



ANGELIC ORGANICS
Learning Center

2023

Farm Camp Parent Handbook



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About Us

Angelic Organics Learning Center

Angelic Organics Learning Center builds sustainable local food and farm systems through experiential education and training programs. On the farm, we welcome the whole person in holistic learning that engages head, heart and hands. Our on-farm programs and summer camps help people learn how to grow food, live sustainably, share in community, and shape agriculture in our region through hands-on experience with Angelic Organics farm. Our goals are for campers to:

- View the farm as a living ecosystem and realize their roles as members of an interconnected community (living soils, animals, plants, wild lands, and humans)
- Understand and express the connection between healthy farms, healthy food & healthy people
- Experience an open, affirmative environment where kids bond with each other over shared, meaningful work



Staff

Trisha Wilks, On Farm Education Director

Trisha came to the Learning Center in 2018 as an On Farm Educator. In the spring of 2023, Trisha transitioned into her current role of On Farm Education Director, where her heart truly lies! Trisha attended Rock Valley College and Northwestern University, and has a deep passion for Environmental, Social, and Climate Justice. She serves the community in other environmental conservation roles including the Trail Stewardship program with the Winnebago County Forest Preserve and as a River Watch participant.



Jackie de Batista, Executive Director

Jackie is a local, sustainable farmer who went through the Stateline Farm Beginnings program in 2007 and joined the Learning Center in 2019. Jackie has a strong programming background in environmental education and leadership, a B.S. in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Wisconsin—Madison, and an M.A. in Environmental Studies, Sustainable Development, and Policy from the University of Illinois—Springfield.



Andy Skupien, On Farm Culinary Manager

Andy has a passion for food and over twenty years in the restaurant industry and has worked for some of the best chefs in our area. It brings him great joy showing the kids who attend our camps how tasty farm to table can be! Andy thinks it's wonderful introducing kids to vegetables they may not have ever seen before.



Camp Counselors and On-Farm Educators

All of our counselors and educators have experience teaching, and expertise in the fields of agriculture and environmental sciences. Summer camp counselors join us seasonally, and stay full time at the Lodge during camp. Camp activities are led by education staff or by specialists such as chefs and artists. All staff who work at Angelic Organics Learning Center (including camp staff, educators, main office staff and regular volunteers) receive background checks and are trained to our child safety policies.

Camp Overview

Summer Camp at Angelic Organics Lodge

Our overnight camps allow kids to immerse themselves in the rhythms of farm life and form deeper connections to the farm and to each other. Days at camp will start with animal chores (from feeding the goats to collecting chicken eggs), and might be followed by time in the field picking veggies from the ground, cooking with freshly harvested food, hiking through the oak savanna, or playing a camp game. We know kids love caring for the animals and doing meaningful activities that impact the life of the farm. We also know kids need some time to be curious, engage with nature, and talk to each other without electronic distractions. We give campers real responsibilities while also allowing them choice and self direction.

Parent Testimonials

“My daughter LOVED her week at the farm. She's been telling stories non-stop since coming home. She loved every aspect of the experience. Her only complaint was that it was only a week long! Thanks so much for allowing my child to have this experience. Also, thanks to all the adults/counselors/youth who made this experience happen. As a teacher, I appreciate the planning and enthusiasm that went into making this camp a success. My daughter can't wait to come back next year.”

“This was the BEST. I wish we could send her to all of the weeks. She thrived at this camp and came home with a head full of new knowledge and ideas! THANK YOU!!!”

“These programs have been part of my granddaughters' lives for 6 years and I believe they've played a crucial role in becoming who they are by learning about the farm, the food and the animals as well as learning how to cooperate, lead, be grateful, be part of a team. Thank you Angelics!”

“Every person my daughter and I interacted with was friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable. My daughter was immediately comfortable with every staff member and quickly bonded with the counselor. I appreciate the sense of humor of the staff members and responsibility placed on the kids.”

“The entire staff was enthusiastic, kind, knowledgeable, funny and attentive to the campers and parents.”



