



Camp Miriam

Information
Handbook





About Camp Miriam

Nestled on the West Coast of British Columbia, Habonim Dror Camp Miriam is a Jewish summer camp that offers a fun and unique camping experience for children who have completed Grades 2-11. Camp is located on a 20-acre waterfront site on beautiful Gabriola Island — a short ferry ride from the city of Nanaimo on Vancouver Island.



Camp Miriam offers a diverse program that combines traditional camp activities with values-based programming. Campers can participate in swimming, kayaking, canoeing, sports, arts and crafts, music, Israeli dancing, overnights, theme days and more. Our enthusiastic staff create innovative and imaginative ways for campers to explore their Jewish identity and to learn about Israel, Jewish history, current social issues and social justice. With an emphasis on sharing and social responsibility, we encourage individual growth, and a sense of community that is cherished long after the summer is over!

We have been providing safe, healthy and inspiring camping experiences since 1948. We are members of Habonim Dror, a progressive Labour-Zionist youth movement with six camps in North America and sister camps in 15 countries. Habonim Dror provides a strong framework of programming and leadership training, that ensures we have a staff of caring, capable counsellors.



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Our Staff

Most of our staff members are graduates of Habonim Dror and Camp Miriam. Often they come to camp after spending a year in Israel on the Habonim Dror Workshop Program, and many of them are university students. Each year there are Israeli counsellors on staff, adding to the richness of our Hebrew and Israel content. Staff may have special training in sports, Israeli dancing, hiking, arts and crafts and more!

We have one counsellor for every five campers and new staff members are paired with experienced staff members.





Senior Staff

Our senior staff includes the Camp Director, an Educational Director and two Technical Directors. They are Habonim Dror graduates and past Camp Miriam campers. The Registrar lives at camp during the season. In addition, the senior staff includes a Shaliach from Israel. The Shaliach encourages programming that reflects a strong connection to Jewish identity and to Israel.

Medical Staff

All staff working with campers are trained in basic first aid.

There is also a full-time qualified medical attendant or registered nurse on camp premises at all times, in addition to a volunteer doctor. Backup support is available at the new Gabriola Island Clinic, or by on-call Camp Miriam volunteer physicians in Vancouver.





What to bring

A packing list for 3 weeks (adjust if your child's session is less than 3 weeks)

Remember to label everything with your child's first and last name.



Bedding

- 2 pairs of sheets (4 in total)
- 2 pillow cases
- 1 pillow
- 1 warm blanket — essential
- 1 sleeping bag (waterproof recommended)



Toiletry Items

- 3 bath or beach towels
- 2 face towels
- toothbrush and toothpaste
- soap, shampoo, and conditioner
- comb and brush
- sunscreen
- mosquito repellent
- kleenex
- medications & supplements (only multi-dose, pre-packaged by a pharmacy)



Clothing

- 10 pairs of underwear
- 10 pairs of socks (2 heavy)
- 5 pairs of shorts
- 10 tee-shirts
- 4 sweatshirts
- 3-4 pairs of long pants
- 2 bathing suits
- 2 pairs of pajamas
- raincoat or poncho
- sun hat and water bottle — essential
- warm jacket
- casual dress clothing for Shabbat



Footwear

- 2 pairs of runners (one for hiking)
Those completing Gr. 7 & up need hiking shoes with ankle support.
- flip flops/crocs — for shower & pool only
- optional: rubber closed footwear for water activities



Miscellaneous Items

- Kupa money – recommended \$5 per camp week
- flashlight and extra batteries
- laundry bag
- stationery, envelopes, and stamps
(U.S. mail will be stamped by camp)
- day pack
- hiking back pack (Gr. 7 & up need for an overnight hike)



Optional Items

- reading materials
- camera (inexpensive)
- non-electronic games
- musical instruments
- fun /crazy clothes for Rikud
- plain white tee (for spray paint / tie dye)
- sports equipment

We do not allow campers to have mobile phones or other WiFi-enabled devices (such as Kindle, Nooks, iPod Touch, iPad, laptops, notebooks, tablets, Nintendo DS, PSP Go, handheld electronic games, etc.). If these items are brought to camp, they will be confiscated and returned when the camper leaves at the end of the session.





What to bring

The packing list included in this booklet is for your benefit and is a suggested list. **All articles of clothing should be clearly marked with camper's first and last names.** We cannot assume responsibility for lost or damaged clothing and other personal belongings.

