



Summer 2019 Parent Manual

The countdown to Summer 2019 has begun!

Welcome to the URJ Camp Newman community – for friendships, adventure and the joy of Judaism, there is no better camp! Your child will choose from many enriching activities, have an unforgettable Shabbat experience, and make Jewish friends that could last a lifetime. Since 1947, our camp has impacted the lives of over 100,000 children, teens, and adults. Our campers call Camp Newman their “second home,” and year after year, they return to renew the strong bonds of friendship they build here. We can’t wait for your child to experience all this and more this summer!

CAMPNEWMAN.ORG | 415-392-7080

Summer Camp Mailing Address: *Camper's Name*, Camp Newman – *Session Name*, 1 Morrow Cove, Vallejo, CA 94590
Summer Camp Office: 200 Maritime Academy Drive, Vallejo, CA 94590
Year-Round Office: 711 Grand Avenue, Suite 280, San Rafael, CA 94901



A LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear Camper Families,

We want to thank you in advance for giving your camper the blessings of a Camp Newman summer. Camp gives us an amazing opportunity to live our Jewish values through a philosophy of CARE:

C – **Community**. We create a holy community, a *kehilla kedosha*, through...

A – **Acceptance**. We accept each person for who they are, living the value of *v'ahavta l'reyacha kamocha*, loving your neighbor as yourself.

R – **Role Modeling**. Staff and campers alike role model what it means to live these values, and we encourage each person to "Make for yourself a teacher, and find yourself a friend." (*Pirkei Avot*)

E – **Each and Every One**. We care about each and every person in our community. We strive to get to know the uniqueness of every camper, and see each as made *betzelem Elohim*, in the image of God.

These values drive everything we do: the way we train our staff, the way we welcome everyone, the way we build our summer home, and the way we embrace your child into the Camp Newman family.

Becoming Your Most Authentic Self: One of my favorite things about camp is how our campers become their most authentic selves through the magic of community, friendship, fun, and Judaism. Sometimes it's apparent only years later when alumni realize, for example, that their love of public speaking began after telling a story at Shabbat services, or that their late night conversations with camp friends inspired them to be a social worker. Time and again, alumni tell us that they are who they are because of Camp Newman.

A Second Home: Since the 2017 fires, we've learned that buildings, though they matter, are secondary to the feeling of home we create together each summer. Camp's walls are constructed out of love, acceptance, and kindness. Camp builds a safe space each summer for kids to be their true selves. This is why campers call camp their "second home," their camp friends "family," and count the days until they can return. It's why our campers feel comfortable sharing their stories with each other about their joys, sorrows, dreams, successes, yearnings, and aspirations. It's why the friendships made here are unlike any other. We can't wait to welcome your child into their Camp Newman home and community!

L'dor V'dor, From Generation to Generation: At Camp, the notion of *L'dor V'dor* is ubiquitous. Children grow up at camp, inevitably passing on camp traditions to younger campers. Many become staff or return as faculty with their own families just so they can share these traditions and their love of camp with the next generation. Talmud teaches that "*by the breath of children, God sustains the world.*" Camp allows for the child in each of us to blossom, grow, and flourish within a distinctly Jewish, loving and accepting community. It's why our campers often cheer, "I love to be Jewish," and why that feeling stays with them years after they attend their last camp session.



We can't thank you enough for trusting us, supporting us, engaging with us, and inviting us into your children's lives. We promise to do our very best to instill in your child everything good and beautiful about our rich Jewish heritage and tradition, and to treat your child as though they are created *b'tzelem Elohim*, in the image of God. Thank you for choosing URJ Camp Newman. **Welcome home!**

Rabbi Allie Fischman
Camp Director, URJ Camp Newman

CREATING A PARTNERSHIP

Dear Camper Families,

We're counting the days until 2019 summer begins! We're excitedly making final preparations to welcome your children into our enriching Jewish community. As we do so, we ask our staff to carry this thought with them, 24 hours a day: ***Imagine that every child's parents are watching over your shoulder as you care for, nurture, and inspire their most precious gift in life.***

The most important covenant we possess at camp is with you, the parents. ***This manual is designed to help you foster a partnership with us so that together, we can create a healthy, secure, successful, and joyful experience for your child.***

Prepare for Camp in Partnership with Your Child

Prepare for camp with your child. Pack together. Chat about their hopes, anxieties, and expectations. Re-watch our [Camp Video](#). The more your child knows what to expect, the better they'll adjust to camp life. Express how proud you are of them embarking on their camp journey. Rather than tell your child that they can "come home" or "call home" if they're having a hard time (which we've found makes it more difficult for them to adjust), reassure them that they'll be surrounded by amazing counselors and camper care professionals who they can call on 24/7 for support. Just as you are preparing your child for success, we are doing the very same for them!

Coping with Moments of Sadness at Camp

The only "cure" for homesickness is time, coupled with our counselors' support. Our counselors are there to comfort your child; they're sensitive, well trained and, in most cases, were former campers themselves and draw on their experiences. They also know where to turn for help. Each session, we have rabbis, cantors, Jewish educators, counselors and camper care professionals (our Nefesh team), as well as senior staff who are readily available to help guide campers to success. When campers have challenging situations (like homesickness or social issues), we help foster their independence by encouraging them to reach out to the resources at hand: counselors, fellow campers, and camper care professionals. With our help, moments of sadness pass quickly and before they know it, they're excitedly on to the next activity with their new friends!

When Your Child Is at Camp

Feel free to call camp any time to speak with your child's *rosh eidah* (unit head), to check on your ___ child, hear what activities they're in, and voice any concerns. We also recommend sending many positive letters ("we are so proud of you" and "can't wait to hear about camp!"), instead of "we miss you terribly" or "here's what you're missing at home." Have letters waiting for them when they arrive. If they're not letter writers themselves, send them self-addressed stamped letters that are easy to fill out ("your favorite activity at camp is:___," "your new friend's name is:___", etc).

And don't forget, it often takes a couple of days for younger campers to adjust to camp life; in our experience, a homesick kid on day two is often a lifetime camper by day three!

L'shalom,

The Camp Newman Family