

# Flying Cloud



## PROGRAM GUIDE

2023



FARM & WILDERNESS

# WHY CHOOSE FLYING CLOUD (FC) CAMP?

**FC** campers delve deeper into themselves, their surroundings, their community, and their inner strength. It's a place for campers who benefit from a small community where everyone is seen and relationships are built at their own pace. It's a place for campers who flourish when encouraged to be highly curious, helpful, open, and hands-on. There are plentiful opportunities to try new things and enjoy familiar ones. The flow for the day is determined by the passions of the campers, while the overall program structure is developed with core outcomes in mind. **It's more than surviving in nature; it's about thriving.**

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

**FC** is a three-week unplugged wilderness experience based on Lake Ninevah in Mount Holly, Vermont. Boys and nonbinary campers embrace the natural world while living in canvas structures, learning to use and create new tools, and growing in community at their own pace.

The **physical infrastructure** is sparse and thoughtful, with few fully indoor spaces. Campers forego phones, flashlights, watches, and electrical tech and sleep in canvas structures like yurts. By casting off these traditional sources of comfort and entertainment, campers find ways to engage and make meaning in nature, creating an unprecedented connection to the Northern Forest around them.

On a **typical day**, campers participate in two large (2-3 hour) blocks of choice activities. These are mainly focused on outdoor living skills — also known as Earth Skills — however many otherwise routine activities take on new meaning at our level of technology, such as improv and acting games, creative arts from natural materials, sensory awareness activities, and more. Campers come away from FC having had many rich opportunities to try new approaches to life outdoors and having developed a familiarity with the natural world that will serve them in the long term.

This **intentional community-building** creates a setting where campers can live and work with integrity, develop skills in appreciation and peacemaking together, and recognize the value of their service to others. Campers and staff work together to set the tone for the session, create group agreements, have intentional discussions, and practice open mindedness. Each camper at FC is personally and publicly affirmed for the unique gifts they bring to camp, and there are daily, structured opportunities to recognize and praise each other for the joys and labors of the day. Unlike the world that most of our campers live in during the year, FC allows proper appreciation for barriers, transitions, beginnings, and endings.

*FC community circles up before a meal to share reflections, hear a cook's announcement, and sing grace.*



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

While your camper is at FC having unforgettable experiences and meeting new friends, they are also being exposed to new learning opportunities created with specific learning outcomes in mind. You can expect an FC camper to return home with a greater capacity for:

## APPRECIATION

- Practice self-exploration and acknowledgment
- Develop an understanding and appreciation for the natural world and their part in it
- Practice public and private appreciation for their peers

	Throughout sessions, campers will engage in the following alignment activities:
	Morning gratitudes
	Evening appreciations
	Activities (esp. Earth Skills, naturalist skills, survival skills, and sensory awareness)
	Building the Honoring Fire, being invited to speak for their friends
	Preparing meals using wild edibles they have identified and gathered themselves
	Silent meeting and "Percolations"
	All other moments of structured reflection

	Campers will be motivated to engage by doing the following:
	Speaking up in Morning/Evening Circles
	"Speaking for each other" at the Honoring Fire
	Sharing out from activity periods into Circle
	Sharing thoughtful reflections at Silent Meetings, All-Camp discussions
	Sharing at closing Friendship Fire

## COURAGE

- Demonstrate a willingness to try new things
- Confront expected and unexpected challenges with resourcefulness
- Build relationships of comfort and support

	Throughout sessions, campers will engage in the following alignment activities:
	Participate in evening appreciations as a ritual of public speaking
	The physical nature of living in the camp as an opportunity to engage in discomfort
	All-Camp discussions as an opportunity to be vulnerable & voice their truth
	All-Camp ritual as an opportunity to engage the unknown
	Accepting the challenge of a capstone experience

	Campers will be motivated to engage by doing the following:
	Participating in skills challenges like Earthwalk/Firequest/Scout Trip
	Participating in things they at first expressed reservation towards
	Setting a particular goal/asking for or being given specific challenges by their counselor
	Speaking publicly in Friendship Fire and Closing Friendship Fire
	Speaking publicly during Evening Circle
	Sharing personally in All-Camp discussions
	Speaking for new friends at an Honoring

