

Dear Jacobs Camp Families,

We are thrilled that you have chosen to send your children to Jacobs Camp! We are already planning new and exciting adventures for Summer 2017, and we are counting down the days until your camper arrives.

We have decided to make a change for this upcoming summer, and we want to tell you about it in advance so you can discuss it with your children to prepare them and manage expectations.

After much discussion with our staff, the Jacobs Camp Committee, and other summer camp directors, we've decided to make a significant change to our existing package policy. **Starting this summer, our camp will no longer accept packages.** This includes boxes or large mailing envelopes of any size. Camp will only accept up to a standard #10 size business envelope (4-1/8" x 9-1/2") or a standard greeting card.

Our experience through the years has shown us that our current system of accepting packages from families is not sustainable or desirable. We believe this decision is truly in the best interest of our campers. Here's why:

- The volume of packages that arrives in camp each day creates a community of "haves" and "have-nots," undermining our efforts to create a Jewish community in which each camper feels that he or she is valued and treated equally.
- Some campers don't receive any packages, which leads to feelings of sadness and jealousy; others receive so many packages they literally cannot manage all of the "stuff" in their cabins.
- Our staff spends hours organizing and sorting over a hundred packages daily, giving them less time to spend with campers.
- Packages and packing materials produce a tremendous amount of waste.
- With the current load of packages, UPS and Fed Ex trucks drive in and out of camp several times a day.
- Sadly, many parents do not respect our no-food policy, and others forget to share that policy with extended family members. The food, candy and gum that arrives in these packages (hidden or otherwise) must be taken away, disappointing the camper.
- Parents have told us that it is expensive and burdensome to fill and mail packages, and that they often feel pressure to do so.
- Other Jewish overnight camps that have instituted similar no-package policies report that this change lifted the burden from parents, campers, and camp staff, and it has had a tremendously positive impact on the camp community.

Of course, we understand that sometimes sending items to camp will be necessary. If your camper has forgotten something (*e.g.*, a teddy bear they need to feel comfortable or to fall asleep) or needs something to be replaced (*e.g.*, running shoes or more sunscreen), you will be able to send those types of items. We will set up a dedicated email address for you to contact us

in advance about these needs. **Please Note:** This will be done on an exception-only basis; all packages received at camp must be communicated to us via email prior to its arrival. If we do not know a package is coming, we will refuse to accept it at camp. More information on our new process will be included in the parent materials sent later this spring.

We feel that this new policy will have a positive impact on our campers' experience, and we are excited to follow the lead of many other overnight camps. We hope you will understand our motivation for making this change, and we are grateful your cooperation.

Thank you in advance for doing your part to ensure that Jacobs Campers have a healthy and safe summer experience and live among a community rich with values and principles.

L'Shalom,

Anna