

BYM Camps

Catoctin

Opequon

Shiloh

Teen Adventure

Health & Safety Plan

Summer 2022

BYM Camps Health & Safety Plan, Summer 2022

OVERVIEW

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camping Program is characterized by a broad and resilient community in which we care for one another and follow the long-held Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship. Implicit in each testimony is the acknowledgement that we live in close relationship with one another, that we listen to each other, and that we recognize evolving and multi-faceted truths.

We have experienced a global pandemic that is unlike anything witnessed in our lifetimes. The spread of COVID-19 throughout our world and within our region led us to take precautions as individuals and as communities that impacted our daily lives in ways large and small. It caused illness, death, and suffering, it caused isolation, alienation, and fear, in our community and beyond. In 2020, it led to BYM not operating a summer camp for the first time in 62 years. In 2021, we reopened with significant mitigation measures in place that were not without their own negative consequences, but which helped us have the joyous and restorative summer that we all needed. In 2022, we are excited to have camp once again, with an incredible amount of knowledge and wisdom gained over these last two years, with a greater level of community-wide immunity against severe disease through vaccinations and prior infection, and with a strengthened commitment to the mental, emotional, social, and physical health of our campers, families, and staff.

This Health and Safety Plan provides guidelines for camp operations in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan was created by BYM Camps Staff, in consultation with experts both inside and outside of our community. It has incorporated many sources of knowledge and guidance, including best practices within the broader summer camp community, and requirements from local, state, and federal agencies. Given the dynamic nature of the pandemic, this plan attempts to account for multiple scenarios and contingencies and will be updated in order to adapt to changing conditions.

The BYM Camps Staff will continuously monitor preparations for and implementation of this plan, leading up to and throughout the 2022 summer camp season, and we will update and adapt the plan as needed. All updates will be communicated immediately to staff and families.

As long as COVID-19 exists, there are no strategies that can completely eliminate risk of any illness or transmission. However, we believe that we can effectively minimize the risk of severe illness and hospitalization by combining a pro-vaccine approach with the fresh air and great outdoors of the Appalachian Mountains. We are confident that we can protect our community while also prioritizing the mental, emotional, social, and physical health of our campers and staff. We are thrilled to welcome everyone back for a magical, transformational, fun-filled summer at BYM Camps in 2022.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In creating this plan and overall strategy for reopening BYM Camps, we followed these guiding principles:

Prioritize the mental, emotional, social, and physical health of our entire camp community

- The physical and social-emotional wellness of all campers and staff is our primary consideration.

Stay grounded and intent in our mission

- Amidst all that has happened and all that will happen, BYM Camps will remain focused on our mission to provide transformational experiences for the young people in our care by living out the core Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship.

Remain committed to both equality and equity

- BYM Camps will place considerations of justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and access at the center of all of our planning efforts.

Maintain integrity and trust

- BYM Camps will act with integrity, will strive to build and maintain the trust and confidence of our community, and will communicate clearly and transparently with all of our families, all of our staff, and all other stakeholders and community members.

Build Community

- BYM Camps is committed to building and maintaining a wise and resilient community, one where relationships flourish and grow in the summer, where they are nourished all year round, where these bonds that sustain us then go deeper and become stronger each summer thereafter.

HEALTH & SAFETY PRIORITIES

Encourage, support, and mandate vaccination as much as possible

- BYM Camps will require vaccination against COVID-19 for all campers, staff, and volunteers. (Religious and physical exemptions will be granted if necessary and when appropriate. Reach out to brian@bymcamps.org if you have any questions or concerns.)
- We believe that the COVID-19 vaccines are incredibly safe and highly effective against severe disease, even with Delta and Omicron. The COVID risk to vaccinated healthy children is vanishingly low, and vaccines provide great protection for staff and families, with a booster dose being important for older age groups.

Appreciate and take advantage of fresh air and the great outdoors

- One of the BYM Camps' greatest sources of strength in combating COVID-19 is the fact that our programming is almost entirely outdoors, with ample fresh air flowing through every space. COVID-19 is an aerosolized virus that is transmitted through the air, and that the risk of transmission while outside is vanishingly small. We will prioritize and emphasize outdoor activities, we will make changes to our program and facilities to be outdoors as much as possible, and we will maximize ventilation and air flow throughout our facilities.

Pre-Arrival Testing

- All campers will need to provide documentation of a negative COVID-19 upon arrival. Our strong preference is for this to be a PCR test performed within 72 hours of arrival at camp. However, if unable to obtain a PCR test in that time window, families may also provide two negative antigen tests, one performed 24 hours before arrival, and one performed upon arrival in the presence of camp staff.

