

December 15, 2022

I hope this message finds you well and your family healthy. As amazing as it may seem, we are drawing near to the midway point between the end of last summer and the start of the next. These are exciting times for camp folks, although we had all hoped (as I am sure you did) that our planning and communication for *kayitz* (summer) 2022 would be utterly devoid of COVID planning. Alas, we are not quite there yet. We cannot know what the future will bring, but please read this entire email carefully, as it contains lots of important information about the upcoming camp season.

First and foremost, I wanted to let you know that **we are requiring all campers to be fully vaccinated before their arrival at Camp this summer**. For our purposes, fully vaccinated will mean the completion of two doses of the vaccine two weeks before the first day of camp. In deciding to put this requirement in place, our Board of Trustees received advice from the Ramah Berkshires Medical Committee as well as from the National Ramah Medical Committee.

The most critical issue, from our perspective, is the health and well-being of our Camp community, which includes not only our staff and campers, but also the families and communities they return to after Camp. While we know the vaccine does not entirely prevent COVID infections, the data is clear that being vaccinated greatly reduces both the risk of spread and the severity of illness. Both of these facts are vitally important for us to have the safest summer we possibly can.

In making this decision, we also carefully considered the safety of the vaccine. While Camp has been mandating certain vaccines for many years, we know that the relatively recent advent of the COVID vaccine is of concern to some of our families. The COVID-19 vaccine for children has been through rigorous testing and thorough review by the FDA and CDC. Thousands of children participated in the clinical trials. Among those who received the vaccine, it was shown to be safe and effective at preventing COVID-19. COVID-19 vaccines are the most closely monitored vaccines in U.S. history, and the FDA and CDC continue to monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccines, including among children. Our medical committee, led by Dr. Phil Levy and Dr. Cliff Nerwen, have prepared an FAQ about the vaccine which you can find [here](#). In addition, Dr. Phil Levy is more than happy to answer any questions you may have about the vaccine. He can be reached [here](#).

Finally, while we do not yet know exactly what the situation with COVID will be come June, and while we do not yet know what regulations New York State will put in place for residential camps this summer, **we believe strongly that a fully vaccinated camp community greatly increases our chances of running as normal a summer as possible.**

Our goals for *Kayitz 2022* are simple: to provide our campers and staff with a safe and healthy experience so that they can grow and thrive, dance and sing, play and laugh, and build relationships that will last them their entire lives. We had hoped that we could do that without reference to COVID this year, and perhaps, by the time the summer comes, we will be able to do just that.

With hope for a happy and healthy (secular) New Year,

Rabbi Ethan Linden
Director

*Please Note: If you have questions about our enrollment or refund policies or dates, please see the complete information [here](#).