

Timberlake



PROGRAM GUIDE



FARM & WILDERNESS



Campers daily sing a great mix of songs with a fantastic band.

WHY CHOOSE TIMBERLAKE CAMP?

Timberlake campers dream big and create epic adventures. It's a place for them to experience a large, intentional, and diverse community where they can find their niche and feel a sense of belonging. It's a place for campers to focus on creating sincere connections with others, have the audacity to try new things, and feel deeply interconnected. When so many things can feel competitive and intensely wired, Timberlake offers an opportunity to simply exist in the beautiful Vermont woods away from technology. **It's a place like no other where campers play joyfully, work purposefully, and thrive in the rugged outdoor living.**

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Timberlake is a three-week unplugged wilderness experience based on the Woodward Reservoir in Plymouth, Vermont. Boys and nonbinary campers embrace closeness to the natural world while living in simple cabins, thrive on epic trips, and build close friendships in a low-competition environment.

Camp changed me. I learned that when I put myself to a hard task, I can accomplish it. I learned that the older campers, like myself, have a great influence on the younger campers."

—Timberlake camper

The physical infrastructure is simple and rustic. Campers live in open three-sided cabins with beautiful views of the lake or the forest. Each cabin is charming, unique, and built with the help of campers over the years. Campers have their own bunk and storage space and are welcome to make it their own while they are here. While there is not electricity or running water in the cabins, campers can find nearby shared facilities that have fresh water and hot showers.

Various other structures dot the Timberlake campus, including a large dining hall, a large lodge for rock climbing and gathering together, an infirmary, an arts building, a construction building, and more. Many of these shared facilities have electricity.

On a typical day, campers have the opportunity to milk goats and care for the gardens at optional 6 AM barn chores. Each meal is family style by cabin, and after breakfast the Timberlake band named the "Trading Post Legends" leads an epic singing session. After the campers gather in thoughtful community reflection in the Meeting Circle, silently connecting to each other and the woods around them before heading off to their chosen multi-day morning activities.

After lunch and Rest Hour, campers have the freedom to choose their Afternoon Activity each day. Options might include ridge hikes, crafting hutches for farm rabbits, long-distance swims, or activities offered by friends or staff. These experiences encourage contributions and leadership from campers of all ages.

Evenings offer diverse options, from community discussions to fun All-Camp Games. Sometime evenings are divided by age group, and still others are an opportunity for everyone to come together to laugh and offer appreciations at our Council Fire. Campers wind down the day with thoughtful cabin routines where counselors check in on each camper and, in most cabins, includes reading time.

OUTCOMES

Audacity

The belief that anything is possible and a commitment to do whatever it takes to make those possibilities real.

Throughout sessions, campers will demonstrate audacity by:

- Singing loudly and raucously during morning songs with our band, the Trading Post Legends.
- Creating in art, fashioning knots and spoons in Outdoor Living Skills, and designing and building in Work Projects, among the many other opportunities in the morning.
- Trying new foods, singing new songs, going on new trips, and being willing to take those risks in a supportive environment.

Sincerity

Acknowledging, realizing, and honoring your authentic feelings and treating others with kindness and gentleness.

Throughout sessions, campers will demonstrate sincerity by:

- Celebrating each other's accomplishments at the weekly Beading Appreciation Ceremony.
- Engaging in spaces to talk through their thoughts and feelings, sometimes around the campfire and sometimes in a big group.
- Reflecting in Silent Meeting and feeling the peace that comes from simple stopping and listening.

Interconnectedness

The recognition of being an integral part of a larger community and growing comfortable with asking for support and matching their unique offerings with the greater needs.

Throughout sessions, campers will demonstrate interconnectedness by:

- Asking for support from others when they are building big things, canoeing on their drip, and building their campfire.
- Contributing to the community through daily chores that benefit them and others.
- Eating family style with their cabin for each meal and learning how to ensure everyone at the table gets what they need.

During Silent Meeting campers can reflect in many different spots, including up in a tree!





Campers sharing an epic performance at the weekly talent show, Council Fire.