Health Screenings

- Our staff will perform a COVID-19 symptom check on all campers upon arrival. Our staff and on-site medical personnel will be on the lookout for common COVID-19 symptoms throughout each session, and will utilize rapid antigen tests to confirm whether or not an illness is COVID-19.

Optional Mask Wearing

- N95 and KN95 masks are effective at protecting the wearer from infection, regardless of what others are doing around them. We will support any and all campers, families, and staff that want or need to continue wearing masks while at camp, because of an elevated risk level or any other reason. We will provide these masks for any staff that requests them, and we will do our best to have enough on hand for campers who request them as well.

For an explanation of BYM Camps' understanding of COVID-19, please refer to Appendix A.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

- March: Families and Staff will receive the Draft Health & Safety Plan.
- April: Families and Staff will have the opportunity to participate in Virtual Town Halls with Brian Massey, Program Manager of BYM Camps, to ask questions and have concerns addressed about this plan and any other topic.
- May: Families will receive an updated Health & Safety Plan. Families will also receive support, as needed, in accessing vaccination, testing, or other resources.
- June, July, & August: Families and staff will receive updates on protocols, along with timely information if a camper or staff connected to them tests positive.

BEFORE CAMP

Testing Requirements for Campers

- All campers will need to provide documentation of a negative COVID-19 upon arrival. Our strong preference is for this to be a PCR test performed within 72 hours of arrival at camp. However, if unable to obtain a PCR test in that time window, families may also provide two negative antigen tests, one performed 24 hours before arrival, and one performed upon arrival in the presence of camp staff.
- [BYM Camps will also share as many resources as we can](#), so that all families have access to testing that is as convenient as possible. Please read all communications from BYM Camps to ensure that you are up to date on the requirements and how to meet them.
- BYM Camps are committed to supporting families and staff with this requirement, if necessary. Please reach out to the Program Manager (brian@bymcamps.org) if you need logistical or financial assistance with regards to getting tested.

Required Vaccination for Staff & Volunteers

- BYM Camps will require full vaccination against COVID-19 for all staff, and volunteers.
- Religious and physical exemptions will be granted if necessary and when appropriate. Reach out to brian@bymcamps.org if you have any questions or concerns.
- We believe that the COVID-19 vaccines are incredibly safe and highly effective against severe disease, even with Delta and Omicron. Vaccines provide great protection for staff and volunteers, with a booster dose being important for older age groups.
- Staff and volunteers will be required to submit proof of full vaccination to the Program Manager, either electronically beforehand, or by showing their CDC Vaccination card in person upon arrival. If they did this in 2021, they are not required to do it again in 2022.
- We recognize that COVID-19 infection can have a similar effect on one's immune system as one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. If you have documented evidence of a positive test, please share it with us, and it may fulfill part of your vaccination requirement.
- To request assistance, or an exemption from this policy, contact the Program Manager (brian@bymcamps.org) immediately.

Required Vaccination for Campers

- BYM Camps will require full vaccination against COVID-19 for all campers.
- We believe that the COVID-19 vaccines are incredibly safe and highly effective against severe disease, even with Delta and Omicron. The COVID risk to vaccinated healthy children is vanishingly low.

- Campers will be required to have proof of full vaccination submitted to the Program Manager, either electronically beforehand, or by showing their CDC Vaccination card in person upon arrival. If they did this in 2021, they are not required to do it again in 2022.
- We recognize that COVID-19 infection can have a similar effect on one's immune system as one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. If you have documented evidence of a positive test for your camper, please share it with us, and it may fulfill part of their vaccination requirement.
- Religious and physical exemptions will be granted if necessary and when appropriate. Reach out to brian@bymcamps.org if you have any questions or concerns.

ARRIVING AT CAMP

Proof of Negative COVID-19 Test

- All campers will need to provide digital or physical documentation of a negative COVID-19 upon arrival. Our strong preference is for this to be a PCR test performed within 72 hours of arrival at camp. However, if unable to obtain a PCR test in that time window, families may also provide two negative antigen tests, one performed 24 hours before arrival, and one performed upon arrival in the presence of camp staff.

Health Screening

- Our standard procedure in any year is to screen all campers and staff upon arrival. In addition to our normal intake process, we will screen for symptoms of COVID-19. If a camper is sick and does not pass the screening, they will not be allowed into camp at that time. They will be allowed to join camp upon resolution of the symptoms and with a negative COVID-19 test.

