

L-I-T Handbook 2019



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Peeps Camp Hours:

9:00am – 12:00pm
Monday – Friday

Camp Location:

ArtisTree Community Arts
Center
2095 Pomfret Road
South Pomfret, VT 05067

Dear L-I-Ts,

Thank you for choosing to participate in VINS Nature Camp's L-I-T program. Preparations are well underway for another summer of adventure and discovery.

This handbook is designed to help L-I-Ts plan for their week(s) of volunteering. It contains information about our policies, drop-off and pick-up, a packing list and much more.

At VINS Nature Camp, our mission is to help young people develop the life skills necessary to be a positive force for their community and the natural world. In order to be successful in our mission, we need the help of our Leaders-in-Training. The most significant way L-I-Ts can help is by becoming familiar with our rules and policies and by reviewing our behavior code before the first day of camp.

As you prepare for camp, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions. We look forward to a great summer.

Warm regards,

Sarah Strew
Lead Nature Camp

Contact Information

Address: Vermont Institute of Natural Science
149 Natures Way
PO Box 1281
Quechee, VT 05059

Phone: 802-359-5000
Fax: 802-359-5001
Email: camps@vinsweb.org
Website: www.vinsweb.org/nature-camp
Tax ID#: 03-0231665

Staff: Sarah Strew, Lead Nature Camp
sstrew@vinsweb.org
802-359-5000 x245

Julie Kozak, Nature Camp Assistant
jkozak@vinsweb.org
802-359-5000 x245
(May – August)

Required Forms

The VINS Nature Camp L-I-T Health and Emergency Care Form must to be completed and returned at least **two weeks prior** to the first day of camp.

A link to this form can be downloaded from the Leaders-In-Training page on our website at <https://vinsweb.org/nature-camp/leaders-in-training/>. Without these forms, volunteers may not participate in our L-I-T program.

Drop-off & Pick-up

Monday – Thursday: Camper drop-off and pick-up at ArtisTree Community Arts Center is located on the first floor of the ArtisTree Community Arts Center (the red barn).

Friday: Camper drop-off and pick-up at VINS Nature Center is located at the east end of the VINS Nature Center parking lot.

Important: As you enter and exit our camp locations there is a set speed limit of 10 mph to ensure the safety of campers, visitors, and wildlife.

Drop-off Time: 8:45 am Monday – Friday.

Pick-up Time: 12:15 pm Monday –Friday.

On the VINS Nature Camp L-I-T Health and Emergency Care Form, L-I-Ts may be given explicit permission to sign themselves out at the end of the day. Unless this permission has been granted, we must have a list of all adults who are authorized to pick up an L-I-T **INCLUDING** parents/guardians. At pick-up, a valid ID **MUST** be presented or our staff cannot release an L-I-T.

If an L-I-T will be arriving late or leaving early please notify us at least one day prior so staff can plan accordingly. Contact the Nature Camp Assistant at 802-359-5000 x245 or email camps@vinsweb.org.

Packing List

L-I-Ts should come to camp each day dressed in casual, comfortable clothes, ready to hike, run, and likely get wet and dirty. L-I-Ts should be dressed for the weather and be prepared to spend most of the day outdoors. During L-I-T training, specific information regarding VINS' dress code will be provided. It is recommended that L-I-Ts bring the following every day:

- Day pack to carry belongings
- Lunch (refrigeration is not available)
- One or two snacks
- Water bottle (water is available for refills)
- Sturdy walking shoes (ex. sneakers or closed-toed sandals)
- Insect repellent and sunscreen
- Baseball cap or sun hat
- Sweatshirt or lightweight jacket
- Raincoat
- Rain boots/shoes, if desired
- Medications (medication permission form must be filled out in VINS Nature Camp L-I-T Health and Emergency Form)
- Bathing suit and towel¹
- Water shoes, if desired (ex. aqua socks, water sandals, or old sneakers)

¹ Not all camps have a swimming facility; however, there are options for water play on hot days.

