

Junior 4-H Camp Cell Phone Policy

4-H camp participants including, but not limited to campers and teen counselors are prohibited from bringing cell phones or other electronic communication devices to 4-H Camp.

Bringing and using these devices is very disruptive to the camping experience in several ways.

1. Campers who experience mild home-sickness and have access to a cell phone will call home. Once that connection is made, the parents almost always end up coming to camp to take their child home. The same camper without access to that phone will be over their home-sickness in 24 – 36 hours and have a wonderful camping experience.
2. Other campers who do not have access to cell phones, but see others using them often feel as if they are being treated unfairly even though they are the ones who chose to follow rules. Seeing this can also incite home-sickness where it otherwise might not occur.
3. 4-H Camp is designed to be a place for youth to have a safe and fun learning experience away from home and their parents. Having direct contact with parents/family/friends throughout the week interferes with and even negates the developmental benefits that the camping experience is designed to provide.

Family and friends are strongly encouraged to send upbeat, positive letters, notes, and care packages to camp. You may even consider mailing packages on Thursday or Friday before camp so that your child will have a package waiting for them the first day of camp when they arrive. We suggest you send your child to camp with self addressed, stamped envelopes for their use. The address for the Holiday Lake 4-H Center is below:

Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center
c/o: *Camper's Name*
1267 4-H Camp Road
Appomattox, Va. 24522

We realize that you are trusting us with your most valued possession and we take that responsibility very seriously. All adult and teen counselors must complete training each year which covers everything from games and songs to risk management. The summer staff at camp goes through two weeks of very intensive training to help ensure that your child has the time of their lives at 4-H camp.

In the event of an emergency involving your child at camp, you will be contacted immediately. This is why it is important to list all the ways we can contact you on the health form and to list at least one emergency contact that we can call if we can't reach you immediately. Likewise, if there is an emergency at home and you need to get in touch with your child, you can call the 4-H center main office number, **(434) 248-5444**, at any time to reach someone and get a message to your child.

Those who bring unauthorized cell phones to camp will have them confiscated. Parents can pick up those cell phones when they pick up their campers on Friday, or they can come to the **Amherst County Extension Office** the following week. Those who bring cell phones, but refuse to surrender them Monday before dinner, may be sent home.

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, contact me at **946-9365** or ***kirvin@vt.edu***.

Please help us enforce this policy for the benefit of everyone at camp and to ensure a fun, safe, and happy week at 4-H camp! We appreciate your cooperation.