At Farm Camp

Facilities

Angelic Organics Lodge is located on 200 acres of vegetable fields, oak savanna, pastures, and farmstead barns. The Lodge sits on a limestone bluff on the northern campus surrounded by old oaks, overlooking Kinnikinnick Creek. The beautiful grounds invite exploration, wonder, creativity, and revitalization. Our commercially certified teaching kitchen is where we prepare all of our fresh farm-to-table meals sourced primarily from Angelic Organics and other local farms. Goats and chickens graze on the grounds, allowing for visitors to interact and experience the rhythms of farm life.

The Lodge accommodates up to 30 campers in dormitory-style lodging. Boys and girls rooms are separated by floor with corresponding bathrooms on each floor. Campers have space below their bunks and in shared closets for belongings. The Lodge also has natural playscapes, a crafts room, and an on-site Wellness Center. Meals are cooked in the Lodge's commercial kitchen, except on occasions when campers help prepare meals over the campfire or in our outdoor oven.



At Farm Camp

Sample Schedule

Breakfast
Morning livestock chores
Photography or nature journals (camper's choice)
Hike to picnic shelter
Lunch
Web of life game
Creek exploration
Free time
Dinner
Make rattles for council of all beings
Appreciation hike
Closing circle and quiet time
Lights out



Council of All Beings

Starting with a special hike through the woods, campers pick a living being that they feel an appreciation for, and complete several activities related to that being, culminating in a campfire on the last night. At this council, all beings come together to solve big problems. One of our favorite camp activities, this activity deepens our connections to nature and each other.

Activities

We have a lot to do on the farm! we plan each day thoughtfully to create a balance of farm work and fun recreational games. We also leave room in the schedule for kids to have input and choose activities as a group, as well as to respond to any changes in weather that might impact what we do.

Possible activities include: chicken races, goat olympics, farm strong relay, seed mosaics, farm journals, woodland survival hike, gardening, ice cream making, Council of All Beings, garden soccer, wild edibles hikes, campfire cooking, and building projects. This is in addition to free-time activities

Teen Week

Teens ages 12-15 take on more responsibility, and learn leadership skills at camp. Teens will run livestock chores taking on a "Farmers Share" of the workload as well as engage in projects of their choice. All teen weeks look a little different from each other based on the interests and direction of the campers.

Farm-to-Fork Meals

Our kid-friendly meals are prepared with fresh ingredients, primarily from our organic, biodynamic farm. Most prepared meals are vegetarian, though locally raised beef, pork or chicken may be an option at some meals. These farm-to-table meals are prepared on site. Items we cannot get from our farm are sourced from other local farmers as often as possible.

If your child has any special dietary restrictions including allergies, we will try our best to accommodate their needs. Please contact us with any questions or concerns about food allergies or restrictions. Salad and peanut butter and jelly or almond butter and jelly sandwiches are available as daily alternatives.



Sample Menu

Breakfast

Seasonal homemade muffins, fruits, yogurt, farm fresh eggs from our pasture-raised chickens.

Lunch

Farm veggie wraps with side of hummus, seasonal fruit and vegetables

Dinner

Potato Leek Soup, Salad harvested by campers, homemade bread, apple cobbler

Preparing For Camp

Talking to Campers

It's normal for campers to experience anxiety and excitement as camp approaches. We have some suggestions for how to make the home-to-camp transition easier:

- **Attend a day program on the farm.** We have open houses and family programs throughout the year. Campers can meet our staff and see the farm with their families. A day on the farm as a family is fun for everyone, and allows kids to get acquainted before they start camp.
- **Keep your messages positive for your camper.** Although separation may be tough for both of you, express confidence in your camper. Encourage them to imagine all the good things they will experience.
- **Avoid making promises to contact them or pick them up.** Homesickness is a natural part of camp, and our staff are well trained to handle those situations as they arise. Promising to pick them up before camp is over may make it harder for them to settle in.
- **Make sure campers know what to expect.** Go over our Code of Living, sample daily schedule, and activities so your child knows what to expect while at camp.
- **Do not send your child with a cell phone or other electronic devices.** Our camps are unplugged! If you are anxious about how your child is adjusting, you can call our office between 9am-5pm to speak to our camp staff for an update on how your child is doing. We encourage families to send campers emails or letters.
- **Emphasize the opportunity to meet new people and make friends.**

If you are concerned that your child might not be ready for camp, please contact our office. We are always happy to talk about how to navigate this decision. In some cases, overnight camp might be a better option down the road.

