

Dear Parents:

We have always taken the safety and well being of our campers – your children – very seriously. After all, giving your children over to the care of other people is perhaps the greatest act of trust you as a parent can engage in. We aim to do everything we humanly can to earn and keep that trust. We also know we cannot do this without your help. We are writing to invoke the partnership we feel we have with you, to help us make sure your children continue to have the safest, most wholesome experience with us possible.

Given certain developments in our culture, including the increased use of internet, cell phones, and text messaging, we ask that you read this letter carefully so you may understand the challenges facing us regarding the continued safety and health of our camp community.

As you know we have a **“no cell phone”** policy at camp. Aside from the fact that there is not good cell phone coverage, they are expensive and can get lost or stolen, the camp environment is not kind to such items, there is a fundamental problem with cell phones at camp, and that is trust. When children come to camp they, and you, are making a leap of faith, transferring their primary care from you to their counselors. This is one of the growth producing, yet challenging aspects of camp. As children learn to trust other caring adults and meet new friends, they grow and learn to solve some of their own challenges. We believe that this emerging independence is one of the greatest benefits of camp. Contacting you or their “old” friends back home clearly means they have not made this transition.

By not sending cell phones to camp, you are deleting the possibilities, of loss of property, damage to property, and misuse of property. Furthermore, you are encouraging your child to increase their independence, meet new friends, and stay on task with camp activities that you paid good monies for.

We agree to contact you if your child is experiencing a challenge in their adjustment to camp. You can help by talking to them prior to us leaving for camp. There are many caring adults that they can talk to while at camp, and licensed health care staff are always available if a medical emergency should arise. **“No Cell Phones”** means counselors and campers; therefore counselors should have another means of telling time and alarm clocks for waking up. If cell phones are located, they will be taken away for the duration of camp and returned upon arrival home. We are all here to help, if you have further questions about the **“no cell phone”** policy please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,
Heart of Kansas 4-H Camp Agents