Campers should have enough clothes for a ten-day period as laundry is done at ten-day intervals.

Due to the camp's terrain, shoes with an open heel, such as flip flops, sandals, or Crocs may only be worn to the pool and showers.

As hiking is an integral part of our camp program and to ensure a positive and safe experience, please make sure that one of the two pairs of shoes or sneakers your child has, is sturdy, provides ankle support and is comfortable for hiking.

At the end of every session, we conduct a Lost & Found meeting at camp. If your child returns home still missing clothing, do not panic! All items marked with the child's name found at camp at the end of the summer will be brought to the Vancouver office. However, regardless of all these efforts, clothing is inevitably lost at camp.

We strongly recommend sending inexpensive clothing and gear.



Camp does not provide blankets, linens, towels, pillows or sleeping bags. Please note that a sleeping bag does not replace a blanket, due to both fire regulations and the possibility of the sleeping bag getting wet on an overnight trip, leaving the camper without dry bedding.

Since storage space at camp is tight, **each camper is limited to 2 pieces of luggage**, designed to fit under their bed. For younger children, a suitcase is the best type of luggage, as it provides easier access to clothing than a duffel bag or pack. If you pack all the clothes and flat items in a suitcase, the sleeping bag, pillow, and odd shaped items can be packed in a small duffel bag, that can be collapsed and stored under the bed. For young campers, consider packing socks and underwear in separate ziplock bags. Pack **WITH** your child so they know what they have and where to find it. Older children may prefer a duffel bag for their clothing items and a separate smaller bag for their sleeping bag, pillow, etc.

Insider tip! Pack some crazy/fun/bright clothing for Rikud (dancing) on Friday night; various coloured t-shirts for team activities; and, one or two t-shirts you might tie-dye or paint!



Medical Information

Camp Miriam has a fully stocked, modern Mirpa'ah (first aid clinic) and a trained medical team.

There is a full-time qualified medical attendant or registered nurse on camp premises at all times. In addition, we have a rotating group of dedicated, volunteer doctors, one of whom is always on Gabriola and available to support our medical team. Backup support, if needed, is available at the Gabriola Island Clinic. Please feel free to contact us at with any questions.

General Medical Information

Medical Forms

Giving us accurate, detailed information about your child's physical and emotional health helps us provide the best care for your child.

Medical forms are due in April in order to give our medical staff time to conduct a thorough, confidential review before camp. The forms are available in early March on your online account. Late submission may result in an extra charge.

If you have medical concerns about your child, or if they will be taking medications or vitamins and supplements at camp, your child's physician must complete the Camper Medications form — no more than four months before camp starts.



Any changes to your child's medical status or exposure to communicable diseases between submission of the forms and the start of camp must be communicated to the Registrar in writing.

Please ensure that you are familiar with our Immunization Policy. You can find it in the Immunization, Insurance & Waiver form in the online forms.

Health Insurance

All campers must have valid medical insurance that covers them in British Columbia for the duration of their stay. Medical expenses not covered by the camper's insurance are the parents' responsibility.

Treatment Protocol

We will inform you (or your designate) if your child is ill or injured enough to be attended by a physician. Please note that we always try to get in touch with you before we administer medical treatment, however sometimes that is not possible – in which case we will attempt to reach you as soon as reasonably possible after treatment.

In the case of an emergency, we will immediately try to contact you from the location of the emergency.

Dental/Orthodontic

We suggest having your child's teeth examined before coming to camp. Be sure to let us know if your child should be wearing a retainer or other orthodontic appliances.

Eye Glasses

If your child wears glasses and/or contact lenses, it is very important that they bring an extra pair or a copy of the prescription.



Medical Information

Medications

Over-the-Counter Medications

Camp stocks most over-the-counter items, such as: acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil), antihistamine (Benadryl), antacids (Tums), antibiotic ointments, hydrocortisone anti-itch creams (Cortaid), bandages, etc. There is no need to send these items if they are taken on an as-needed (PRN) basis.

If your child is bringing regular or as-needed medications (or supplements) to camp it is very important you read this section carefully.

All medications and vitamins/supplements sent to camp must be prescribed by a physician and pre-packaged by a pharmacy.

Camp Miriam's medication packaging policy is designed to minimize potential medication errors and make distributing medications and supplements safer and more efficient.