Preparing For Camp

Pre-Camp Checklist

- **Register for camp online at LearnGrowConnect.org**

Choose the week(s) of camp your child would like to attend and register online. Once you have completed the online payment, you will receive an email with the remaining application forms. See our registration policies section for more details.

- **Review the Packing List**

You may want to label items with your child's name if you are worried he or she might leave something behind. If your child is a first-time camper, practicing how to pack your bag is a great way to prepare them for camp.

- **Save or Print Important Information**

We will be sending out important information prior to the start of camp including emergency phone numbers for you to keep while your child is at camp.



Preparing For Camp

Recommended Packing List:

Clothing

- 3-5 sets of work clothes*
- 4-5 sets of casual clothes*
- Undergarments
- Swim suit
- Pajamas
- Sturdy, closed-toed shoes*
- Rubber Boots*
- Old sneakers or water shoes*
- Indoor slippers or sandals*
- Socks (bring plenty!)*
- Sun Hat
- Jacket or Sweatshirt for evenings
- Rain coat or poncho
- A laundry bag for dirty clothes

Toiletries

- Soap
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Shower caddy*
- Towel
- Bathrobe*
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Lotions (if desired)

Miscellaneous

- Water bottle*
- Sunscreen*
- Bug repellent*
- Camera*
- Day pack for hiking
- Favorite stuffed animal/photo/book/journal*

Bed linens

- Twin Sheets*
- Pillow*
- Sleeping bag*

Optional Farm or Camping Items

- Work gloves
- Outdoor lantern or flashlight
- Compass

Please Do NOT Bring:

- ✗ Cell phones, gaming devices, electronics (camera are okay)
- ✗ Makeup
- ✗ Sharp tools, pocket knives, weapons
- ✗ Pets
- ✗ Alcohol or drugs

*Indicates further notes in the next section, Notes About Packing

Preparing For Camp

Notes About Packing

Clothing

Please expect all your child's clothes to come home dirty! We strongly recommend leaving any favorite or special items at home. Campers do not have access to laundry while they are here, so pack enough items to last the whole week. Work clothes should consist of sturdy, loose-fit jeans or canvas pants and breathable t-shirts. We recommend at least one long-sleeve work shirt for occasions when we may encounter thorns. Casual clothes can include shorts and t-shirts, but should still be appropriate for physical activities. Campers should also have a set of long pants and shirts for cooler evening weather, as well as a sweatshirt or jacket.

Outdoor Shoes

We require closed-toe shoes at all times. We recommend rubber boots appropriate for muddy pastures. Canvas shoes are fine for other camp activities. You may want to pack a pair of sturdy hiking boots for walking through the trails that surround the Lodge, and a pair of old sneakers or closed-toe water shoes to wear while exploring the creek. Socks are also required daily, so please pack plenty of them!

Water Bottles

We ask that everyone bring their own water bottle. We spend most of our time outside and everyone needs to stay hydrated! We recommend a water bottle of at least 16 oz and encourage larger water bottles if you have them. Please note that our water is from a well and is perfectly safe to drink, although it can taste different from city water and may leave a mineral residue on a water bottle.

Sunscreen and Bug Repellent

Everyone should bring enough sunscreen to wear every day. You may also choose to bring bug repellent for dawn and dusk hours. However, we do try to keep chemical repellents to a minimum on our organic farm in order to protect the friendly bugs that contribute to our farm's ecosystem! We encourage campers to wear long clothing as their primary protection, and to supplement with plant-based repellents only when necessary.

Stuffed Animals, Books, Personal Items

If your child has a favorite stuffed animal or item from home, we welcome them to bring it along. We want campers to feel at home on our farm, and favorite items can help ease feelings of homesickness. There will also be opportunities for quiet activities such as reading or journaling. We do ask that electronic devices and cell phones stay at home, with the exception of cameras if desired.