MAGIC MOMENTS/SESSION JOURNEY

Campers should come away from a summer at TL with new skills and experiences. Educational programming is designed to serve 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 cabin consists of an average of eight campers and two counselors. With an enrollment of 110-120 campers in most summers, Timberlake has a staff-to-camper ratio approaching 1:2. The support staff team at Timberlake includes:

- Camp Director
- Assistant Director
- Program Director
- 3 Lodge Directors are the primary liaisons with parents and guardians. Each Lodge Director is responsible for their group of campers ages 9-10, 11-12 and 13-14.
- 6 Activity Heads
- Trips Coordinator
- Nursing team
- Head Cook & kitchen staff

Each Lodge has its own dedicated Lodge Head, who supports the staff in that lodge as well as plans and leads community strengthening programming within the lodge. The Leadership Team at Timberlake consists of the Camp Director, an Assistant Director, Program Director, Trips Coordinator, and the Lodge Heads. Other layers of Leadership include Activity Heads for each different activity area, access to a behavioral health specialist to support camper and staff wellness, a camp nurse, and finally a kitchen crew dedicated to providing us with delicious food all summer long, some of it even coming out of our own farm and gardens.

Timberlake 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.

PROGRAM FEATURES

Daily Program: Morning Activities in Activity Areas

Campers will choose to specialize in a particular activity area for 2-4 days to complete a project, learn skills deeply, or collect camp achievements. Campers sign up multiple times each session and can choose to sample multiple areas or dive deep into a single area. These groupings are across ages and cabins, allowing campers to make new friends from all over Timberlake. The six activity areas are:

- Arts
- Barns & Gardens
- Outdoor Living Skills (Traditional Campcraft)
- Rocks & Ropes
- Work Projects (Construction)
- Waterfront

Staff work to develop program plans that are responsive to the desires of our campers, utilizing best practices from teaching to create epic experiences for all campers.

Campers enjoy helping with chores each day!





Community is part of daily life at Timberlake.

Daily Program: Open Choice in Afternoon Activities

In the afternoon, campers have open choice, choosing from any of the activities our counselors will offer. These activities will be a mix from our activity areas and feature both high and low-energy activities. Campers may choose activities based on their favorite counselors, what their friends want to do, or simply what they're excited to do. These activities last 2 hours and are a mix of ages and cabins.

Daily Program: Chores

Campers work purposefully during chores to care for the community. These chores are by cabin groups and are age appropriate. Our youngest campers tend to sweep and set for meals while our older campers help wash our dishes. Chores are a core part of our program, allowing campers to see the impacts they can have and how interdependent each member of the community is. Believe it or not, campers tend to much prefer chores at camp compared to home!

Daily Program: Songs with the Trading Post Legends

After breakfast each day, we'll set up our main lodge for songs. Our band, the "Trading Post Legends," is made up of campers and staff who play a mix of instruments, usually guitars, piano, and drums. Some summers we have had flutes, violins, trombones, saxophones, and even a tuba! Our songs are a mix of old and new folk, pop, country, and rock. We use both song cards held up on stage and song books that campers can use to learn the lyrics, so folks can jump in and sing with us, even on the first day.

Daily Program: Silent Meeting

After the big energy of songs campers head to the more thoughtful energy of Silent Meeting. Located in our beautiful Meeting Circle, this is a time for group contemplation. The entire community will sit together in silence, listening to the rustling of the trees and the world all around us. While this can feel strange to new campers, most grow to appreciate the rare moment to just stop each day. After Meeting, campers can choose to share their thoughts and contemplations that came to them during Meeting.

Cabin Cookout

About once a week cabins will gather for dinner at their own firepits. Campers will build the fire and cook hot dogs and s'mores over the fire. There are always alternatives for campers who need them. After cabins have an evening together that might include running games, swimming, and more.

All-Camp Games

Timberlake is a low-competition space with limited formal sports. We have a small basketball court and a Gaga Pit. However, we embrace our high energy and physicality in our All-Camp-Games (ACGs) that can stretch across our entire 100+ acres. These games are often loosely based on Capture the Flag with a theme. Counselors will hype up the game with skits and we always make sure we have both running and non-running options for every game.

Grand Circuits and Epic Day Hikes

Campers will push their physical limits at Timberlake if they choose. Two opportunities near the end of each session are designed to do just that: Grand Circuits and Hikes-to-Remember. A Grand Circuit is a swim around our entire lake, approximately 3 miles. A Hike-to-Remember is a single day hike of approximately 30 miles. For either experience campers work up to that final test through shorter swims and hikes with watchful counselors.

