

Since camp ended two weeks ago, we've had countless camp families, staff, and friends congratulate us on our summer at Deerskill. We've heard "You pulled it off" or "Congratulations on a COVID-free summer" or even "I didn't think it was possible" a number of times. For us though, to truly breathe a sigh of relief we knew that we had to wait.

We've had today circled on our calendar for awhile now. Today is an important day as it represents 14 days since the last day of camp - this is the currently accepted maximum incubation period for COVID-19. **We were waiting until now to truly celebrate a summer at Deerskill without any known cases of COVID-19!**

It was only 100 days ago that the idea of running camp in the middle of a pandemic was seemingly out of reach, if not impossible. There were so many challenges and hurdles along the way, it's hard to recall them all. Bus companies couldn't find drivers, staff withdrew in waves, states were added to the quarantine list, hand washing stations were impossible to find, sanitizer dispensers were only available on eBay, tents and picnic tables were purchased, staff orientation was on Zoom, we added 5 groups then eliminated 8 as group sizes shifted, the list goes on and on. There were many nights we looked at each other and wondered how we would get to the first day. The only reason we did is because of the amazing leadership and support staff we have here at camp - truly they are the foundation of Deerskill and their personal sacrifices and exhaustive efforts prior to, and during, camp gave us all the opportunity to be successful.

Of course, you, our parents, and your children played a huge role in keeping everyone safe along the way. Whether it was keeping campers home who had a stuffed nose, or changing vacation weeks or even destinations due to newly added states to the quarantine list or having to complete the screening form EVERY MORNING, you all contributed to our joint success. Our incredible staff wore masks every day despite the hottest July on record and still managed to smile (with their eyes) and lead and support our campers through such an uncertain time - they all deserve a ton of credit.

Yet, at the end of the summer, it was all so worth it. The outpouring of support and the overwhelming feedback we have received has truly touched us and in many ways changed our own appreciation for the impact Deerskill has on our campers, parents and staff. We are ever more inspired to continue to look forward and explore how we can support our community over the coming months and into next summer. And yes, none of us know what next summer will look like, but we do know that whatever it holds, we'll be ready for it.

Thank you for your trust in us despite such challenging circumstances. Thank you for helping to keep your kids safe. Thank you for being part of such a remarkable summer.

Be safe and have a wonderful school year,

Todd and Rebecca