



Camp Encore/Coda Gender-Expansive Cabins

We aim to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for our campers and families of all identities, and to further affirm and nurture our campers, we offer gender-expansive cabins for campers and families who are interested in this option.

Not all of our campers identify as boys or girls, and we want to have living spaces that further support our campers that identify as genderqueer, gender non-conforming, etc. For campers who are often made to conform to gender expectations that are not true to who they are, we hope that the option of gender-expansive cabins will allow them to feel safer and to even more fully be themselves at camp. At the same time, if a child identifies as genderqueer, trans and/or is questioning their gender identity, we would not require them to be in a gender-expansive cabin. This is simply an option and a choice for camp families and their children.

Families can elect to have their child be in a gender-expansive cabin through the bunk request form that goes out to enrolled families in the spring. This cabin is open to all interested campers. Even if a camper does not identify as genderqueer, but they and their family feel this cabin would be a good place for them, they are able to be in the gender-expansive cabin. As one example, if a child is friends with a gender non-conforming camper who wants to be in a gender-expansive cabin, perhaps they would want to also be in this cabin so they can be with their friend. Campers will not be placed in a gender-expansive cabin without the consent and approval of their parents/guardians. For campers who do not elect to be in the gender-expansive cabin, the addition of this cabin will not have any impact on their camp experience or cabin living situation.

A few questions you might have:

- I'm not familiar with the terms non-binary or gender-expansive as a gender identity.

What is all this about? According to www.genderspectrum.org, gender-expansive is an umbrella term used for individuals that broaden their own culture's commonly held definitions of gender, including expectations for its expression, identities, roles, and/or other perceived gender norms. Gender-expansive individuals include those with transgender and non-binary identities, as well as those whose gender in some way is seen to be stretching society's notions of gender.

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- **Is this definitely happening?** We began offering a gender-expansive cabin option in the summer of 2022 and it has been very successful. We imagine it will be available every summer going forward, but it is subject to interest. In the summer of 2022, we were able to have one gender-expansive cabin each session. Moving forward, we're hoping to be able to offer at least one upper camp and one lower camp gender-expansive cabin each session, but this is dependent on interest. If we don't have enough campers enroll to fill a gender-expansive cabin in a given age group, we will be in touch with interested families to discuss and make a plan.

- **How will my camper maintain their privacy in this cabin?** There is a separate changing area and bathroom in a gender-expansive cabin.

- **What if my camper says they want to be in a gender-expansive cabin once they arrive at camp?** While we recognize that identities are often in flux and may change, we unfortunately cannot guarantee that there will be space to change a camper's cabin assignment once they arrive at camp. We would do our best to accommodate such a request, with parental/caregiver consent, but especially because of the number of beds per bunk, this may not be possible.

- **My child is interested in this cabin option, but I and they don't want their experience at camp to be ALL about gender.** This cabin will simply be a "home base" at camp, and all campers will participate in the typical programming at camp. We hope this space will allow them a chance to have some conversations about gender if they want to, but more importantly to feel even more comfortable being themselves.