

# MAXIMIZING THE CAMP APP EXPERIENCE



## CAMP APP

**Thank you for choosing the Camp App! The following guide will outline tips and strategies to take on this new technology, promote the App to participants to ensure they get signed up on time, maximize the App features, and maximize your results for fundraising campaigns within the App. Make sure to read the full User Guide found on the Support page on our website prior to starting. We also recommend downloading the Fundraising and Promotion Tool Kit referenced in this guide, also located on the website.**

**TAKE YOUR CAMP TO THE NEXT LEVEL!**

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# USING THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY

We created this tool as former camp professionals to assist camps in improving communication, staying organizing, and enhancing the camp experience for parents. By having interest in the App and creating an account, you have taken the next step to improve your camp! Implementing a new technology at camp can be a scary and time consuming. It may involve talking to a pushy sales team, long hours training yourself and staff, having a lot of change, complicated or little to no user guide resources or support, long term commitments, etc. *Our App is different!* We understand all that so the last thing we want to do it burden you with more unnecessary work that has little result. Here are all the things we do to make this transition as easy as possible:

1. Everything is set up to use on your own. If you picked up on how to use it and know what you want to do with the App, you can start on your own and never have to contact us, if you choose. No pushy sales teams, no long onboarding sessions, and no contracts or long term commitments. The App is there when you need it and want to use it, all with just a free account.
2. If you do need us we are here with a direct contact. No call centers. Just start with an email or support ticket on our website and we will help you with whatever you need assistance with in a quick efficient manner.
3. All the detailed User Guides and Tutorials for yourself and Parents are located on the Support page of our website. Here you will find simple and detailed step by step guides and videos on how to use the App.
4. The App is extremely flexible and was built to run alongside anything you already have in place, such as your registration or email platforms. We don't want you to have to change your entire operation by using the App, just add another tool in your camp management tool box. The options are minimal when it comes to a camp management app, and there are none out there packed with as many features as ours.
5. The process to onboard your parents is a simple import and export process. Just copy and paste your rosters in our roster form, upload it, and parents will start to get on automatically. The more effort and communication you are able to put into this process the easier it will be. Once your parents get on, the system is even easier to use.

6. We will onboard your parents for you! If you don't have the time to set up your rosters in the format we need, send them over for us to format. We will send them back for your review and to upload them to get your parents on the App. Once the App is a regular part of your program this process becomes much easier as all your returning participants already know where to go and what to do.
7. All screens for all the features in the system were built very similar so you don't have to learn a new process for everything in the App. Once you learn how to post or upload for one feature, you can do it the same for all.
8. When parents have issues, you can send them directly to us for assistance. Communicating to them throughout the process will greatly limit the questions you get from them, but regardless we don't want you bogged down trying to assist them. Send them to the Support page on our website and we are glad to assist.
9. We always recommend that the person posting to the App is the person in charge of that site. Your individual counselors will generally supply you with information to post but will not do the posting. Once you learn the system it is easy to show and train anyone else you need to give access to.
10. We do Live Demo's throughout the camp off season to give you an opportunity to hop on a quick call and see the App in action. Check the App page on our website if you ever want to sign up for one. Once we get closer to Summer Camp we will transition to webinars and trainings for you and your staff to use the App.
11. The App is always unlocked for the Camp Admin with the account. You can create a test camp, add yourself as a parent to give you mobile app access, and test out the App. Once you are comfortable with it and how it works, you can then roll it out to camp. You can always do all of this on your own.
12. We want to hear your feedback! The direction of our App is dictated by our users, both Camp Directors and Parents. If you have suggestions in functionality or new features email us directly or fill out our periodic surveys and you may see your suggestion come to life in the next version.

