

# We welcome you

# To **CAMP** **TAWONGA**

*We're mighty glad you're here.*

A welcome packet for first-time  
summer campers and families



Questions? We're here to help! Call us at 415.543.2267

# Welcome to the Camp Tawonga Family!

We're thrilled you're joining us for a fun-filled session with new friends and adventures this summer! We hope you're excited, but also know you may be wondering what to expect. This packet should help familiarize you with what Tawonga is all about. In it, you'll find an introduction to some of the activities, traditions, songs and games you'll experience at Camp. You'll receive more information too as your session gets closer, like a roster and information on mail and communications during the summer.

If you think of any questions in the coming months, please don't hesitate to call us at 415.543.2267 or email [info@tawonga.org](mailto:info@tawonga.org). We're here to help!

## A Bit of History

**Did you know Camp Tawonga has been around for almost 100 years?**

The camp was founded in 1925 and since then tens of thousands of children have grown up at Tawonga. Camp was originally located near South Lake Tahoe and was an all-boys camp; the first session for girls was in the 1930's. During World War II Tawonga had to close but reopened in 1964 as a co-ed summer camp at our current site on the Tuolumne River next to Yosemite National Park.



## Tawonga Means...

The word Tawonga has roots in several cultures. In the village of Tawonga, located near Mount Beauty, Australia, it means "in flight, like a bird or spear." In the language of the Tumbuka of Ivory Coast, Africa, Tawonga means "We are grateful." In the town of Mzuzu, Malawi, Africa, Tawonga means "Hello" and "Thank You." In 1925, the first Tawonga campers believed Tawonga meant "I will." The brochures of those days always spelled "I WILL" in capital letters to capture the feeling of their rugged determination.

Tawonga means thousands of things to thousands of people, including "I am unique and special for who I am," "I am part of a cooperative community," "I love being included in the Jewish community," and "I am conscious of my lifelong relationship with nature, and my responsibility to protect it."

At Camp Tawonga, we believe that "Tawonga" means all of this and more. Its truest definition represents a collective voice, a unifying experience. In any language, in any country,

**Tawonga means home.**

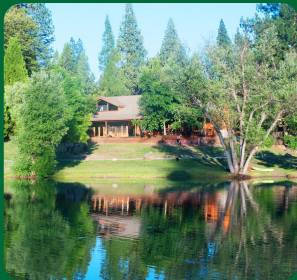
# Your First Day at Camp



**FIRST**, join other campers at the bus pick-up spots in Oakland or Oakdale. Our friendly staff will direct you to your bus, where you'll meet other campers your age.



**YOU'RE CLOSER!** Buses make a stop in Oakdale for campers to eat lunch and to stretch your legs.



## WELCOME TO CAMP TAWONGA!

You've arrived after a four-hour journey into the mountains. Our warm and friendly staff will welcome you with a smile and a song! Right away, you'll meet your bunkmates and counselors and move into your cabin.



**YOUR BUNK WILL GO ON A "HAVURAH HIKE"** which is a walking tour of Camp. "Havurah" means "circle of friends" in Hebrew, and this tour will help to familiarize you with the layout of Camp.



## AFTER DINNER IS THE OPENING CAMPFIRE.

This is a chance for the entire Camp to come together, welcome each other, meet the rest of the staff and start settling into Camp. Each bunk performs a short and fun skit to introduce themselves.

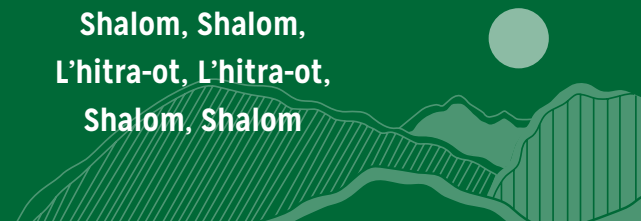


### *Friends, Friends, Friends*

Friends, friends, friends,  
We will always be.  
Whether in fair or in dark stormy weather  
It's Camp Tawonga to keep us together!  
Our love for you (cha cha cha), it will e'er be true,  
Love will pervade us though miles separate us,  
We're friend, friends, friends.

### *Shalom Chaverim*

Shalom chaverim,  
Shalom chaverim,  
Shalom, Shalom,  
L'hitra-ot, L'hitra-ot,  
Shalom, Shalom



# TRADITIONS

## Cheers

At Camp Tawonga, we love to chant and cheer. Some cheers are new and different each summer, invented by bunks or other groups of campers or staff to show their spirit. Some are long-standing traditions like “The Birthday Shtick” done on campers’ birthdays.

