

We understand the enormous trust you have instilled in us by choosing Camp Gordyland. Before our first day of camp, we read this "letter" aloud to all our counselors to reiterate how important our jobs at Camp Gordyland are.

To: My Child's Counselor...
From: A Camp Parent on the First Day of Camp

Dear Staff Person,

How strange it is that I've never met you and today you will become the most important person in my child's life. I suppose you've been told that already: "These are other people's children-their most cherished loved ones; they'd actually give up their own life before they would let anything terrible happen to them." (This is not an exaggeration!) Whenever I hire someone to look after my child, I interview them. I have a chance to meet with them, ask them things, and watch how they interact and play with my child and how my child responds to them. But when a parent sends their child to camp, odds are they've never met the people who will stand in their parent's place. I just wanted to tell you that this can be very scary for me.

Please don't be insulted. I trust the director who hired you and would never think of sending my child unless I did. If the director trusts you, then I trust you. But I know that the director is not going to take care of my child personally. You are. And I just wanted you to know what an extraordinary act of faith it is for me to put my child into your care.

It just occurred to me: If you care for my child with love and patience and skill, then you're no stranger. You've suddenly become MY most important friend in the world.

Sincerely,

A CHILD'S GRATEFUL PARENT