

Cell Phone/Electronics Policy Chihopi 2026

Based on policies endorsed by the American Camping Association and other experienced summer camps, Camp Chihopi is a cellphone/electronics-free event. These devices are expensive and may easily get lost or damaged during camp, but more importantly, **Chihopi is a time to meet new friends, be outdoors, and enjoy nature and all the fun activities!** Chihopi is a unique opportunity for campers to put their electronics aside and enjoy meeting other campers who are just like them, and to start building meaningful friendships with their peers and staff.

We know this is a big adjustment, but research shows that screen time decreases the child's ability to develop social skills. Please read this brief article from the American Camping Association that highlights the success of an electronics-free camp setting. Most campers said that camp is best without phones! ["It's the Best Part of Camp": Camper Views on Smartphone Policies | American Camp Association \(acacamps.org\)](https://www.acacamps.org/it-s-the-best-part-of-camp)

Campers will not be permitted to have or have access to cell phones/electronics during camp.

- If campers bring cell phones/electronics, they will be turned in to Bev at Registration on Thursday morning for safekeeping during camp. Phones will be returned to campers on Sunday at lunch.
- Counselors/staff will also adhere to the cell phone policy. Do not call/text your child's counselor at any time during camp.
- If there is an emergency or important message, please contact Bev (412-298-6270).
- A photographer will be taking pictures during camp. A link to all the photos will be sent to families by late August.

Although we understand how screen time can impact the camper's opportunities to socialize at camp, a more significant problem is how phone use affects trust. Attending camp is a leap of faith for some parents as responsibility for their child's care is temporarily transferred to the camp staff. This can be challenging, but by feeling a little more "on their own," the young campers learn to problem-solve more independently as they learn to trust other caring adults who are helping them solve a challenge they may encounter at camp.

Texting or calling your child during camp, or having them contact you, may show them that you have not transitioned to trusting your child to be in the care of others. Talk to you child before camp and tell them that if they are having difficulty, there is always someone to talk to at camp – our counselors, child life specialists, nurses, and other transplant team members! We are here to help them achieve skills in learning more about their care, increasing their independence, and developing trusting relationships with staff and peers.

Thank you for supporting Chihopi as an electronics-free event and helping your child have the best possible camp experience!