## RESPONSIBILITY

- Contribute physical work that sustains the infrastructure of day-to-day life
- Engage in emotional connection the community counts on to be strong
- Understand and articulate their role in the larger community

	Throughout sessions, campers will engage in the following alignment activities:
	Creating and living by community agreements as an opportunity to reflect on and advocate for their and others' needs
	Form small, functional lodge groups
	Chores as an opportunity to contribute meaningful work
	Contribute to larger-scale projects like the Honoring Fire
	Plan and cook meals on Cook Crew as an opportunity to contribute to the well-being, health and spirit of the camp
	All-Camp discussions as an opportunity to reflect on and share emotions and opinions
	1:1 check-ins with the lodge counselor as regular opportunity to reflect on needs and well-being

	Campers will be motivated to engage by doing the following:
	Seeing the impact of shared chores play out through the community
	Building the Honoring Fire
	Constructing work projects
	Contributing in Circle/Village Council/All-Camp discussions/Community Agreements
	Finding their niche in supporting the community
	Growing in their ability to set and meet personal goals
	Taking on projects/challenges appropriate for skill level



## MAGIC MOMENTS/SESSION JOURNEY

Camper come away from a summer at FC with new skills and experiences. Educational programming serves as the foundation upon which these transformative moments take place. These “magic moments” are stages in the campers’ journey through their weeks together at camp that make it an unforgettable experience.

They are as follows:

- I’m here, I matter, and I’m going to be alright.
- I’m excited about what’s ahead, I am confident I can do it and ready to get started.
- I’m in! We’re in the zone.
- It was hard and I am proud of myself.
- I belong here because I have contributed, and I want to celebrate this with others.

## STAFFING

Each camper lodge consists of 4-5 campers and one counselor. The support staff team at FC includes the Camp Director, Assistant Director and Program Director, as well as a Trips Coordinator, medical point-person and 2 kitchen staff. A camp nurse lives onsite at Saltash Mountain Camp, just a few minutes away, and visits each day. With enrollment of 25-40 campers most summers, this means a staff to camper ratio approaching 1:2.

FC staff are trained in Behavior Management and Conflict Resolution, Youth Development, Mental Health, Cultural Competency (DEI), Trip Leading, Wilderness skills, and our camp-specific Emergency Action Plan, among other things. All staff are Wilderness First Aid certified by the start of camp and many receive certification in Lifeguard, Wilderness First Responder, and more as part of their training.

*Camper and a staff member return from an off-campus camping trip.*





*Using fresh local ingredients, a rotating camper cook crew works to learn back country cooking skills.*

## PROGRAM FEATURES

### DAILY PROGRAM: CORE ACTIVITIES

A typical day at FC includes two 2+ hour blocks of choice activities. These center on our program focus of outdoor living skills — also known as Earth Skills — and often branch into other diverse areas, as FC staff are encouraged to teach what they are passionate about. As these are staff-and-camper-chosen, the most appealing activities tend to arise and stick around to become classics over time. Activities are offered in various types and at different energy levels (ex., friction fire, plant identification, running games, poetry writing), so any camper can find an activity that matches their interest and energy level on that day. This summer will also include challenge days, a pre-scheduled opportunity for campers who want a specific challenge to work on throughout the day, with scaffolded preparation and follow-up to help them achieve their goals.

#### Cook Crew

FC kitchen is a distinct operation in food service. Not only are all meals cooked over open fires, but the kitchen operation is also designed as an integrated program area. With the help of our kitchen staff and counselors, rotating camper cook crews of 3-5 design the menu and then cook all three of their chosen meals in a day, most days of the session. This is done entirely in our screened-in kitchen and over an open fire and is an excellent arena to learn skills applicable both in the kitchen and outside of it.

#### Chores

With the program outcome of “Responsibility” in mind, chores become not only a means to keep our camp running but a teaching tool for responsibility and work ethic. A direct line can be drawn between the work that our campers do and whether our infrastructure is functioning properly, making their work visibly meaningful, and the impact of their efforts felt on a physical level.

#### Opening and Closing Friendship Fires

The Opening and Closing Friendship Fires serve to bookend the community space of the camp. Intention-setting, focused reflection, and sharing builds the foundation for our shared growth in Opening Friendship Fire. The Closing Friendship Fire functions as a space to reflect, celebrate, and voice our appreciation for each other after a long and fruitful summer.



