

# First time at sleepaway (Residential) camp?

**Must-reads:** [Residential Camper Handbook](#) [Camp FAQs](#)

## What to Expect

Whether it's your child's first time at sleepaway camp or just the first time at Project Oceanology, our caring, supportive staff and fun atmosphere allow new campers to feel welcome quickly and included in our camp family.

We have a fun-filled week planned, with plenty of science and socializing. This consists of a mix of classroom/lab activities, time aboard our research vessels, skiffs, and coastal habitat exploration.

Safety is a priority!

- All staff are First Aid/CPR certified
- Trained in Medical Administration
- Certified Waterfront Lifeguards on staff
- Licensed boat captains for all vessels (Enviro-labs and Carolina Skiffs)
- Life jackets are worn aboard all boats and when in the water

One way to foster a sense of community at camp is by leaving cell phones and electronics at home. We don't allow any electronics (phones, tablets, e-readers, smart watches, etc) at camp, but that doesn't mean you can't contact your camper! Campers can call home any time, but phone calls are usually in the evening, during free time. You can also email your camper; emails are printed and distributed during mealtimes. Campers will have the opportunity to respond to parents during meal times under the supervision of a staff member. We also upload lots of photos to our Camp Google Photo album (check your email!) throughout each day so you can see all the fun your camper is having!

## Welcome

Sunday evening after check-in is all about getting to know your camp family! Interns, educators, and campers play games that strengthen bonds and help them communicate. After structured activities end at 9 PM, there is supervised choice time, followed by bed/lights-out. There are two interns on each floor of our hostel, and our residential supervisor's apartment is located on the second floor. All five of these adults

are trained and available to help campers navigate sleep-away jitters and homesickness.

We strive to make every camper's experience amazing at Project Oceanology. We work hard to create a camp environment where everyone can have fun. Our staff receives ongoing training, including strategies to help students with self-awareness and self-management skills. We have a Calming Kit available for each camp so campers can step away from the group to regulate themselves. The Calming Kit includes noise-canceling headphones, speakers with soft music and white noise options, guided breathing exercises, fidget spinners, and weight stuffed animals, to name a few.

## **Meals and Snacks**

Meals are an important part of the camp experience. Our daily camp activities require your child to stay hydrated and refueled with three meals and snacks because most of our day occurs in the field. Our meals are catered through UCONN dining services, and we can accommodate every type of dietary need. Please contact us anytime with concerns regarding your camper's dietary needs. Three meals a day are prepared and served in our cafeteria. Project O provides snacks for campers between meals, and you are welcome to pack snacks for them as well (we encourage allergy-friendly snacks!).

## **Medications at Camp**

Does your camper need to take medication while at camp (prescription or over-the-counter)? Our staff is trained in medication administration (including Epi-Pens). We keep camper medication in a safe location, either locked in our facility or traveling with us in the field. Emergency medications, such as inhalers or epi-pens, are always carried with camp staff.

Everything you need to know about medication administration at camp is detailed in our Camp FAQs and our Residential Camper Handbook (see links above).

## **Code of Conduct**

We expect all campers to demonstrate care, respect, and responsibility at all times; campers must also exhibit self-control and kindness and follow instructions.

Please refer to the camper handbook for the complete Code of Conduct (link above) and discuss this with your child in preparation for attending camp.

## **Meet us!**

We are hosting two camp family meetings via Zoom from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm on March 7, 2024, and April 2, 2024. Please plan on attending one of them to meet our camp directors, ask questions, and get first-hand information on what Project Oceanology is all about! The links for these meetings will be emailed to all registered campers as the dates get closer.

On April 27, 2024, we will host “Family Day” at Project O (multiple Marine Science activity stations from 10 - 2 pm) and a camp open house to meet our Camp Directors and camp staff. A tour of our camp facility includes our labs, bunk rooms, cafeteria, boats, and our beautiful coastal setting!

If you need more information or would like to speak to one of our camp directors before registering your child for camp, please email us at [projecto@oceanology.org](mailto:projecto@oceanology.org)