Preparing For Camp

Notes About Packing, continued

Bed Linens

We **do not** provide any kind of bedding. We recommend bringing one set of twin-size sheets to use for warmer nights and one sleeping bag in case it gets cool. Campers should also bring their own pillow.

Toiletries

In order to have more time for fun activities, we will move campers quickly through a rotation of morning and evening shower times. While waiting for their turn, campers will change into bathrobes. Campers should bring their own soaps and shampoos for showers. We recommend a small plastic or canvas shower caddy for storing and transporting items. Campers share storage space with their bunkmates, so please keep items small.

Duffel Bags

Most items will be stored underneath the bunk beds in your camper's duffel bag. Bags should be large enough to fit everything in. Standard suitcases measuring 14" tall when laying flat will fit under the bunks.



Preparing For Camp

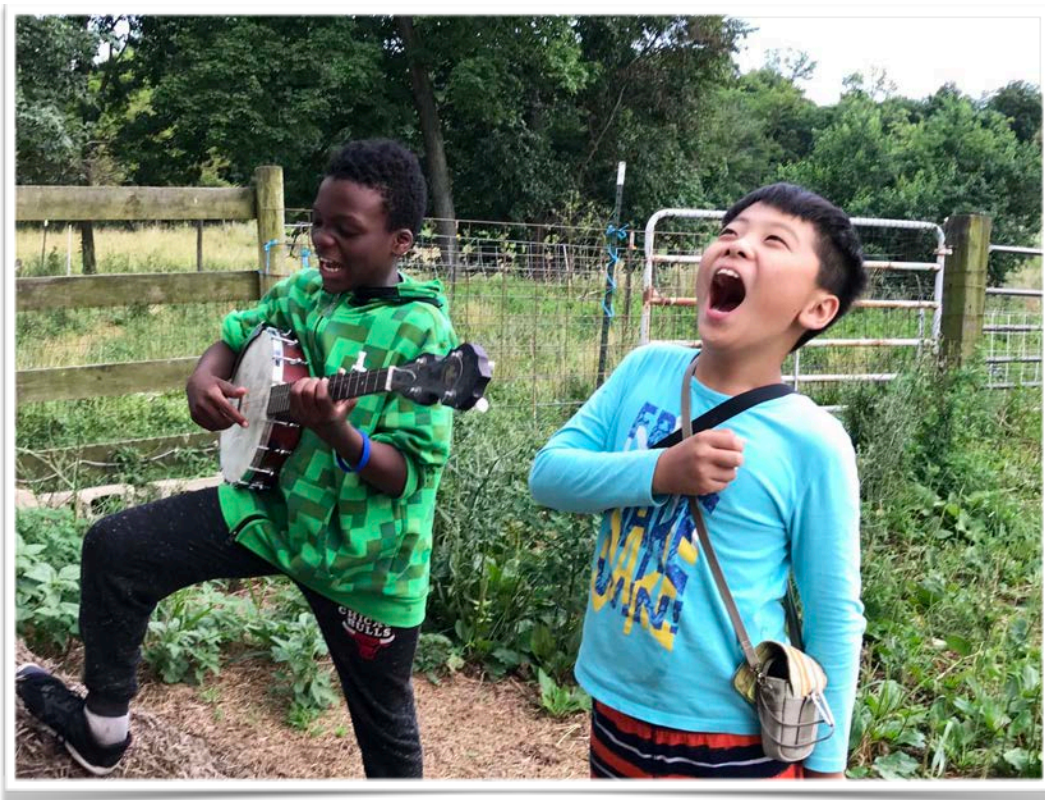
Opening and Closing Days

Parking is limited at the Lodge, so staff will be present to direct parking during check-in and check-out. Opening Day starts at 2:00 pm and check-in takes place until 3:00pm. Parents will have a chance to meet the staff, help campers unpack their belongings, and see the farm. At 3:15pm we will start group activities for all campers. It's important for campers to stay busy and get to know each other at the start of camp, so we ask that all parents and family members leave the Lodge promptly after dropping off their camper. Parents and family are invited to drive down the road to the Learning Center Workshop to meet our Program Director over tea and coffee from 3:30 - 4pm.