ON-SITE TESTING & MONITORING

Health Screenings, Monitoring, & Testing

- Our staff will perform a COVID-19 symptom check on all campers upon arrival.
- Our staff and on-site medical personnel will be carefully monitoring everyone's health on a daily basis, and if symptoms arise that indicate a possible case of COVID-19, we will administer an antigen test to confirm whether or not an individual has COVID-19.
- Our staff will contact parents if we determine their camper should be tested, and keep them informed every step of the way.

Response to Confirmed COVID-19 Case

- As always, we will do our very best to keep your camper healthy and safe while at camp, and will be ready to care for their medical needs if they feel ill. If your camper needs medical attention for any reason while at camp, we will have health personnel on-site and on-duty at all times.
- At all times, taking into consideration our ability to adequately care for a symptomatic child, evolving health assessments, operational guidelines, and many other factors, **BYM Camps reserves the right to request that a family come pick up their child within 12 hours of receiving the notification.** As such, we ask that parents be prepared to pick up their camper within 12 hours of being notified.
- We will notify the local health department immediately following any positive test result.
- Communication with other campers, staff, and families:
 - If we confirm that someone in your camper's session has COVID-19, we will contact you right away. We will make clear whether or not that camper was in your camper's cabin or unit, or not.
 - If we have a confirmed positive case of COVID-19, in the interest of transparency and integrity, we plan to let the greater BYM Camps community of families know as well, without discussing the specific camper affected, nor the Cabin or Unit Family exposed, unless your family is directly impacted.
- If a family would like to come pick up their camper, that is their right. However, we will not send any camper home simply for being a "close contact".
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, we will more closely monitor those in the Cabin and Unit, and might decide to take greater care to isolate that Cabin and Unit Family from the rest of camp, to increase mask wearing and outdoor programming, and to use antigen tests with greater frequency.
- In all decisions, we will consider our operational guidelines, alternative programming, scope of exposure, presence of symptoms, assessment by our medical staff, and the use of testing, before sending anyone home.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION @ EACH CAMP

- Fostering a culture of mental, emotional, social, and physical health at each camp, among the campers and staff, are fundamental to us having a safe and joyous camp season.
- At the same time, each individual camp, led by their Director, must work to build that culture among their staff, with dedicated time set aside during Staff Training to tailor the larger Health & Safety Plan to their individual camp, and build comfort and buy-in and a sense of collective accountability toward the health of our camp community this summer.
- Each individual camp, led by their Director, will set aside time for discussion, for sharing and listening, so that all staff trust in each other and trust in the plan, feeling comfortable and confident with its implementation. This is crucial in order to ensure a safe and joyous camp season.

RESOURCES

[ACA Field Guide for Camps](#)

[CDC Guide for Activities and Gatherings](#)

[CDC COVID-19 FAQs](#)

[Maryland Department of Health](#)

[Virginia Department of Health](#)

[Frederick County, Maryland - Department of Health](#)

[Madison County, Virginia - Department of Health](#)

[Frederick County, Virginia - Department of Health](#)

APPENDIX A

Children, COVID, and the Importance of Returning to Normal in 2022

BYM Camps' Scientific & Philosophical Understandings of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Our Health & Safety Plan is based on our reading of the latest science, as we attempt to have a flexible mental model of the pandemic and the world, so that we can best serve the young people under our care in June, July, and August of 2022.

But we also understand that science does not equal truth, that science is always contested, that scientists often disagree with each other. Science can help us quantify risk, can help us understand what's happening and why. But only humans and their institutions decide what is safe and healthy.

With that in mind, here are our five core understandings and beliefs of the virus and the pandemic, which serve as the foundation for our larger plan.

1. COVID-19 is an indoor, aerosolized virus, & the outdoors are safe.

- a. Indoor spaces, especially if unventilated and crowded, are by far the most conducive to transmission of COVID-19.¹
- b. Spread of COVID-19 is airborne, not via droplets nor fomites.²³
- c. Outdoor transmission is extremely rare.⁴⁵

2. The vaccines are highly effective at preventing severe disease and hospitalization

- a. Vaccines remain highly effective against Delta and Omicron⁶⁷⁸
- b. Boosters provide high level of protection for older adults⁹¹⁰¹¹¹²¹³

¹ [Ten Scientific Reasons in Support of Airborne Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 - The Lancet](#)

² [Low Risk of Surface Transmission in Real Life - The Lancet](#)

