



Growing Independence at Camp

Our youngest campers arrive to camp with a range of ability and responsibility in their health, hygiene and personal independence. The Pemi staff are ready to support their growth in this area, and we hope you notice some shifts and gains when they return home!

Now is a great time to start practicing exposures to independent skills that will increase your camper's confidence at camp. Prepare them to have a successful transition in any of the following areas that might be applicable.

Brushing Teeth: Counselors will give reminders for morning and night brushing. See if your camper is able to self-start these routines without prompts. Can they put toothpaste on the brush independently? Are they brushing for enough time?

Showering: Check in on the quality of their washing! Other than making sure the campers are taking regular showers, this skill will fall to your camper. See if they are able to care for their hair while showering, and scrub up well.

Overnights: Practice spending the night with family or friends. This will lend confidence to your camper before they spend a night away from home at Pemi.

Applying Sunscreen: A tricky one for our youngest campers! This is often an area where parents will swoop in and manage this skill for their child. In the lead up to Pemi, discuss the best times for applying sunscreen, how to apply and when to reapply. Have your camper practice applying sunscreen. We will also give reminders and help get the tops of ears and noses.

Toileting: Check in on your camper's readiness in some of these areas. Bathrooms are a touch further away at camp, so plan accordingly! Remind your camper to give themselves adequate time to reach the bathroom. How are their abilities in recognizing when they need to go, taking a break to go, wiping, hand washing and flushing?

Communication/Self-Advocacy: Remind your camper who they can go to if they have a question or challenge. Remind them Pemi has many helpers. Discuss which staff might be helpful to reach out to. The cabin counselor, a nurse, a director, or the staff member that makes them the most comfortable! Talk about how you will communicate through letters while they are away. Have your camper practice writing a letter!

Growth and independence in skills related to personal hygiene, self-advocacy and overall health & wellness are huge benefits in an experience away from home. We are excited to partner with you in these areas!