

Our laundry service is provided by a trusted and reliable third-party company, who will do laundry once a week for a total of three times during the summer. This ensures that our campers have clean clothes to wear throughout their stay at camp.

Each camper will be provided with a laundry bag, which will have a unique identifying number. This helps to ensure that each camper's laundry is properly sorted and returned to them. We ask that parents label all of their child's clothing with their name to help ensure that all clothing is returned to the correct camper.

Our laundry service includes the washing and drying of all clothing items, including socks, underwear, t-shirts, and shorts.

Please note that our laundry service is intended to provide convenience for our campers and their families. However, we are not responsible for any lost or damaged items. We recommend that parents do not send any items of high value or sentimental value with their child to camp.

## **Canteen & Spending Money**

Parents deposit in advance into their daughter's account between \$30-50 for two weeks, and \$60-\$100 for four weeks for canteen and spending money.

Every day, the campers have an opportunity to buy from the canteen. The canteen sells snacks, drinks, ice cream, ices and more. Before big trips, campers may withdraw money from their account to spend during the trip.

If at any point during camp your daughter's account runs low of funds, we will inform you in case you would like to make another deposit. You can also always call the camp office to find out your daughter's current balance.

We will send information on how to make a deposit into your daughter's account before the summer. CGI Poconos is not responsible for any money kept by a camper in their cabin.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

At CGI Poconos, we love to celebrate our campers' birthdays during their session with us. If your daughter's birthday falls within the camp session, we will reach out to you to discuss how you would like to celebrate this special occasion. However, if you do not hear from us, please don't hesitate to reach out to us a few days before your daughter's birthday. We want to make sure that her birthday is celebrated in a way that is meaningful and memorable for her, and we are always happy to work with parents to make this happen.

You may also send a birthday package (other than food and drinks) for your daughter's birthday. Please mark it "BIRTHDAY GIFT", and e-mail the camp office with the date of the birthday so we can deliver it on the actual birthday.

### **Photos And Videos**

We believe that parents should be able to share in the joy and excitement of their child's camp experience. That's why we make a special effort to keep parents up to date on everything that's happening in camp. Each day, we post a variety of photos and videos on the Companion app and our social media platforms to give parents a glimpse into the fun and exciting activities their child is participating in.

The Companion app and our social media platforms, including Instagram and Facebook, are the perfect way to stay connected with all the latest news and updates from camp. By following us, you'll be able to see photos and videos of your child having fun, making new friends, and participating in a variety of exciting activities.

In addition to keeping parents informed, our social media platforms are also a great way for campers to stay connected with each other after camp is over by following us on Instagram or Facebook. Campers can see photos and videos of their friends having fun and participating in activities. This can help to foster a sense of community and belonging among our campers, even when they're not physically together.

So be sure to download the Companion app, and follow us on Instagram @cgipoconos and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CGIPoconos](https://www.facebook.com/CGIPoconos) to stay in the loop on all the latest news and updates from CGI Poconos.

## **Security**

At Camp, the safety and well-being of our campers is our top priority. We have taken extensive measures to ensure that our facilities, staff, and programs meet the highest safety and security standards.

Here are some of the security measures we have in place:

**Staff Screening:** All staff members undergo a rigorous screening process, including background checks and reference checks, before they are hired. We also require staff to participate in ongoing training and education to ensure they are equipped to handle any situation that may arise.

**Physical Security:** We have a secure perimeter fence surrounding the camp property, as well as security cameras strategically placed throughout the facility. We also have a 24-hour security team on duty to monitor the premises and ensure the safety of our campers.

**Emergency Preparedness:** We have established emergency procedures in the event of a natural disaster, medical emergency, or other crisis. Our staff is trained to respond quickly and appropriately to any emergency situation, and we conduct regular emergency drills to ensure that everyone knows what to do in case of an emergency.

**Health and Safety:** We maintain high standards of health and safety at our camp, including regular cleaning and sanitizing of facilities, providing nutritious meals, and ensuring that campers are properly hydrated and protected from the sun.

We want parents to feel confident and secure in entrusting their children to us. If you have any questions or concerns about camp security, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **Bunk Requests**

At CGI Poconos, we strive to create a comfortable and enjoyable experience for our campers. To this end, we allow campers to submit up to two bunk requests, which we will do our best to accommodate. It is important to note, however, that we can only place campers together if they were born within the same year (September-August).

