

Camp Earth Connections  
PO Box 146  
Slaterville Springs, NY 14886-0146

Summer, 2010

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are looking forward to working with your children during our Mountain Bike programs this summer! During the course of the program campers will be taught about bike safety, riding techniques, bike maintenance, and the importance of riding in a way that preserves and respects the environment. In addition to the mountain biking activities, they will also have the opportunity to learn more about their natural environment through participation in a variety of outdoor living skills workshops.

Safety will be the guiding influence of our activities during the program. It is important that all of the children who are participating, regardless of previous mountain biking experience, are allowed to learn at their own pace without having to take any unnecessary risks. That being said, we will try to help everyone involved to improve his or her mountain biking skills. In order to achieve that end, we will ask them to push their personal limits at times. On another safety related topic, the leaders of the mountain biking camp will assess the trail and weather conditions each day before embarking on any riding activity. In the event of weather or trail conditions that prohibit riding, campers will be engaged in other activities, as described in the next paragraph.

Participants in the entire mountain biking camps will spend time on their bikes learning and practicing a variety of riding techniques (i.e. braking, platforming, choosing a line). The team leaders will be familiar with the trails and will also have trail maps with them at all times, as well as walkie-talkies to communicate with each other. Moreover, they will have a two-way radio, which will assist them in contacting the main camp if necessary. The remainder of the time at camp will be spent participating in bike safety and maintenance activities, as well as outdoor living skills (OLS) workshops. These workshops may cover such topics as orienteering, learning about plant and animal life, and learning/practicing OLS skills (i.e. knife safety and tool use, fire-building, outdoor cooking, environmental awareness, stalking, and camouflage). Riders will have the opportunity to make entries into group and individual journals.

In order to ensure safety and provide all campers with the opportunity to learn about all of the topics that will be explored at camp, there are certain items that are required of *all* mountain bike campers. These items, along with some other items that are *optional*, are listed on the back of this letter. Please feel free to contact us before your children come to camp if you have any questions about any aspect of the camp. Again, we are very excited for the opportunity to work with your children during the mountain biking camps.

Sincerely,

Susan Rausch  
Camp Director  
607-844-3178  
campearthconnection@gmail.com

Required Items	Optional items
A <i>certified</i> bike helmet (no football helmets, motorcycle helmets, etc)	A basic repair kit which usually includes tire levers, a wrench, and a tube repair kit
A multi-speed bike able to be ridden off-road (wide, knobby tires, front & rear hand brakes)	Other, more sophisticated bike repair tools
Appropriate shoes (biking shoes, hiking boots, something with a tread) - NO SANDALS, FLIP FLOPS, OTHER OPEN TOE SHOES	Pedal cages (recommended) - these provide a rider with better control when riding downhill and a more efficient use of power when riding uphill
Two extra bike tubes (the tire size can be found on the side of each tire)	A backpack-style water reservoir (CamelBack)
Two water bottles	Tire pump
Eye protection (e.g. sunglasses with non-black tinting, goggles)	
Sun screen or alternative sun protection (e.g. long-sleeved shirt)	
A rain jacket (in the case of inclement weather)	
Loose-fitting, light shorts and shirt (long sleeve if it's not too hot)	
Biking Gloves	

Most of these items can be purchased at a department store, although some of the optional items may only be found at a sporting goods store (Dick's Sporting Goods, Cayuga Ski and Cycle, The Bike Rack, The Outdoor Store). Please contact Susan if you have any questions about any of the equipment.