Letter from Medical Director:

My name is Jeffrey Hannel MD and I have been the medical director for WRYC for about 20 years. This year, we are facing a brand-new challenge in the running the camp, you guess it. COVID 19, The coronavirus, the quarantine challenge of 2020.

We have been in weekly contact with the Health department weekly in preparation for the starting of camp. We have contacted the Texas DSHS (Department of State Health Services) and even private COVID boards at the local hospitals. Our entire focus has been to protect your kids and keep them the safest we can during this time of challenge. It has been a very cooperative beneficial process and I would like to thank all the people who have put so much work into making the camp the safest place for your kids this summer. I would especially like to thank Texas Governor Abbot and Lubbock Mayor Dan Pope and the city council of Lubbock for putting an extraordinary amount of time into protocols and practices to keep Lubbock Strong. WRYC has always operated under the DSHS and health department oversight but this year, it will be even more important in order to keep your kids the safest environment we can make for them, while letting them experience the normal social developments that are necessary as they grow up. WRYC promotes a strong Christian environment with leadership that demonstrates a willingness to let Kids explore their personal relationship with Christ as they grown into responsible young adults and on. Many of our existent board and staff are previous campers and staff/counselors and return each summer in order to pass on the strong traditions started by our camp founders back in 1971.

The COVID19 virus can infect people of all ages. While the risk of serious illness or loss of life is greater in those people over 65 or with people with pre-existing health conditions, persons of every age group can become infected and spread it to those who are more vulnerable.

Many children can obtain and spread COVID19 without showing the true symptoms we see in the media. These asymptomatic or “silent carriers” are almost impossible to detect without testing everyone. The current tests are limited in their effectiveness due to a high false negative rate which means that you can miss approximately 30% of the positive cases and they are extremely invasive with a swab placed into the back of the nasopharynx (quite irritating). Since there is no correct way of perfectly detecting carriers/early sickness, the authorities have recommended stringent maintenance serially checking to try to prevent spread.

Although no place in the world is totally safe from COVID 19 right now, I wanted to walk you through some of the protocols we have put in place in coordination with state and local authorities to keep our kids safe!.

Some of the new precautions are already happening. The number one rule in overnight camping this summer will be this. “IF you are sick, stay home” If you come to the camp sick, we will be sending you home immediately. If you develop any symptoms, we will assess you but if we find the possibility of COVID, you will be sent home for testing. The DSHS has stated that the parents/guardians have 8 hours to come pick up the child if the child turns symptomatic during the camp stay after being notified by medical personal at the camp.
**WRYC has a huge advantage over other camps...** We are basically outside most of the time. Our tents are outside, our activities are outside, our pool is outside. Since we know COVID19 breaks down quickly in direct sunlight, we are going to try to use that as much as we can this summer. We of course will have the kids drink a lot more water as they will be outside for more activities and classes/gatherings in order to prevent spread of someone who accidently brings it into camp.

Your children’s staff have arrived at camp in advance of your children for a 8-10 day training and cleaning session. This also serves as a quarantine to make sure the staff themselves do not bring anything to camp. There were two counselors from an endemic area that were brought and evaluated for COVID19 before they could arrive at camp per state protocols, and they were NEGATIVE.

The counselors will be going through multiple State/DSHS training classes before the camps initiate and are taking new classes in recognizing the signs and symptoms of COVID19. They will be learning how to take TOUCHLESS temperatures and we will be keeping a three times a day temperature on all kids to make sure none become symptomatic at camp. We are posting symptoms of COVID19 around camp as well as good hand washing protocols and general hygiene rules (such as coughing and sneezing) in multiple areas.

It all starts at drop off on the morning of you camping session, it will be a staggered drop off in an established drop off area. Your children will have their camp supplies taken from the drop off area to their own tents. We will be sterilizing the outside of the luggage/tubs but will take great efforts not to interact with your children’s items as this can spread infection.

As a long WRYC tradition has held, your child will be assigned to a tent that will also serve as a mini safe environment this year. Your campers small group environment will largely follow them through the camp as the camp director has altered gathering requirements to stay in the same age specific group. The camp has developed a specific Cabin Hygiene Plan, Dining Hygiene plan, and Activities Hygiene plan as well increase frequency of sterilizing High traffic/High use areas with Government approved cleaning solutions.

For specifics, please see the included links that we have listed on our website.

This year will be designated per DSHS regulations as a “NO VISITOR” year. You can understand how having people who are not directly responsible for camping activities entering camp, can induce a higher risk for kids. Also any packages received by camp will be held for 24 hours before being delivered to staff or kids. Food and Frozen deliveries will be unloaded in a separate secluded area, sterilized, and then brought into camp. The Counselors and staff will not be allowed to leave on weekends between sessions without the express permission of the camp director. Emergency maintenance personal, will be escorted on campus for repairs with masks and gloves at all time to minimize risk.

We have ordered double the amount of cleaning supplies and have an adequate supply of Personal Protective Equipment in case of any outbreaks. We have a management plan and will use one of the indoor facilities as a quarantine area for short terms if a camper or staff becomes very sick while we are getting transferred for appropriate testing and care.

Medical personal has screened the health histories of incoming campers to make sure there are no VERY high risk conditions that could results in a poorer outcome and we will pre-notify the camper that they
must have a letter clearing them from their condition specific specialist in order to attend. Staff also has provided medical histories to be reviewed.

The camp administration has made extra efforts to make sure additional stations of hand sanitizer, soap and water, and disinfecting wipes are available at areas through the camp.

Medical staff will keep the medical director informed of any potential infections or other medical conditions throughout the camping sessions.

Staff will be wearing cloth face coverings in exposed conditions and campers are welcome to bring their own face coverings. They will not be allowed in the pool areas as they present an additional risk of drowning and can obstruct the pool filters. Campers will be encouraged to dress to swim in their tents and come with a coverup, so they do not have to use the enclosed bathrooms at the pool house except in case of emergencies or true bio breaks while swimming. These bathhouses will be cleaned sterilization equipment daily.

Campers will be expected to shower daily and maintain good hygiene. These environments will be cleaned twice a day with sterilization solutions to prevent transmission in these areas.

Counselors will be responsible to make sure that campers in their tents do not interact with campers outside their “COFs” (Circle of Friends)

The Camp will be deep cleaned/sterilized between each session.

We hope that by giving you some idea of the extraordinary measures we are taking to keep your children safe, you will be comforted to know that they are in a safe environment. We are working our best to let them develop spiritually / emotionally / physically in an environment that can bring out the best in each kid.

Remember, “We are all in this together.” We ask that parents and congregations keep WRYC in your prayers during each session so that this can be a positive COVID19 - free summer camp term!