# PROMOTING THE APP TO PARTICIPANTS

It is important that you communicate your usage of the Camp App to parents before, during, and after the registration process to make sure they understand how you intend to use the App for camp and the benefit they will receive from it to ensure an easy and streamlined onboarding process. *Make sure to reiterate that joining the Camp App is a mandatory part of your program!* This is the best way to ensure you maximize your chances to get all parents on and engaged with your camp on the App. Here are some tips to get your camp parents on board with the App:

1. Use our Parent Letter located in our Fundraising and Promotion Tool Kit or something similar to explain the benefits of the App and how onboarding works. Give this to them at registration via print, email or even mail if your camp does mail outs.
2. Give your parents our Camp App Parent User Guide located on the Support page of our website. You can print this out, email it to them or email the link to our website.
3. In most cases parents will be making the one-time payment to activate their account. It is important to make sure they understand the value of the App and what they are getting for that fee. There is a screen in the mobile App that will give them a few bullet points on this and it is outlined in the Parent User Guide.
4. Include the App information and one time parent's fee next to wherever you have your camp fees posted on your website along with all marketing and registration materials. Make sure to mention that those that already have an active Camp App account do not have to pay again, even if it was from another camp. This way there are no surprises when parents are prompted to make the one time account activation payment.
5. If you have subscribed to the App your parents do not pay the activation fee. It would still be beneficial to let them know the App is 100% free for them yet it still mandatory to join to ensure they receive the information you send them.

6. Prior to onboarding your parents, set up different things in the App so there is something there when they arrive. Create a welcome message on the newsfeed, put some camp documents in the document center, have your field trip information up, etc. This way it is not blank when they sign on and they come to you with questions or concerns that they cannot see anything in the App.
7. When onboarding starts your parents will get an email from our system to join your camp on the App. We recommend you immediately send an email from your account as well to alert them to look out for the link to join and explain the benefits of the App as well as what they can expect from it.
8. Their default login is their email with password 123456 to make it as easy as possible to get on, regardless if they received the login email or not. Make sure to pass on this information in your follow up emails. If they do not receive our system email they can search “The Camp App” in the App store or find the links on the App page on our website.
9. After a week or so, follow up with your parents to ensure they sign up before camp starts. You can see on your camp rosters in the App who has logged in and who has not.
10. Once your camp is fully on the App, welcome them to it. Reiterate the benefits and let them know how you will be using it. Remind them to review the Parent User Guide prior to the start of camp to maximize their experience on the app and ensure they understand how it works and how to navigate.
11. Use all the features in the App and use them as often as you can! The biggest feedback we get from parents is that they were on the App for camp but the camp barely ever posted anything. If you are going to use a tool to enhance their camp experience, use it to the fullest of its ability.
12. If there are features within the App that you may not use, make sure to pass this on to parents so it doesn't look like there should be something there that they are not seeing. We always recommend you use all functions of the App to maximize the camp and parent experience!

Remember, you can never communicate too much! Most your parents will read and understand this simple process right away but it doesn't hurt to send reminders when possible to make sure everyone understands and is on board.

# MAXIMIZE THE APP FEATURES

Now that you have promoted the Camp App to your participants and you have onboarded your parents, it is time to start engaging with parents on the App! Prior to onboarding your parents, you should have all your schedules, supplemental materials, trips and events on the App so they can see it there when they join. The worst thing you can do with any tool you incorporate into your camp is not use it. Also, always add yourself as a parent to your camps so you can see what your parents see when you post and upload. [Make sure you read the full Camp App User Guide or view our Tutorials before getting started!](#) Here are some tips to maximize each feature of the App:

## Camp Newsfeed

1. Make sure to have a welcome message on the Newsfeed when they arrive to welcome them to camp.
2. At a minimum, post here daily to engage parents. Updates and reminders for camp activities, trips, and events are a necessity. The more you communicate this the better!
3. Post fun and engaging content for parents like a funny picture of campers, campers playing an activity, campers off site at a trip, or campers showing off a craft project. All these pictures will also land in your pictures album but you can highlight any aspect of camp with the description on your newsfeed!
4. Always post some type of picture with your newsfeed post to make it look better and more engaging. Pictures are optional, if you do not post a picture it will look more like a text.
5. Every time you post your parents will get a notification keeping them engaged with your camp operations!