What NOT to Pack/Wear

- Video games, iPods, or any other electronic toys or devices (Please note: L-I-Ts are not permitted to use cell phones during the camp day unless given explicit permission from camp staff)
- Personal items or toys unless otherwise requested by an instructor for a share time
- Flip flops or open-toed sandals
- Nice clothing that should not get wet or soiled
- Prescription or over-the-counter medications not listed in VINS Nature Camp L-I-T Health and Emergency Form

Please be sure to label all belongings. At the end of the camp season, all unclaimed lost and found items will be donated.

Health Care

Medication: If an L-I-T will be taking any prescribed or over-the-counter medications while at VINS Nature Camp you must notify camp staff by completing the Camper Medication Information, Permission, and Waiver section in the VINS Nature Camp L-I-T Health and Emergency Care Form. Camp staff is not permitted to administer any medications; however, we will remind and/or assist your child in taking his or her medicine according to your instructions.

Illness and Minor Injury: L-I-Ts should not come to camp if s/he is ill. If an L-I-T becomes ill or injured during camp, a parent/guardian will be called to determine whether s/he should remain at camp for the rest of the day.

Emergencies: All VINS camp staff members are certified in First Aid and CPR and are trained to respond to emergencies. In the event of a health emergency, a parent/guardian will be contacted immediately. If camp staff are unable to reach a parent/guardian, an L-I-T's emergency contact will be notified.

If necessary, an L-I-T will be transported by ambulance to the nearest appropriate medical facility. Camp participants will never be transported in a VINS staff member's personal vehicle. A camp staff member will remain with an L-I-T until a parent/guardian or a designated emergency contact arrives.

Behavior Policies

VINS Nature Camp is committed to providing each camp participant, whether a camper, Leader-In-Training, or staff member, with a safe, nurturing camp experience that accommodates individual needs and learning styles.

In order to maintain the safety and quality of our camp program, we expect that everyone understand and adhere to our VINS Nature Camp Behavior Code. Please review the VINS Nature Camp Behavior Code prior to the first day of camp.

VINS Nature Camp staff are trained in behavior management techniques and work to resolve issues with conduct. However, certain behaviors are deemed unacceptable at VINS Nature Camp; including, but not limited to, intentionally harming others, using abusive language, and disobeying camp rules established at the start of the camp week.

In the event of unacceptable behavior, staff will discuss the conduct issue with the L-I-T and, in certain cases, may involve parent/guardian in that conversation to determine whether or not s/he should remain at camp for the rest of the week. VINS Nature Camp reserves the right to dismiss an L-I-T for unacceptable behavior or conduct.

If you have any questions about our VINS Nature Camp Behavior Code or our policies regarding discipline or expulsion, please contact Lead Nature Camp, at 802-359-5000 x245.

VINS NATURE CAMP BEHAVIOR CODE

VINS' Nature Camp Behavior Code is based on the Five Finger Contract used by many adventure and challenge-by-choice programs. In our behavior code, we embrace five values, represented by each of the five fingers, which direct how we conduct ourselves at VINS Nature Camp.



- The **Pinky Finger** is the smallest and easiest to hurt which is why it represents **Safety** in our behavior code. When we look at our pinky, it reminds us to look out for the emotional and physical safety of others and ourselves, by following safety rules, using kind language, and keeping our hands to ourselves.
- People traditionally wear wedding bands on their **Ring Finger** to represent their **Commitment** to each other. VINS Nature Camp expects participants commit themselves to the camp experience by participating in the activities of the day, being willing to try new things, and being open to facing challenges. This allows campers to get the most out of their camp experience.
- At VINS Nature Camp, the **Middle Finger** represents **Respect** for each other, ourselves, and the world around us. Camp participants practice working with others and seeing the capacity for good in everyone. While at camp participants are also encouraged to give compliments and praise for jobs well done, and to think about ways to respect our camp environment.
- The **Pointer Finger** points; people often use it to point at others; at VINS Nature Camp we point this finger at ourselves. This finger reminds everyone about their **Responsibility** as part of a group. Everyone gets to choose how he or she behave. At VINS Nature Camp, children are taught to make their own choices and to take responsibility for their actions.
- “**Thumbs up**” is a universal gesture of approval. At VINS Nature Camp, the thumb reminds us to keep a positive attitude, encourage others and **HAVE FUN**. VINS Nature Camp curricula are designed so that campers will have fun while exploring nature and through those experiences build a better understanding of and appreciation for the natural world.