## Some helpful hints for cheering along:

1

Whenever someone says “But before that...” wave your hands in the air and scream “Aaah!”

2

If someone says the word “announcements” in front of a group of people...get ready for a long funny song that follows!

3

After a great song session, campers and staff alike might need to hear just one more song played, and they may chant “One more song!” or, in Hebrew, “Od Shir Echad!”



Without a doubt, you’ll soon be learning old cheers and creating new ones of your own!



## Prayers

At Camp Tawonga we celebrate our Jewish community. You don’t have to know all the prayers, belong to a synagogue at home, or be Jewish to be comfortable at Camp. It’s all about learning and, best of all, it’s fun!

One important Jewish tradition at Camp is to say a blessing before and after every meal. This helps us show our thanks for the delicious food we eat at Camp.

The blessing before each meal:

### Hamotzi

Hamotzi lechem min ha-aretz  
We give thanks to God for bread.  
Our voices join in happy chorus  
As our prayer is humbly said:

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu  
Melech ha-olam Hamotzi lechem  
min ha-aretz. Amen.



# T A W O N G A

# Song Session

Music, singing, and dancing are favorites at Camp Tawonga. It's hard to imagine Camp without them! Song sessions follow every breakfast and dinner at Camp.

They're a great time to sing, dance, and get silly with awesome live music from our song leaders. Don't worry if you don't know the words! They're all in the Camp songbook. Here are some of our favorites:

## Country Roads

Almost heaven, Camp Tawonga  
Sierra Mountains, Tuolumne River  
Life is old there, older than the trees,  
Younger than the mountains,  
Blowin' like a breeze.

**Country roads, take me home,  
To the place, I belong,  
Camp Tawonga, California,  
Take me home, country roads.**

All my memories, gather 'round her,  
Miner's lady, stranger to blue water.  
Dark and dusty, painted on the sky,  
Misty taste of moonshine,  
Teardrops in my eyes.

(Chorus)

I hear her voice in the morning  
As she calls me,  
The radio reminds me  
Of my home far away.  
Driving down the road  
I get a feeling  
That I should have been home  
Yesterday, yesterday.

(Chorus)

## B'tzelem Elohim

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah (4x)  
We all got a lift to live,  
we all got a gift to give.  
Just open your heart and let it out.  
We all got a peace to bring,  
we all got a song to sing.  
Just open your heart and let it out.  
Yeah.

**When I reach out to you and you to me,  
we become b'tzelem Elohim.  
When we share our hopes and our dreams,  
Each of us b'tzelem Elohim**

We all got a tale to tell.  
We all want to speak it well.  
Just open your heart and let it out.  
We all got a mountain to climb.  
We all got a truth to find.  
Just open your heart and let it out.  
Yeah.

(Chorus)

B'reishit ba-ra-E ---lo ---him, (4x)  
B'reishit bara Elohim,  
All our hopes, all our dreams,  
B'reishit bara Elohim, each of us,  
B'tzelem Elohim.  
Yeah.

(Chorus 2x, last line 3x)

## 'Tall, Tall Trees'

Sitting in a quiet grove,  
Out among the tall,  
Tall trees in California,  
Northern California.  
It's good to see a deep green forest,  
Remind me of the way life used to be  
There's a lesson to be learned here,  
From the trees.

**They're so old, they're so wise  
They're so wonderful to see  
They're so strong,  
They just breathe life  
They're so beautiful to me  
And there's no place else  
That I would rather be  
Than here among the tall, tall trees  
(x2)**

They've been around a long long time.  
As the world goes drifting by  
They survive  
And they do it in style.  
Some try to cut them down  
Fire's been known to burn them  
To the ground.  
There's a lesson to be learned here,  
For they still stand proud.

(Chorus)

BRIDGE:

Wake up in the morning  
Sit beside the fire, taking it all in.  
A little peace and quiet,  
That's what I desire,  
I'm thinking clear again.

'Cause I'm here among the tall, tall trees  
Oh here among the tall, tall trees

## MORE TAWONGA TUNES

You can listen to Tawonga tunes at home! Search for "Camp Tawonga" on Spotify, stream songs on our website at [tawonga.org/tawongatunes](http://tawonga.org/tawongatunes) or purchase the Tawonga CD through our online canteen at [tawonga.org/canteen](http://tawonga.org/canteen). Our songbook is also available through the canteen.