Additionally, we understand that there may be campers who prefer not to share a bunk with a particular individual. We encourage campers to let us know if this is the case, and we will make every effort to honor these requests. However, we cannot guarantee that all requests will be accommodated.

## **Packing List**

Going to summer camp can be an exciting and memorable experience for children, but packing for the trip can often be overwhelming for both parents and campers. It's important to make sure that your child has everything they need to have a safe and enjoyable time at camp. This is why we've put together a comprehensive summer camp packing list that will help you ensure that your child is well-prepared for their time away from home. From essential clothing and toiletries to fun items and gear, our packing list has got you covered. So, let's dive in and get your child ready for an unforgettable summer camp adventure!

### **Clothing:**

- 10 tops
- 10 bottoms
- 2 sweatshirts or sweaters
- 2 sweat pants
- 12 sets underwear
- 2 pairs of pajamas
- 10 pairs of socks
- 2 swimsuits
- 1 bathrobe
- goggles

### **Shabbat:**

- 2-4 nice dresses or skirts
- 1 pair of dress shoes

### **Footwear:**

- 2 pair of sturdy shoes/sneakers
- 1 pair of shower/beach shoes
- 1 pair of rainboots

### **Bedding & Linen:**

- 2 sets of twin size linen
- 1 pillow
- 1 warm blanket
- 3 bath towels

2 Washcloths  
1 laundry bag  
1 sleeping bag (Not for Jr division)

**Toiletries:**

1 shower caddy  
shampoo  
conditioner  
body wash  
toothbrush with holder/cover  
toothpaste  
hair brush/comb  
nail clipper  
hygiene products

**Miscellaneous (\*optional items):**

backpack  
sunscreen  
baseball cap/sun hat  
extra name tapes, laundry marking  
pen,  
flashlight  
paper, envelopes, & stamps  
canteen / reusable water bottle  
\* hangers  
\*extra eyeglasses  
\*siddur  
\*books  
\*musical instruments (non-electric)



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Financial assistance**

Q. Do you offer financial assistance to families?

A. Yes! It is our mission that no child be turned away due to their family's inability to afford tuition. To that effect, CGIP offers 4-tier pricing which provides families the opportunity to pay what they can afford. Tier 1 is our full price, tier 2 & 3 are discounted rates, and tier 4 is a CGIP Scholarship. Our online scholarship application is short and easy to fill out. For the Summer 2022 season we were able to provide over \$215,000 from our scholarship fund.

In addition, CGIP prides itself on helping families find 3rd Party funding from local federations and foundations. For the 2023 summer season, we were able to secure over \$110,000 from 3rd party grants and scholarships. See details below.

Q. Are you affiliated with the Foundation For Jewish Camp (One Happy Camper/PJ Goes to Camp)?

A. Yes! If your local federation is participating in the OHC program and the child is eligible they will receive a grant of \$700-\$1,000. If the family's federation is NOT participating but they participate in PJ Library and the child is eligible they will receive a grant.

Q. Are there other 3rd party funding opportunities besides the OHC grant?

A. Yes! Many federations and similar local Jewish organizations provide scholarships for children to attend Jewish overnight camp, even if it is not their first time attending. We work closely with families to identify and apply for these scholarships.

**IMPORTANT:** Most of these organizations have application deadlines with the earliest starting in January.

### **Health**

Q. Is there a nurse in camp?

A. Yes. Camp has a health center staffed with an experienced nurse available to tend to our campers needs. In addition to making certain your child receives their

necessary medicines, our health staff is responsive to day-today needs during sick calls, as well as during times of emergencies.

## **Facility**

Q. What are the cabins like at camp?

A. The camper cabins at CGI Poconos are nicely appointed and well maintained. Each cabin features a covered front porch, an open area with wooden bunk-beds around the periphery of the interior, with shelves next to each bed, as well as A/C. Each cabin has a bathroom in the back, containing 2 sinks, 2 toilet, and 2 showers each with a private changing area.

Q. How many campers and staff are in a cabin?

A. The vast majority of our cabins have 10 to 12 campers, and 2 counselors. The counselors live in the cabins with the campers.

## **Food**

Q. How is the food at CGI Poconos?

A. The food at CGI Poconos is excellent. There is always a wide variety of choices, such as salad, fruit and pasta bars, in addition to our entree. Our experienced chef makes delicious meals for campers and staff to enjoy, and of course gourmet Shabbat meals. We also serve snacks during the day, which include fresh fruit, cookies and juice.