Acceptable Pill Packaging

Multi-Dose Strip Packaging (individually sealed compartments that contain all pill-form medications that are to be taken at a particular delivery time)

OR

Multi-Dose Blister Packs (each blister pocket contains all the pill-form medication, to be taken at a particular delivery time)



We will NOT accept unit-dose blister packs where each individual medication has its own blister pack.

Send only the number of doses needed.

Pills must be packaged:

- By day and delivery time (breakfast, lunch, dinner, bedtime)
- In a closed packaging system
- Out of their original bottles
- With the prescription attached to the package by the pharmacist

There must be 100% correlation between:

- The medications in the blister packs
- The medications specified on the physician-completed Medication Form
- The medications you identified in the child's online Medical Form.

If your camper arrives without accurately pre-packaged medication, you will be required to either have it pre-packaged at the pharmacy of your choice and make arrangements for it to be delivered to camp; or be charged a \$200 service fee to offset the considerable time and care we require to ensure correct timing and dosages.

IMPORTANT: Your pharmacy may require several days' notice to complete the packaging process. Please give yourself time! If your child requires updated prescriptions, please make your doctor appointments early.



Medical Information

Exceptions to Packaging Policy

All liquid, creams, inhalers, powder, injectable medicines, birth control pills, or “as-needed” medications/supplements must be sent in their original, sealed packaging with clearly outlined instructions by the pharmacy and physician as to when and how to administer.

Medication Dispensing

Medications are dispensed at mealtimes and bedtime. Exceptions will be made only if medically necessary and indicated as such on the medical form. You are responsible for ensuring that your child's prescriptions on the Camper Medication Form and online Medical Form clearly indicate how and when medication is to be dispensed. You are also responsible for ensuring all medications are brought to camp pre-packaged as per the Medication Packaging Policy (above).

REMINDER: There must be 100% correlation between the medications named on the physician-completed Medication Form, the medications identified in the online Medical Form and the contents of the pre-packaged blister packs and/or other (exceptional as named above) medications and supplements.



Meals



Great care and planning goes into meal preparation at camp. We provide campers with three well-balanced, nutritious and enjoyable kosher-style meals, as well as two snacks every day.

We must know in advance about any special food requirements or allergies.

We make every effort possible to ensure that camp is NUT-FREE. We trust that everyone who comes to camp will understand the seriousness of a nut allergy and will respect our desire to provide a nut-free environment.



Camp Values

Creating a Safe Space — Camp is a refuge

Thank you for sharing your child with us! By sending your child to camp you are providing them with the opportunity for a seminal life experience.

Camp Miriam provides a unique natural environment where kids have the opportunity to play, learn and grow independently from their parents and from many of the distractions of the outside world. Campers have told us that the refuge they enjoy at camp has helped them make meaningful friendships, be more creative, focus on the present and feel free from judgment.

The following camp policies enable us to foster and preserve this invaluable environment:

- Camp is an unplugged zone. We do not allow campers to have mobile phones or other WiFi-enabled devices (with or without a SIM card). Please don't pack these devices because we will have to take them away if they are brought to camp.
- There is no visitor day at camp. Everyone is welcome to see camp during the Open House in May and new families are welcome to attend Family Camp, also in May. You can register and learn more about these events on our website .



- Due to our nut-free, Kupa, and kashrut policies, please **do not** send food or candy to camp.
- We have found that parent phone calls to campers, and vice versa, are very disruptive to the flow of the camp experience. Staff will call parents of all campers from Grades 2-5, and all new campers, during the first week of camp. Additionally, the Registrar or Camp Director are available to address your concerns by email or phone.

We enthusiastically encourage you to communicate with your child the old-fashioned way, through snail mail!





Camp Values

Code of Conduct

In order to ensure the health and happiness of all members of our community, we have developed a Camper Code of Conduct that we expect campers to sign and follow. The code of conduct is available with your other online registration forms. Please review it with your camper.

To ensure a safe and secure environment for all campers and staff, drugs, alcohol, and smoking/vaping are prohibited. Anyone caught using any of these substances will be sent home immediately and no fees will be refunded.