Closing Day starts at 10:00 am. Campers will have the chance to give parents and family members a tour of the farm until Closing Circle which starts at 10:30am. All campers and families are welcome to attend Closing Circle. Please check out with staff before leaving the farm. Camp ends promptly at 11 am.

Late Arrivals and Early Departures

Our Opening and Closing Days are important parts of the experience, and we might not be easily able to accommodate late arrivals, early departures, or other absent days during camp. Please talk to the program director if your child will be unable to attend the entirety of camp.



Staying Healthy at Camp

Physical and emotional wellness are key to a great camp experience. All staff are trained to engage campers in farming and recreational activities safely. We also provide healthy meals, plenty of activity, and lots of fresh air to maintain optimal physical health. However, sometimes illnesses and accidents occur. Our staff is prepared to respond to any health concern.

Camp Directors are certified in CPR and First Aid, and administer medications per physician's instructions on the label of the container. There is a Wellness Center on the farm where an ill or injured camper will be treated for minor injuries or ailments. Serious injuries such as deep cuts and sprains can be treated at NorthPointe Wellness Clinic or Beloit Memorial Hospital.

Our staff will contact you if your child needs emergency care, new or additional medication, or in cases of extreme or lingering illness. In some cases, campers may receive medical treatment before a parent is contacted. Every effort will be made to give your child the best possible care, as well as to keep you informed. The camp staff will not contact you for routine visits to our Wellness Center for bumps and bruises, or mild illnesses. Please be aware that coverage of any medical, dental, prescription services or eyeglasses repair will be the responsibility of parents or their insurance providers.

Ticks

Safety practices, such as proper clothing and frequent checks, reduce the risk of tick bites or tick-borne illnesses. We encourage campers to do tick checks and teach them about what to look for on their own bodies. We also recommend that parents encourage campers to continue tick checks at home, as ticks (or signs of tick-borne illness) may take a few days to show up. If you have any concerns about ticks, please consult the Illinois Department of Public Health for more information and check with your child's physician.

Mosquitoes

The best way to avoid mosquito-borne illness is to prevent mosquito bites. In morning and evening, we encourage campers to wear long-sleeved shirts, pants and socks to create a barrier and reduce the risk of getting bitten. In addition, plant based insect repellent can help deter mosquitoes. Consider trying a mosquito repellent made from botanical ingredients and avoiding harsh chemicals on our organic farm if possible.

Staying Healthy at Camp, continued.

Head Lice

On Opening Day, all campers will get a quick medical check for general good health, including a check for head lice. Please check your camper before coming to camp for head lice and let us know of recent treatment. If head lice are detected on your child after the first day, we will contact parents for pick up.

Bed wetting

If your child wets the bed, our staff is trained to discreetly assist them in laundering their bedding, sleeping bag and pajamas. Please be sure to inform us ahead of time so we can prepare to serve your camper.

Sleepwalking

The doors of all our bunk rooms have small bells on them to sound when they are opened, so counselors will know if a sleepwalking camper tries to leave the room. Please inform us ahead of time if your child sleepwalks, and make sure your child selects a lower bunk to avoid injury.

Menstruation

If your child has already begun a menstrual cycle (or is at an age to begin a cycle) make sure they pack an adequate supply of hygiene products, as well as a pain reliever of choice to be checked into our wellness center.

Medications

Medications, including over the counter, will be turned in on the opening day of camp and will be stored in the Wellness Center. Medications are not allowed in the bunk rooms, with the exception of inhalers and EpiPens, which campers keep with them at all times. If possible please, send along a spare inhaler or EpiPen to be kept at the Wellness Center as a back up medication. All medications must be listed on the camper's health history form and have a permission to administer form with clear instructions on file.

Local Health Care Providers

Visiting Nurse

A registered or licensed practical nurse has office hours at the farm daily to monitor medication distribution records and see ill or injured campers.

Northpointe Wellness

Northpointe Wellness in Roscoe, IL is the closest clinic to the farm. In the case of an emergency, Northpointe Wellness will provide medical care to campers. The clinic is on the same road as Angelic Organics Lodge, just 10 minutes from our program site. Care physicians are board-certified in emergency medicine and part of the Beloit Health System. Additional services at the Northpointe campus include X-ray, CT scan, MRI and laboratory.