## The Quest & The Honoring

The Honoring is our way of bringing rites of passage back into the lives of young people. It is a two-day event which culminates in an evening of public affirmation and the conference of FC Words, short nature poems unique to the gifts we see within each camper. In the process of preparing for the Honoring, campers reflect on shared experiences with their peers, and demonstrate skill and care through the creation of an enormous celebratory fire.

## FC Days

We invite groups from other camps like FS, SAM, RSG, and TL to celebrate FC. Folks from different communities get acquainted with the space and enjoy activities together.

## Special Guest Teachers & Educators

Each summer, we have special opportunities to learn from experts in crafts like camouflage, tanning, tracking, or blacksmithing. Having guest educators, such as our friends from the Nulhegan Abenaki community, gives new perspectives and crucial insights to the skills FC campers learn.

## Four-Day Wilderness Trips

These focus on exploring wilderness recreation areas across Vermont and the Northeast. Some example trips from summers past:

- ▶ Backpacking on Vermont's Long Trail
- ▶ Canoeing in the Adirondack Mountains
- ▶ Hiking in the Breadloaf Wilderness

## Capstone Experiences for Senior Campers

Earthwalk, Firequest, and Woodward Service are skills challenges focused on resilience, deep reflection, responsibility to the community, and demonstration of learning. These give our senior campers a special role in guiding the flow of the session while demonstrating skills they've cultivated over their time at FC.

*Pumping water is one of many ways campers and staff participate in meaningful work and community connection.*







*The conch is one of the only time-keeping tools at camp, used to indicate an approaching transition in the day, such as a meal.*

### **Ritual Arc**

Rituals at FC are arranged for the experience of a single summer, as well as across multiple summers, meaning that campers experience ritual differently each year. They include: Opening Friendship Fire, The Quest and the Honoring, Firequest, Earthwalk, and Closing Friendship Fire.

Rituals serve an important purpose in the flow of the FC experience. Everything today is always “on” — always connected and accessible — and while this serves many practical functions, it also limits our recognition and appreciation for thresholds, barriers, and transitions. There are many phases to the FC camper journey, particularly for a camper who returns summer after summer. Rituals at FC allow us to mark and celebrate transitions, and are practices built to help campers understand the purpose, origin, and goals of each part of their journey.

### **“Party Days!”**

Our way of honoring the importance of celebration. Party Days at FC include Interdependence Day, Fair, Banquet, Honoring days, and the day of our Square Dance with our neighboring Saltash Mountain Camp.

### **End-of-session Banquet & Variety Show**

A special party evening to close out each session! Our staff crew prepares a special and exciting meal — in the past these have included ribs, whole animal roasts, seafood, T-Rexes, crème brûlée and more — and the community shows off their silliest and best talents in a variety show while we enjoy it.

# SAMPLE SESSION SCHEDULE

## First Session

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Week 1	Arrival/ Orientation	Building community: Norms and agreements	Day Trip to Lake Ninevah 	Choice activities and skills	Choice activities and skills	Choice activities and skills	Campers on Quests; Activities
Week 2	Bonfire build; The Honoring!	Hike to Woodward, Interdependence Day	Lodge morning, Activities, All-Camp discussion	Choice activities and skills	Pack Out	Trips 	Trips 
Week 3	Trips 	Trips return; pack in 	Activities	Campers on Quests; Activities	Bonfire build; The Honoring!	Lodge morning, Activities	Fire Quest
Week 4	Activities; Craft Finishing	Packing/ Banquet/ Variety Show	Departure				

## Differences in Second Session:

- Dates for Second Session trips are two days later
- Campers prep for Fair at the end rather than Interdependence Day
- Campers in First and Second Session participate in different capstone experiences

*An example of the canvas structures our campers and staff call home in the summer.*