Q. Can you accommodate food allergies and special diets?

A. The most important job we do at Camp is to safeguard your child's health and safety. We strive to accommodate campers with a variety of food allergies, intolerances, and special food needs. If your child has special food needs, please contact us to discuss your individual situation.

## **Staff**

Q. Who makes up the staff at CGI Poconos?

A. CGI Poconos is directed by veterans in overnight camping for over 15 years. We hire highly motivated counselors, specialists and general staff, who come to us with spirit and a strong commitment to the children and love for camp. All staff

are interviewed extensively and are required to attend an intensive staff orientation that takes place before camp.

## **Travel**

Q. How do the children get to camp?

A. Campers travel to camp from all parts of the United States and abroad. Many local Tri-state-area families drive their child(ren) to camp at the start and end of each session. Campers flying in all arrive at Newark International Airport (EWR) during a specific window of time, and are greeted by staff members. Once all the campers have arrived they are taken to camp by coach bus. When they arrive at camp, additional staff-members (along with an excited group of kids!) are there to greet the bus and to help the campers find their bunks and settle in.

## **General**

Q. What makes Camp Gan Israel in the Poconos unique?

A. Camp Gan Israel in the Poconos offers our campers a top-quality overnight camp experience in a beautiful setting. We present a truly immersive experience infused with Jewish values and minimize social pressures by offering single-gender sessions. Our fun, nurturing environment encourages campers to develop new skills and build meaningful friendships. Participants gain a deeper appreciation of their spiritual heritage – fostering a sense of strong Jewish identity that will impact their lives and inspire others.

Q. What should my child pack when coming to camp?

A. Feel free to use the suggested packing list when packing your child for camp!

Q. How do I communicate with my child while they are at camp?

A. Campers call home weekly during the 4 week session, starting approximately one week into camp. The call schedule will be emailed to you in advance so you can be available at the correct time. We encourage good, old-fashioned letter writing as the best way to communicate with your camper. Campers love getting regular mail from their family and friends! Campers may also write letters and have them mailed out. In addition, parents may email their children through the Campanion app.

Q. What grades does CGI Poconos serve?

A. CGI Poconos has programming for campers entering grades 3rd–10th. Camp has two sessions, each 2 weeks. Campers entering grades 3rd-5th may enroll in either one session or the entire summer. Campers entering grades 6th-10th are encouraged to enroll for the entire 4-week summer experience.

Q. How do I communicate with the camp if I have a question or concern?

A. The camp office is open every day from 9:00am until 6:00pm. Our office staff will take your message and pass it along to the appropriate member of our Leadership Team. We do our best to return parent phone calls as quickly as possible on the day they are received. The camp's phone number is:  
845.425.0903

Q. Do you allow electronics in camp?

A. CGI Poconos is a “screen-free” environment. Camp is one of the only places throughout the year where children can truly “unplug” and spend their time interacting with others rather than their devices. Please see above for more information.

Q. Can campers request a friend to be in the same bunk?

A. Yes, each camper may request up to two friends who are in the same grade-level and are attending the same session of camp. We try our best to accommodate the bunk request. Bunk requests can be submitted through the Companion app. All requests must be made by completing that on-line form.

Q. How do you celebrate my camper's summer birthday?

A. Camp makes a celebration for each camper whose birthday falls during the camp season. If your daughter's birthday falls within the camp session, we will reach out to you to discuss how you would like to celebrate this special occasion. However, if you do not hear from us, please don't hesitate to reach out to us a few days before your daughter's birthday. We want to make sure that her birthday is celebrated in a way that is meaningful and memorable for her, and we are always happy to work with parents to make this happen.

Q. Where is the camp located?

A. CGI Poconos is located in the northeast corner of Pennsylvania, nestled in the beautiful Pocono Mountains. Camp is in Dingmans Ferry which is approximately 2 hours from New York City.

Q. Does camp have dress code standards?

A. No. The dress in camp is very casual and camp appropriate. We send a suggested clothing and equipment list to help you in your packing.

Q. Where do CGI Poconos campers come from?

A. Over the past 11 years we were proud to welcome campers from over 26 states and 9 countries since most of our campers hear about CGI Poconos through local Chabad centers and friendships with current camp families.

Q. Are there any programs for new and returning campers in the “off season?”

A. Yes! CGI Poconos has a Winter Camp! Visit [www.cgipoconos.org/winter](http://www.cgipoconos.org/winter) to find out more.

Q. Can I speak to references about the camp?

A. Yes! Please contact us and we would be happy to put you in touch with current camp families from your area.