Beloit Memorial Hospital

Beloit Memorial Hospital is the closest hospital to the farm in Beloit, WI. In the case of a severe injury, or an incident outside of Northpointe Wellness Clinic's hours of operation, campers will receive medical attention at Beloit Memorial Hospital. Part of the University of Wisconsin Health System, this hospital has general medical and surgical hospital services. Press-Ganey, a national hospital evaluating service, put Beloit Memorial Hospital in the top 5% of Level III Trauma Centers of their size. The hospital is approximately 25 minutes from Angelic Organics Lodge.

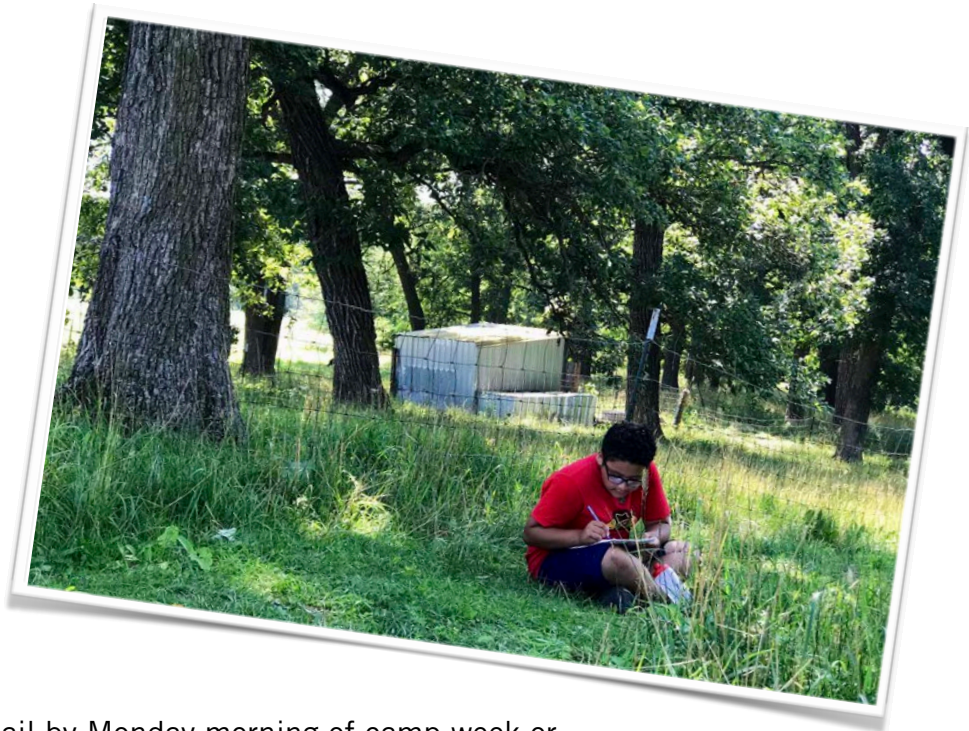
Safety on the Farm

We want everyone on the farm to stay safe and well. Campers are required to stay with the group except for supervised free time. During orientation, campers will learn about any and all farm hazards including farm machinery and electric fences, and should remain alert to their surroundings. We may do some creek study activities that involve supervised wading in shallow parts of the creek, but do not allow swimming or unsupervised wading.

Contacting Your Camper

Emailing

While campers will not have access to personal email accounts while they are here, friends and family may write emails to be shared with their camper. Emails must be sent by 12 p.m. to be distributed the same day. You can write emails to programs@learngrowconnect.org. Please include the name of your camper in the subject line of the email.



Letters

If you choose to send letters, please mail by Monday morning of camp week or earlier. Letters should be addressed to:

Camper First Name Last Name
c/o Angelic Organics Learning Center
1545 Rockton Road
Caledonia, IL 61011

Phone Calls

Campers will not have access to our office phone and will not be allowed to have cell phones during camp.

