

# ELECTRONICS POLICY AT CAMP

## The (Jewish) Values of an Electronics Policy

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### HELP OUR CAMPERS “UNPLUG” - PLEASE LEAVE ALL ELECTRONICS AT HOME!

When campers “unplug,” it gives them the opportunity to truly let go and fully integrate into the camp experience. When we’ve surveyed campers, they actually tell us that they really appreciate the break from electronics! They develop autonomy, independence, and a stronger sense of self. They make new friends, take responsibility for themselves and their bunkmates, and problem solve. These things cannot be achieved when parents are only a call away.

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU BREAK THE RULES...

Although electronics have been strictly prohibited at camp for years, some families choose to ignore this policy. However, electronics interfere with important aspects of camp.

- Electronics remove campers from the camp experience, cause conflicts in cabins, and leads campers to focus on friends at home instead of those at camp.
- Phones enable campers to call parents when they need advice instead of encouraging them to problem solve or turn to their peers or counselors.
- Electronics are prone to getting lost, broken, or even stolen at camp – and Camp Newman cannot take responsibility for the loss or damage of any item, nor does our insurance policy cover replacement of camper items.
- Lastly, please consider that **when you allow your child to break the rules and take electronics to camp, you’re teaching your child that the rules do not apply to you and your family.**

### In partnership with our Advisory Board, we created an Electronics Policy to:

- Create an environment that encourages community building, bonding, and “unplugging”
- Encourage campers to spend more time outdoors
- Promote socialization between campers
- Remove the divide between “the haves and the have-nots” in each cabin
- Reduce the stress associated with the damage to and theft of electronics
- Give campers a much-needed break from the world of technology
- Allow campers to fully embrace the connections they make with other campers
- Ensure that our campers are not exposed to age inappropriate material

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### CELL PHONES

- Campers are **NOT PERMITTED** to have a cell phone while at camp. **If your child brings a phone to camp,** they can check it in on the first day. It will be confiscated if discovered later.
- **Avodah and CIT campers ARE PERMITTED** to have cell phones at camp for use during very specific times during the session. If this privilege is abused, the camper’s phone will be confiscated and returned on the final day of camp.
- **Campers who arrive by airplane may have their cell phones ONLY** in the airport gate area. Once a camper lands they’ll be permitted to call home to let their family know that they have

landed safely and are with our camp staff. Immediately following that call, phones are checked-in by our camp staff and returned at the airport on the closing day of the session.

### **iPOD/MP3 Players**

If your child needs to listen to music at camp, please send an inexpensive mp3 player instead, NOT a phone. We STRONGLY recommend that your child leave expensive music players at home. If you allow your child to bring an iPod/mp3 player, please discuss proper handling in a camp setting (never taking it outside the cabin, not leaving it on the floor or in the bathroom, etc.). Please check your child's music player before they come to camp to be sure the device adheres to the following guidelines:

- **Remove all movies, TV shows and games.** This way we will not have to monitor the age appropriateness of every movie and show our campers may have on their devices. Any iPod/mp3 player containing these will be confiscated and returned on Closing Day.
- **PLEASE make sure all music is age appropriate.**
- **It should not be able to access the Internet or have phone capabilities.**

### **DIGITAL CAMERAS**

Name-labeled disposable cameras are preferred (no expensive cameras, please!). If your camper does bring an inexpensive camera, make sure to pack enough memory cards and batteries. Please discuss proper handling of the camera and that pictures should be taken of others only with their permission, and that Camp cannot be held responsible should an expensive camera be lost or damaged.

### **HELD-HAND GAME DEVICES**

Game devices are not allowed in camp. Playing board and card games (which are readily available) is encouraged during *menucha* (rest hour) so that campers can socialize, interact, and build community within the cabin. Any hand-held devices we discover will be confiscated and returned on Closing Day.

### **LAPTOPS, NETBOOKS, IPADS, KINDLES, NOOKS**

None of these or similar electronic devices are permitted in camp. (Exception: Avodah/CIT campers may bring laptops for homework use only; please consider additional insurance for these items.)

### **ONE LAST WORD ON ELECTRONICS...**

We recommend that your child powers down, unplugs, and takes what we're certain is a well-needed break from the world of electronics. We recommend bringing other "interactive" things, like playing cards, chess, scrabble, word games, etc. Of course, books are always welcome! Please be respectful of the usage and content limitations we have in place. If you have any further clarification, please contact one of our Camp Directors at 415-392- 7080.