Council Fires and Beading Ceremonies

A few times a session, the entire community will gather at sunset for Council Fire and the Beading Ceremony. Council Fire is our talent (and not-so-talent) show where campers and staff will share songs, silly stand-up, or just random tricks. As the sun goes down and the fire gets brighter, we'll shift to the much more thoughtful Beading Ceremony. Campers will stand in front of the whole Timberlake community and publicly appreciate someone and give them the bead of the summer. This ceremony is a key part of building empathetic campers who are willing and able to appreciate others.

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
- Rock climbing in the Adirondacks

Every camper at Timberlake will go on a trip. Trips are mixed cabin groups adjusted for age and skill. Campers have a choice between 5-7 trips. Trips are led by a specialized trips staff and a counselor. We have built out an extensive preparation plan that seeks to give campers the skills needed to both pack their bag well and be emotionally prepared for the adventure.

Leadership Opportunities

Leadership can look a bit different in our low-competition, highly-collaborative community. We seek to celebrate and build leaders who both lead from the front and lead from the back. Campers might step up to help with announcements, take point on building their cabin's campfire, choose to host our talent show, or lead camper-led activities. Leadership and community are intertwined to help campers be their best selves.

End-of-session Banquet & Candlelight Ceremony

Our final banquet is an epic celebration! Our main lodge is completely transformed to a new magical space such as an enchanted forest, medieval jousting ring, hidden caves, and more. Our staff create hype and games to lead into the banquet and our kitchen goes all out to create multi-course meals aligned with the theme. After, our final ceremonies celebrate our highest camper achievements followed by a thoughtful candlelight ceremony that weaves through the night to end at a final special Timberlake place.

SAMPLE SESSION SCHEDULE

Here's a peek into what a session at TL *might* look like. In each session, we strike a balance between structure and downtime, creative play and wilderness adventure. Every summer plays out a little differently than the one before.

Sample First Session

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Week 1				Arrival/ Orientation	"The Hook" – Campers try each Activity Area	Activity Area Rotations General Swim Safety Chat	Camper-led Activities
Week 2	12-14 yr. olds Prep. for Trips Council Fire	12-14 yr. olds on Trips  Cabin Cookout Evening	Evening ACG	Racial Justice Night	12-14 yr. olds return from Trips Council Fire	Activity Area Rotations Cabin Cookout Evening	9-11 yr. olds Prep. for Trips
Week 3	Activity Area Rotations Gender Night	9-11 yr. olds on Trips  Evening ACG	Cabin Cookout Evening	Racial Justice Night	9-11 yr. olds return from Trips Council Fire	Activity Area Rotations Cabin Cookout Evening	Adventure Evening
Week 4	Activity Area Rotations Evening ACG	All-camps Interdependence Day	Banquet & Candlelight Ceremony	Departure			

Notes on the Schedule:

- Campers prep for Interdependence Day at the end of Session 1 and Fair at the end of Session 2
- Half of the camp goes out on trips at once: 9-11 yr. olds and 12-14 yr olds. During that time the other half is in camp.
- Campers can choose their activity areas during the rotations and choose between Arts, Barns & Gardens, Outdoor Living Skills, Rocks & Ropes, Work Projects, & Waterfront

SAMPLE MENU

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrambled eggs • Sauteed greens • Homefries • Fruit salad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oatmeal • Maple syrup/Brown sugar • Dried cranberries • Peanut/Sunflower butter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast cereal • Farm milk • Sprinkle of nuts, seeds and/or dried fruit • Fresh fruit – peaches, pears or applesauce
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheddar grilled cheese • Tomato soup • Farm salad greens, shredded carrots, strawberries, dressing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches • Farm salad greens, shredded carrots, steamed veggies, dressing • Fruity tea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mac and cheese with Cabot cheddar • Sliced fresh tomatoes • Sauteed onions and peppers • Hot sauce
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popcorn & Fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tortilla Chips & Trail Mix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popsicles
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tacos with sauteed onions and peppers from the farm • Salsa • Hot sauce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pasta • Tomato sauce with minced onions and garlic • Cooked sausage • Sauteed farm cooking greens • Fruit salad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coconut curry with chickpeas and carrots • White rice • Sauteed garlic green beans

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We 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. 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.

