



F.A.Q.s for Parents

How will Camp help develop my confidence and leadership?

The middle and high school years are the in-between time of life where girls may feel insecure about who they are, and often look to other girls for their place in a group. At High Rocks camp we learn to be confident in our own voice and our own self. One way in which we do this is by working hard to create a judgment-free zone, where your opinions, thoughts, ideas, and dreams are valid and can be shared openly. This is surprisingly easier in an environment where you are in small groups with other girls you don't yet know. This kind of collaboration leads to deep friendships, and many successes, doing things that are a little out of your comfort zone, with each other's help.

How will Camp help me in preparing for college?

High Rocks is designed to build confidence in all subjects including those you might not "like" or feel that you are especially good at. For example, math and science are important for most jobs, and at High Rocks they will experience those classes in small, hands-on groups with wonderful experienced teachers who want all the girls to love these subjects. In Camp Steele, all girls will participate in a College Day, that will focus on exploring life after high school and how to prepare for it, with specific steps to take based on your year in school.

What are the benefits of coming to Camp?

After coming to Camp, you will be connected to all the other campers and a network of special mentors. These include the staff, our AmeriCorps volunteers, and college interns who have come from different schools all around the country to work with our campers, building up their confidence and motivation all year long. They will get as much help as they want with finding things they are really interested in pursuing, taking college trips, service trips, overnights, and other adventures which give them opportunities for leadership all year.

How did High Rocks start?

High Rocks started with New Beginnings Camp 1996 as a BIG IDEA of having a "Gifted Program in the Woods". The plan was to give girls a camp where, by the end, they would feel smart, beautiful, bonded to each other, and ready for high school. The classes, including Horses, Outdoor Science, Math, Art, Writing, and a daily discussion group and campfire, have stayed pretty much the same for over 20 years. And having it all outside makes it a really unusual experience, with challenges involving the unpredictable weather and the lack of normal distractions.

What are some "distractions" I will learn to live without?

Cellphones don't work very well anyway in our campground, and with many teens seeming dependent on them, we feel like a "device free" two weeks helps build confidence too. And we don't have TV's or phones or private rooms. But we do have one of the most beautiful spots in the West Virginia. Owls and fireflies and a huge diversity of wildlife and trees and mountains all around. This gives girls a different, quieter environment to think, write poetry, play music, and make some deep friendships that can last a lifetime. Girls sleep four to a shelter in cots, where they may hear scary noises outside, but squirrels in the leaves usually are the cause.

How is the food at Camp?

The food is wonderful! The food is what we all wish we could have every day, made for us and our families. Hot breakfast every day with fruit, yogurt, toast or bagels, juice, cocoa, tea and coffee. Main meal at lunch is different every day with a meat and non-meat choice, vegetable choices, and a huge salad bar daily with lots of choices. Plus, always a peanut butter/jelly/lunchmeat choice. A homemade dessert most nights. Everyone has a water bottle, and we all drink a lot of water. The combination of healthy food, less sugar, and more exercise contributes to everyone feeling much better about themselves at the end of 2 weeks.

Can I miss part of camp?

Camp is planned out to follow a certain pattern and rhythm. The goal is to have all the girls feeling smart, happy, and bonded by the last couple of days. It doesn't work as well for a girl not to experience the whole thing, and sometimes is harder for the classes and other girls. Not a "No," but...

What happens if I get hurt or sick?

We have a physician, a nurse, and a hospital close by. We are diligent about looking after any health issue. At the same time, most girls will get pretty tired after their first few days, as they love to stay up and talk (after lights out). The combination of healthy food, exercise, and lots of water usually has them feeling a lot better soon. There is always a staff member to talk to, and a cup of tea. We will let your parents know immediately if you are hurt or sick.

How much does it cost?

If you and your parents are committed to you coming, we are committed to helping you find financial aid. We ask that all families contribute as they are able, knowing that there are families that are not. Private donors make up much of our funding.