## **Camp Documents**

1. Get as much content up here as possible prior to onboarding your parents so they can see it all when they join.
2. The document center is a great way to post your detailed schedules. Whether you have schedules on your Camp Calendar in the App or not, you can still post a PDF copy of your schedule or include supplemental material to your schedules.
3. Don't limit yourself to just your daily or weekly activity schedules. Anything that you need to give to parents can be posted here as long as it is a PDF.
4. Post supplemental materials mentioned above such as camp manuals and other parent handouts.
5. If you have fillable PDF forms here they can view them, download them, fill them out, and send them back to you via email right from their mobile device or tablet.
6. Parents will get a notification anytime you upload a new document.

## **Camp Calendar**

Your Camp Calendar is a great way to transpose your camp schedules right to the App to keep you and your parents organized all summer. Here are some ways to maximize your Camp Calendars:

1. Put as many Activities as you can on the calendar and be as detailed as possible. Parents really enjoy being able to see what their child's day is going to entail each day.
2. If you are not putting all your activities in detail on the Calendar, at least put some general information or highlight some of the larger scale activities.
3. The Calendar allows you to repeat activities daily, weekly, or monthly to make it easy for you to add your ongoing activities to the Calendar.
4. All your field trips and events will automatically show up on the Camp Calendar so parents will be able to see all the details in both locations.

5. If you are not using the calendar, make sure to let your parents know ahead of time and also make sure your camp schedules are available in the document center.
6. Parents will get a notification anytime you post a new calendar entry.

## **Camp Trips and Camp Events**

1. Get as much content up here as possible prior to onboarding your parents so they can see it all when they join.
2. Try to put a picture on these posts so it's more engaging for parents to read and catches their eye. You can pull a picture or logo from the trip destination website or add a picture of your camp on the trip if you have been there in the past.
3. Fill in as many details on each trip as possible. It is great to have all the dates and times there but extra details on what to bring and a detailed description of what campers will do on the trip is great for parents to know.
4. Remember to remind them on the details of an upcoming trip or event on your Camp Newsfeed. You can never communicate too much and this will ensure all your campers arrive on time and prepared.
5. Parents will get a notification anytime you post something new. If you do an edit it will not push a notification so either remind them of the edit on your newsfeed or delete the old entry and create a new one to have it push the notification for the new or updated trip or event.

## **Pictures**

As we all know, pictures are a great way to engage with parents and show the surrounding community what you are doing at camp. Nothing resonates more with a parent than seeing the smiles on their kids faces at camp. The picture feature is the number one thing parents and camp directors' request so use it as much as you can. Here are some tips to maximize using pictures in the App:

1. Take and post as many pictures as you can! Make sure to vet your pictures before posting to make sure they are appropriate, clean, limit duplication, and are a nice representation of your program.



2. Eliminate repeat pictures before posting. If your counselor snapped 100 pictures in a row of the same thing, only post the best ones. This will save parents time of having to go through so many of the same activity.
3. When creating your albums break them up however you can to make it easier for parents to know where to go to find their kids. Depending on how your camps and camp groups are structured in the App you can do this by week of camp, age group, by their counselor, by bunks, etc.
4. You can select as many pictures as you can to upload at one time. They tend to upload very quickly, but the more pictures you do at once the longer it will take to upload. Also, your internet connection plays a large part in the upload speeds.
5. Camp Admin's can login to their dashboard from the browser on their mobile device to use the phone. However, by doing this you will generally have much slower internet connections. The App itself will function fine, but it is not recommended trying to upload large picture albums while on a phone on site or it could time out if your connection is not great.
6. Use a picture on your Camp Newsfeed posts to catch parents eyes, even if it is just a reminder.
7. Use your best pictures to highlight fun and engaging content of your best camp activities on the Camp Newsfeed.
8. Use a picture when posting Camp Trips and Camp Events to make them stand out more.
9. Don't hesitate to also share pictures on your social media page and website to show the surrounding community all the great things you do! It is one thing to talk about it, it takes it to another level to show it!
10. Parents will get a notification anytime you post a new picture or add pictures to an album. They can download them directly to their mobile device.