## SAMPLE MENU

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3 (hitting the trail)
<b>Breakfast</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrambled eggs</li> <li>• Sauteed greens</li> <li>• Homefries</li> <li>• Fruit salad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oatmeal</li> <li>• Maple syrup/brown sugar</li> <li>• Raisins</li> <li>• Dried cranberries</li> <li>• Sunflower seeds</li> <li>• Peanut/Sunflower butter</li> <li>• Farm milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breakfast cereal and granola selection</li> <li>• Farm milk</li> <li>• Peanut butter</li> <li>• Sprinkle of nuts, seeds and/or dried fruit</li> <li>• Fresh fruit: peaches, pears or applesauce</li> </ul>
<b>Lunch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheddar grilled cheeses</li> <li>• Tomato soup</li> <li>• Farm salad: greens, shredded carrots, strawberries, dressing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches</li> <li>• Farm salad: greens, shredded carrots, steamed veggies, dressing</li> <li>• Fruity tea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mac and cheese with Cabot cheddar</li> <li>• Sliced fresh tomatoes</li> <li>• Sauteed onions and peppers</li> <li>• Hot sauce</li> </ul>
<b>Dinner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tortillas</li> <li>• White rice</li> <li>• Black beans</li> <li>• Sauteed onions and peppers from the farm</li> <li>• Sweet potatoes</li> <li>• Cheese</li> <li>• Salsa</li> <li>• Hot sauce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pasta</li> <li>• Tomato sauce with minced onions and garlic</li> <li>• Cooked sausage</li> <li>• Sauteed farm cooking greens</li> <li>• Fruit salad</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coconut curry with chickpeas and carrots</li> <li>• White rice</li> <li>• Sauteed garlic green beans</li> </ul>
<b>Dessert</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stonefruit cobbler with oat crumble</li> <li>• Farm milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hot chocolate</li> </ul>

### Back Country Cooking for the Community

- Hot meals are prepared over a fire! On average, produce is provided by F&W's Tamarack Farm Program 2-3 times a week. Other ingredients come from other local organic farms whenever possible.
- Common snacks between meals: herby popcorn, tortilla/potato chips, GORP (trail mix), apples & oranges, granola bars.
- At FC, we recognize the luxury in eating meat and desserts regularly. Cook crew can choose to make one or the other, but not in the same day. You can see how that choice plays out in the menus above.





*FC campers learn how to properly prepare and gear-up for all types of weather so that they can enjoy camp during rain, shine, or fog.*

## FC DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION

**W**e believe that the incredible F&W experience should be open to all who want to join. We have a deep history of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion work dating back to our founding and we strive to create systems and spaces to create as a diverse community as possible. This looks a little different at each camp, and generally has three prongs: camper discussions & experience, organizational systems, and staffing policies. Specific activities are tailored to each camp's unique missions, environment, and camper community.

### Camper Discussions & Programming

Ultimately we want all our campers to feel a sense of belonging. This begins by campers feeling they can bring their full authentic selves to the experience. Part of this is through our programming and discussions. All of our camps use a foundational approach that focuses, sequentially, on four topics:

#### IDENTITY > EMPATHY > CRITICAL THINKING > ACTION

While each camp will discuss different aspects of this sequence, generally our younger campers will focus on identity while our oldest will focus on action. The discussions are age-appropriate and focused on each camp's unique community.

At FC in particular, campers will engage in two evening discussions separated by age :

1. Masculinity, Gender, & Sexuality
2. Race & Class

### Organizational Systems

To support our staff, campers, and programming we have sought out reforming to our internal ways of working with each other. Learning from best practices in other educational institutions, we have implemented several systems to help us be more responsive to a diverse group of campers, including:

- Teaching preventive responses to behaviors through routines & rituals
- Utilizing a behavior response system that emphasizes collaboration and decision-making by a team rather than a single individual
- Comprehensive orientation of families prior to arrival including individual phone calls, online sessions, blog posts, podcasts, and more

### Staffing Policies

Inspired by the words of the late Dr. Rita Pierson, we actively work to hire a diverse staff, because "every camper deserves a champion". We have worked to partner with organizations to create pipelines and opportunities for staff new to Farm & Wilderness. Our industry-leading three weeks of staff training are also designed to include deep discussions around identity and a large toolkit of preventive routines and responses that work for all campers.



Campers sit together in the clearing with their instruments for a morning jam session.

## THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

**B**elieve it or not, we've barely scratched the surface of everything FC has to offer. Find out more about a summer adventure at FC, Campership, and beyond at [www.farmandwilderness.org](http://www.farmandwilderness.org). If you have any questions or want to dive deeper, send us an email at [admissions@farmandwilderness.org](mailto:admissions@farmandwilderness.org). Our admissions team will be happy to help!

**See you on the trail!**