Emergencies

If you experience a family emergency, please call the numbers listed on the emergency contact sheet provided before the start of camp, and we will plan with you the best timing and approach to sharing news with your camper.

Code of Living

Our Code of Living guides campers in creating and maintaining a group living experience suitable for each camper to realize their potential and thrive in community. We start with guiding principles known as the 5 Finger Contract: Safety, Commitment, Respect, Responsibility, and Positivity. At the start of camp, we learn the 5 Finger Contract as a group and discuss behaviors and actions that fit with these guiding principles. As a community we then incorporate campers' input into our Code of Living for the week.

Behavior Management and Dismissal

We enact a behavior management plan with campers as needed. The behavior management plan helps us address negative behaviors and outline next steps for creating a more successful camp experience. After a behavior plan has been drafted, our camp staff will contact a parent or guardian to discuss the behavior plan, and review our full behavior policy. Behaviors that warrant immediate dismissal include: endangerment of oneself or someone else; striking or threatening to strike another person; possession of alcohol, drugs or a weapon; inappropriate sexual behavior; tampering with emergency fire system equipment. Parents are responsible for immediate transportation of their camper from Angelic Organics Overnight Farm Camp if a dismissal occurs. Parents can receive a copy of our entire Behavior Policy upon request.

Homesickness

It's natural for campers to experience some homesickness. Our counselors are trained to handle homesickness and strive for campers to stay at camp, form new friendships, and develop as young people. Should homesickness grow severe and interfere with a camper's ability to have fun on the farm, our camp director will get in touch with you to decide on the best approach. Please be aware that it does not always help for campers to speak with their family directly. We will do everything we can to give your child a good, formative experience at camp before we consider sending a camper home.

Emergency Preparedness

Our camp staff are trained to handle all emergency procedures on the farm, including responding to extreme weather conditions. Our top priority is to keep our campers safe. In the event of an emergency, our staff will contact parents only after the safety of all campers has been secured, and may not be available to take calls during an event. Our farm has appropriate shelters for extreme weather on site.

More About Camp Life

Laundry

Campers will not have access to laundry facilities while they are at the farm. Plan to pack a full week's worth of clothes for camp.

Showers and Hygiene

Boys and girls have separate showers and bathrooms on different floors. Campers are expected to shower at least once per day, and are scheduled to shower either for the morning or evening. We do lots of work on the farm, so it's important to stay clean! Since everyone has to share the facilities, we ask campers to keep showers short. Campers are responsible for bringing their own towels and toiletries. Please see the packing list for more information.

Requesting Bunk Mates

Bunks are filled on a first-come, first-served basis, so we recommend arriving at 2:00pm on Opening Day if campers wish to secure a bunk with a friend or sibling.



Registration Policies

Registration: Camps are filled on a first-come, first-served basis, and are subject to change. To reserve a spot at camp, a nonrefundable \$150 deposit must be paid per child, per session. Unless otherwise noted, advance registration and payment is required. Registration is per person for all camps and programs. To ask for a custom payment plan, please contact the program director at programs@learngrowconnect.org.

Registration, payment, and all required forms must be completed by May 1st of the camp year. Late applications will be considered, but we cannot guarantee that we'll be able to accommodate your child.

Cancellation: Any payments made will be refunded only if we are notified of non-attendance prior to May 1st. A partial refund may be issued if we are notified by June 10th. After that date, refunds will only be available if another child fills the vacant spot. Deposits are non-refundable.

All requests for refunds must be made in writing to programs@learngrowconnect.org.

Transfers: If a conflict arises and you would like to transfer your child to a different camp session, we will make every effort to accommodate you. Please contact us as soon as possible if your child needs to transfer to a different session.

You can view our full registration policy including policy on coupon codes and waitlists on our website at www.LearnGrowConnect.org.

Scholarship and Financial Aid

We are proud to have a scholarship fund and financial aid program through which kids of all backgrounds have a chance to go to camp. Scholarships are granted based on need, available funds, and space available in the desired camp session. A full or partial scholarship may be granted. If you'd like to apply for a scholarship, please contact us directly at programs@learngrowconnect.org

Campers receiving a scholarship will still be required to register online and pay the non-refundable deposit.