## **Video**

Within the App you have the ability to share YouTube videos that can be played right inside the App. Here are some ways to maximize the Video feature:

1. You must use YouTube links. The App cannot accept videos linked to other platforms.
2. Highlight your trips, events, or larger activities with videos to further engage your parents.
3. You don't have to be a master video editor to use video at camp. Take the stock footage you took from your device at camp, review it, trim it if needed, and upload to your YouTube account. Once it's there all you have to do is copy and paste the link to the App.
4. If you do not want your videos public on YouTube you can make them private to just your account.
5. When you post a video it is viewed with a player right inside the App. It does not take them out of the App and to YouTube.
6. The YouTube link needs to be the browser link with the full youtube.com name in it. It will not accept the shortened link that you would share directly from your channel page.
7. Parents will get a notification anytime you post a new video is posted.

## **Messaging**

You have the ability to contact parents within the App for things that may need a little more detail or something you do not want to post publicly in the Newsfeed. Messaging via the App is an upgrade from email because you already have the parents engaged in the App and it cannot get lost in a spam folder or full and flooded inboxes. Parent replies can be made by using the Contact Us function on their side of the App to send you a message directly. Here are some messaging tips:

1. Send messages as little or as much as you want. They will all be saved in the App for reference until you delete them.
2. For very important, urgent, last minute things you can always send a message to follow up on a Newsfeed post so the parents are notified more than once.

3. You can send messages to the entire camp, your camp groups, or individual parents.
4. Parents will get a notification anytime you send a message. Messages will stay visible in their inbox throughout camp.

## **Push Notifications**

Push notifications are what separates the App from other communication tools as it makes it as simple and easy as possible to make sure parents are seeing the things you post, upload, and send. It also allows you to notify a large group of parents instantly and efficiently, regardless of how many parents you have on the App. Here are some tips with using notifications:

1. Anything you put into the App will automatically send a push notification to parents automatically.
2. Notifications only go out for new content. If you edit something it will not send the notification so it is recommend to post the change on your newsfeed or just delete the old post and do a new post so the notification goes out.
3. You want to post frequently but don't overdo it and post all hours of the day. Find the balance on what works for you to get important information and content to parents but not bombard them with notifications.
4. A general rule with push notifications is that they will not send while the App is open. If parents are in the App or have it open in the background, they will see the post come through them they switch screens in the App. It will still send when their phone locks, even if the App is still up.
5. The App has a notification tracker. Even if they are in the App, they will see a bubble on the tracker to indicate a new post. If they click the notification in the tracker it will take them directly to your new post or upload.

6. Parents cannot turn notifications off within the App itself. If a parent has a concern that they are not getting them, it is almost always a device issue not the App system. There are three ways a notification may not come through:
  - a. As mentioned above the App is open. They just have to switch screens to see the new post.
  - b. They have went in their phone settings to block notifications either for just the Camp App or for all apps.
  - c. They have no internet connection. Even if their internet is showing a connection, sometimes it will go in and out and may have been out when the notification went through.

# USING THE CAMP APP ON SITE AT CAMP

Using the Camp App on site at camp is quick and easy and allows you to manage your program right from your phone to give parents live updates and reminders as they happen. You don't need to be in your office at a computer to post or upload, but you do have to have an internet connection. Here are some tips and guidelines to using the App while on site at camp:

1. There is no App from the App Store for the administrators. All logins to the Camp Admin Dashboard happen through the website.
2. To use the App on site with camp login to the website from the internet browser on your mobile device.
3. Ensure you have a good internet connection while using the App on site or it may lag or time out while you try to post.
4. While on site you can still quickly and easily post and upload. However, it is not recommended to upload large amounts of pictures as it may not be as quick and efficient as on your computer.
5. While using the App on site at camp you can send parents updates and reminders as they happen. It is also an effective tool if you run into any unexpected issues, like your bus getting stuck in traffic on the way back from a trip. Notify the parents immediately that you will be running late. Use the Camp App to inform parents on any situation that may arise.