An Inclusive Community

Camp Miriam stands in solidarity with advocates for justice, equality and inclusion. Based on the principle of 'shivyon erech ha'adam' (equality of human value) we strive to create an inclusive youth community for all counsellors and campers. Every human, regardless of gender, sexuality, race and class status is welcome at camp and is encouraged to contribute towards creating safe spaces where each individual is valued, their voices are heard and their needs are respected.

We acknowledge and accommodate campers according to the gender to which they identify. This includes providing gender-neutral bathrooms at camp.



Kupa (Shared funds)

Kupa, translated from Hebrew, means a place to store money, but in Habonim Dror we translate it as a “cooperative fund.” Kupa is one way we insert elements of cooperative living into camp life. Campers pool their funds and then decide as a democratic community how to use those funds to best serve both the individual and, more importantly, the community as a whole. This process is managed by a committee of campers.

The idea of Kupa is one of the most important elements in the educational program and ideology of Habonim Dror. Through Kupa, campers learn about tzedakah, sharing, teamwork, compromise, democracy, budgeting and more.

The recommended amount for Kupa is \$5.00 for each week at camp. Please remember that each person should give what they are able.



Tiyul (Trips)

The Tiyul program is one of the most unique and exciting aspects of Miriam. Tiyul provides campers with the opportunity to bond with their peers outside of camp, to test their abilities and to learn wilderness skills. Campers often return from Tiyul feeling refreshed, more confident, and closer to their fellow campers.

Midway through the session, campers pack their bags and depart for the beautiful camping and hiking opportunities that Gabriola and Vancouver Island offer. Where the campers go and what they do depends on their age group.

Grades 3 and 4 remain on Gabriola. They spend two nights camping at Descanso Bay, a quaint little campground with a beautiful view of the sunset over the ocean. Located five minutes by car from camp, Descanso provides Miriam's younger campers with the opportunity to experience group camping and short treks while remaining close to camp.





Grades 5 and 6 spend two nights “car camping” at a campground on Vancouver Island. Day activities include building sandcastles at the beach, taking short hikes through the campground, playing games, eating lots of trail mix, and learning about nature. At night, everyone gathers together to sing campfire songs and eat s’mores.

Grades 7, 8 and 9 leave car camping behind for more scenic backpacking trips. Each camper carries a backpack with their clothing as well as group gear and food. They hike for a good portion of the day before arriving at a campsite where they set up tents, make dinner, and enjoy an evening in nature.

These hikes typically involve 5-10 kilometres of walking. Locations consist of well-maintained, beautiful trails with available camping space, such as the Juan de Fuca Trail and Strathcona Provincial Park.

Boating

Each summer, there is often one older group (Grade 8 or 9) that goes on a canoeing and kayaking trip instead of a backpacking trip. Campers paddle to Blackberry Point on Valdez Island, a sparkling white beach sitting beneath a small mountain. Because this trip only takes one day of paddling, campers spend the middle day hiking up the mountain, paddling across the water to the small neighbouring islands, and swimming in the ocean.

A note on safety: All trips are led by counsellors who have been certified in Wilderness First Aid or Wilderness First Responder. There are often multiple counsellors on each trip who have this certification, as well as medical attendants with Occupational First Aid.



Registration

Your Online Camp Account

You created an online account in CampMinder when you registered your child for camp. All the forms will be available in March and are due **in April**. This includes: Medical form, Immunization, Insurance & waiver Form, and the Code of Conduct.

Your username is your email address. If you have forgotten your password, you can always choose 'forgot password' to regain access to your account. If you have any issues or questions just call the office or email office@campmiriam.org.

Transportation

Transportation is provided from Vancouver to camp and back. Depending on numbers of campers, we may also run buses from Victoria and Seattle. In addition, we will arrange for both pick up and drop off at the Vancouver International Airport, as required.





Communication

Mail

Mail takes on great importance at camp and we encourage you to write to your child as much as possible. Some parents start sending letters before their child has left for camp, to ensure that they receive mail early in the session. You can also give mail to the Registrar at the bus on the first day of camp.

Likewise, we encourage campers to write home. Please give your child stamped and addressed envelopes. US-bound mail will be stamped by camp. We cannot accept emails and faxes for campers.

Summer Contact Information

Camp phone numbers and address will be provided before the start of the session.

In case of emergency, please phone camp.



Contact Information

Phone: 604-266-2825

Email: registrar@campmiriam.org

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Camp Miriam is an accredited member of the British Columbia
Camps Association and the Canadian Camping Association