Camper Discussions & Programming

Ultimately, we want all our campers to feel a sense of belonging. This begins when campers feel they can bring their full authentic selves to the experience. Part of this is through our programming and discussions. All 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 Timberlake in particular, campers will engage in two evening discussions separated by lodge (age):

- Masculinity, Gender & Sexuality
- 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.

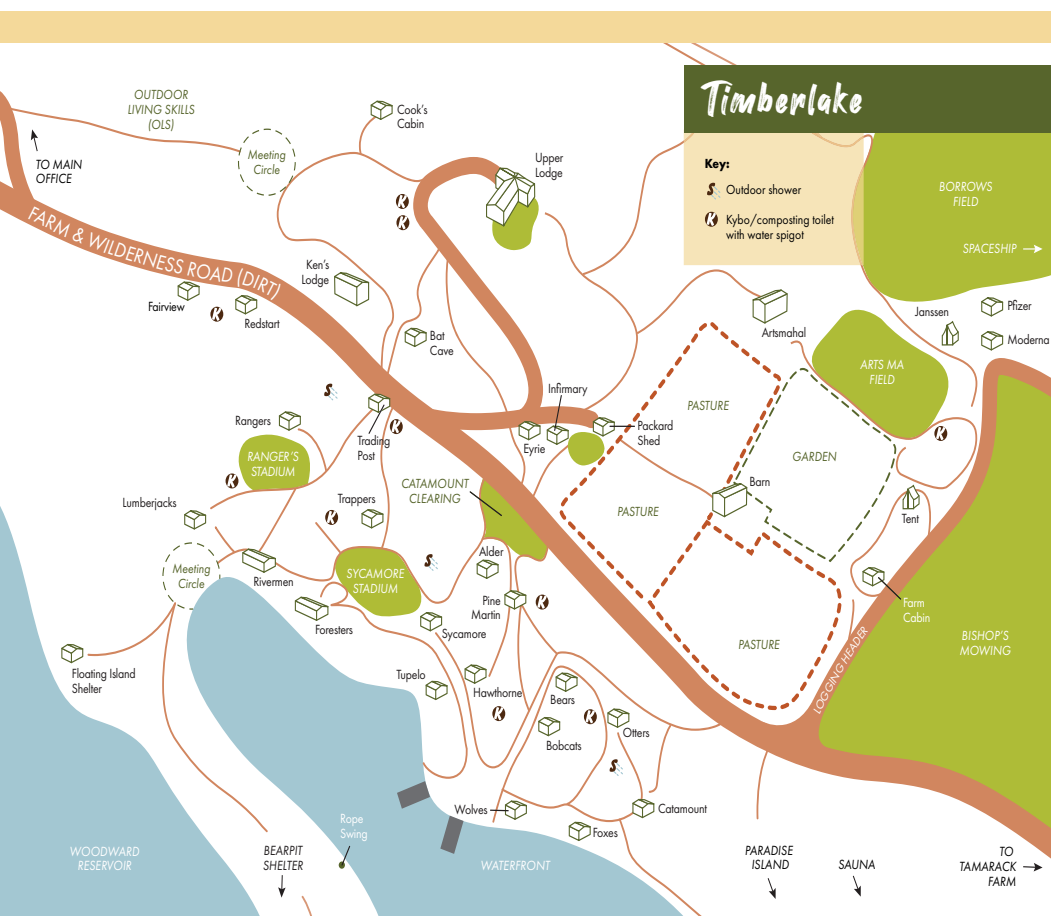
Staffing Policies

Inspired by the words of the late Dr. Rita Pierson, we actively work to hire a diverse staff, so every camper can see themselves reflected in our staff. We believe that every camper deserves a champion, so 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 responses that focus on preventive routines that work for all campers.

THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

Believe it or not, we've barely scratched the surface of everything Timberlake Camp has to offer. If you have any questions or want to dive deeper, send us an email at admissions@farmandwilderness.org. Also be sure to check out our Instagram to see photos from the summer: [BigBellTL](#)

See you on the trail!



Campers playing a camper version of "Hungry, Hungry Hippos"