# FUNDRAISE WITH THE CAMP APP

One of the great features of the Camp App is that it allows parents to easily give a donation to your program with a click of a button while using the App. The approach to fundraising within the Camp App is similar to a crowdsourcing campaign where you can expect a lot of small donations to come in to reach whatever goals you want to set. You will receive 96% of the funds raised within the App that will be sent to you once your camp concludes. The 4% is to cover processing and transaction fees that we incur to offer this feature. This is another tool for you to generate revenue by using the app.

You have the attention from an engaged audience within the App so now it is time to use that resource to drive your campaign. Here are some tips to maximize your results on a Camp App fundraising campaign:

1. Set an attainable goal and have a plan! As you are getting close you can try to rally your parents to get there!
2. Send parents a fundraising letter to kick off your campaign. Outline why you are fundraising, where the money will go, and how it will benefit their kids and your camp. We have a sample letter in our Tool Kit.
3. As mentioned above use the Camp Newsfeed to remind parents of the ongoing campaign and rally them as you hit certain benchmarks nearing your goals.
4. Provide an incentive if they donate a certain amount to encourage larger donations. It can be something like “Donate \$20 to get enrolled in a raffle for a hotel stay” or you can set up donation tiers where each level of donation qualifies them for a different potential prize.
5. Show parents how previous donations were directly used. If you have some equipment or supplies that were purchased with past donations, post it in the App to show what you are doing with their money.
6. Thank them as much as possible both individually and as a collective group.
7. Provide recognition. Put together something unique that recognizes them for their contribution. Examples are things like a framed picture of the camp, a plaque for larger donations, some “camp swag”, etc. are great ways to show your appreciation.
8. Use your Camp Newsfeed for sponsorships. Parents who own businesses may be interested in donating in exchange for the opportunity to showcase their business on the newsfeed to the rest of your camp parents.

There are several resources out there for fundraising that you could add to this mix but everything above is what we have found most useful in our crowdsourcing campaigns. We hope you can meet and exceed your goals by fundraising with the Camp App!

# ASSISTING PARENTS WITH COMMON ISSUES

The majority of your camp parents will get on the App, pay attention to it, and pick up on it very quickly. We try to make the process as easy as possible for them, as well as you, but you still may receive questions as it is new to your program. If a parent ever has a question you cannot answer you can always send them to the Support page on our website to contact us directly or fill out a support ticket. Visit the FAQ's on the Support page on our website to see the full list of frequently asked questions and how to handle those.

The vast majority of issues on your parents end, if you come across any at all, will be an issue with their device or internet connection. We have mentioned that we always recommend you add yourself to all of your camps on the App so you can see all of your posts, uploads, and notifications come through. This way if a parent comes to you with a question, you are seeing the same things they are. Here are some common questions from parents:

1. Not getting the system emails: All our system emails come from [noreply@thesummercampsources.com](mailto:noreply@thesummercampsources.com). The majority of the emails they get here are notifications that a new camp is available, but once they get on they should see those in their My Camps list. We will also send system updates to them as well.
2. Parent cannot login: The default login is their email with password 123456. If they cannot get in, there may be a typo in their email on your end. You can also try to login with their credentials on your phone just to check. You also have the ability to reset or change your parents passwords to assist with this and make sure they get on. This is located on the buttons next to their name on the App Login (Parent) menu item.  
  
If they have a bad internet connection or an issue on their device that may prevent them from getting on. If you are able to login with their credentials, chances are this is their issue.
3. I am not getting notifications: You cannot turn these off in the App. The only way they are not getting them is if they turned them off in their phone settings either for our app or all apps. They may also have a bad internet connection. Again, if you are getting them you know that it is an issue on their end, not the system.
4. Where do I go to download the App: The new parent welcome email has their login credentials and links to the app store. If this landed in spam or they didn't see it, they may ask how to get the App. Just have them search "The Camp App" in the app store, download it, and login with their email and password 123456.
5. I am in the App but don't see anything: When there is a section of the App that you have not posted yet, there is a message that says "Your camp has not posted yet, stay tuned!" We always recommend you have things in the app before they arrive to circumvent this question. If not, they may see nothing there and think something is wrong.