³ [Summary of House Testimony on Airborne Transmission of COVID-19 - Dr. Lindsay Marr](#)

⁴ [Why Covid's Airborne Transmission Was Acknowledged So Late - The New York Times](#)

⁵ [A Misleading CDC Number - The New York Times](#)

⁶ [Vaccine Efficacy, Statistical Power, and Mental Models - The Insight](#)

⁷ [Hospitalisation and vaccine effectiveness for Omicron - UK](#)

⁸ [Vaccine surveillance report - 1/6/22 - UK](#)

⁹ [Boosters provide high level of protection against severe disease for older adults - UK](#)

¹⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/pdfs/mm7107e2-H.pdf>

¹¹ [Vaccine surveillance report - 2/10/22 - UK](#)

¹² [CDC COVID Data Tracker - Hospitalizations and Vaccination Status](#)

¹³ <https://gis.cdc.gov/GRASP/Fluview/FluHospRates.html>

3. Prioritizing the mental, social, and emotional health of campers is paramount.

- a. Children have been at lower risk of severe illness throughout the pandemic, but have been asked to bear a disproportionate burden for society's failures.¹⁴¹⁵¹⁶
- b. Indicators of student mental health distress are alarming. Policies to improve and protect student mental health are urgently needed.¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹²⁰²¹
- c. The Surgeon General and the AAP have declared youth mental health to be an urgent public health issue, or even an emergency.²²²³
- d. School closures have been associated with: negative mental health impacts for both parents and students; considerable impacts across emotional, behavioral and restlessness/inattention problems, marked rises in screen-time and social media use and reductions in physical activity, and learning loss.²⁴²⁵²⁶²⁷²⁸

4. COVID poses little risk of serious disease for most campers, and vaccines are available for all campers and adults.

- a. CDC data show that annual pediatric mortality from COVID is similar to that of the flu in unvaccinated children.²⁹³⁰
- b. Long COVID is not a major risk to children. Studies consistently find that post-infection symptoms are similar in children who had COVID and children who had other, non-COVID infections.³¹³²
- c. With severe disease risk from COVID already very low for healthy children, vaccines drive the risk to nearly zero.³³³⁴
- d. Well-fitted N95 respirators protect the wearer, regardless of what others do.³⁵³⁶

¹⁴ [The Students Left Behind by Remote Learning](#)

¹⁵ [The Lost Year - ProPublica](#)

¹⁶ <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/02/relaxing-covid-restrictions-kids/622857/>

¹⁷ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2782796>

¹⁸ [Adolescents with Eating Disorders During COVID-19 Pandemic - AAP](#)

¹⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7024e1.htm>

²⁰ <https://policylab.chop.edu/article/addressing-global-crisis-child-and-adolescent-mental-health>

²¹ [Policy Lab Guidance In-Person Education - CHOP](#)

²² <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-youth-mental-health-advisory.pdf>

²³ [National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health - AAP](#)

²⁴ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2788076>

²⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/pdfs/mm7011a1-H.pdf>

²⁶ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2788069>

²⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7037a3.htm>

²⁸ [COVID-19 and Learning Loss - Disparities Grow and Students Need Help](#)

²⁹ https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/covid_weekly/index.htm

³⁰ <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/>

³¹ [https://www.journalofinfection.com/article/S0163-4453\(21\)00555-7/fulltext](https://www.journalofinfection.com/article/S0163-4453(21)00555-7/fulltext)

³² <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00431-021-04345-z>

³³ [COVID-19 Vaccine Surveillance Data - UK](#)

³⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/briefing/covid-age-risk-infection-vaccine.html>

³⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-133/pdfs/2010-133.pdf>

³⁶ <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2022/01/does-it-help-wear-mask-if-no-one-else/621177/>

5. Normalizing camp and de-escalating fear are the best responses to Omicron

- a. We plan to talk openly with children about how safe they are, and how well vaccination protects the adults in their lives. For children, COVID is a flu-like risk if unvaccinated and almost no danger if vaccinated. We will encourage children, parents, and staff to see mild COVID infections as inevitable and not alarming.³⁷³⁸
- b. We want to avoid escalating mask rules or other COVID policies. More restrictive policies increase fear & falsely convey that camps are unsafe. This increases harm to student mental health, which can have major detrimental effects.³⁹⁴⁰

³⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

³⁸ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2787944>

³⁹ [Fear is our worst enemy when it comes to COVID-19 and children - Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

⁴⁰ [Urgency of Normal Toolkit](#)