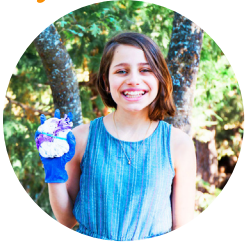




# Daily Activities

There are tons of things to do at Tawonga, from swimming and sports to drama and arts and crafts! Most of your time at Camp will be spent with your bunk, participating in activities based on your cabin's schedule. No two schedules are exactly the same! This gives everyone an opportunity to participate in activities they know and love, and to try new activities that their bunkmates love too.

## A&C



That's short for Arts and Crafts. This is the place for pottery, watercolors, lanyards, tie-dye, shrinky dinks and more. You name it, A&C has what you need to get creative!

## Swimming



Our Olympic-sized pool is the perfect place to cool down! And, there are plenty of opportunities to swim in the Tuolumne River. Safety first - all campers take a swim assessment when they arrive, and lifeguards are always on duty when we swim.

Tend to the vegetables and herbs growing in our beautiful garden, and make delicious treats with your bunkmates like smoothies, pizza and shakshuka, an Israeli egg dish! Our farm boasts chickens, pigs and goats too. With veggies from our garden and milk from our goats, you'll enjoy a "farm to table" feast!

## Farm & Garden



Get on stage and dance, sing, or just get goofy. There's always an opportunity to put on a wild outfit for a talent show or a funny skit, so get ready to dig through our costume closet or even pack your own dress-up supplies.

## Performing



## Sports



Get in the game! Basketball, softball and soccer are all favorites at Tawonga. Ever heard of Gaga? You'll love this Israeli game that's a lot like dodge ball and played in an octagonal court. Campers can also be found playing ultimate frisbee and capture the flag. But remember, it's not about winning and losing as we usually end in a "Tawonga Tie"!

## Boating



Take out a canoe, a kayak or a paddle boat, and take a lap around Turtle Island. While you're exploring, try to spot turtles, frogs and dragonflies!

## FLOATS

*The Sky is the Limit!*  
Do you like to act? Want to jam on your guitar? Whatever your passion, you can make it happen at Tawonga!

In addition to the activities you do with your bunkmates, you'll also have a chance on some days to do what we call "floats." This is when campers can choose their own adventure, participating in activities independent of their bunk.

# Making New Friends



Coming to Camp without a friend? That's exciting! You'll likely make your first friend on the bus, and then when you get to Tawonga, you'll immediately meet your counselors and bunkmates and play some "get to know you games."



But before that ... (ahhh!) ... you'll have lots of opportunities to meet other kids from your session before Camp even starts. We offer several "New Family Orientations" where campers come with their parents to get to know Tawonga better (invitation included in this packet). Campers get to meet other kids from their area, play games, and ask questions while adults meet with a director.



If you don't meet anyone at one of our orientations, or you can't attend, don't worry - you'll receive a roster about a month before the start of your session. Your parents can help you set up playdates or meet-ups so you know a couple kids before you get on the bus. Just remember, Camp is a great way to make new friends, and many campers come to Tawonga without knowing anyone else. You'll begin building friendships the moment you step on our property, and will return home with wonderful, lifelong friendships.

## Backpacking and Day Hikes

How amazing is it to be right at the doorstep of Yosemite National Park? You will have a chance to visit Yosemite, Stanislaus National Forest, or other surrounding areas with your bunkmates. Campers in A Taste of Camp go on a day hike; campers attending Camp for two or more weeks go backpacking or camping and sleep under stars for one or two nights. You'll need to bring a good pair of athletic shoes or hiking boots and a sleeping bag. We'll provide all the other supplies you'll need.



# TAWONGA



## MAD LIB:

This summer, I will be going to \_\_\_\_\_ for the first time. \_\_\_\_\_ !  
(NOUN) (EXCLAMATION)

I am feeling \_\_\_\_\_ about it.  
(ADJECTIVE)

It is going to be so much fun to make new friends, and do new activities like: \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
(NOUN)

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ . I am most looking forward to \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(NOUN) (NOUN) (NOUN)

I can't wait to be in a cabin with \_\_\_\_\_ other kids. I think my counselors' names will be  
(NUMBER)

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ . Some of the most important items for me  
(NAME) (NAME)

to pack in my suitcase are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(NOUN) (NOUN) (NOUN)

I can't wait to go to Camp Tawonga!



## WORD SEARCH:

FIND THESE POPULAR TAWONGA WORDS!  
(across only)

- |                 |             |           |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------|
| CAMP            | FOREST      | ARCHERY   |
| TAWONGA         | DRAMA       | CANOE     |
| GROVELAND       | SPORTS      | UNIT      |
| ARTS AND CRAFTS | FRIENDSHIP  | COUNSELOR |
| SWIMMING        | CABIN       | SUNSHINE  |
| TUOLUMNE RIVER  | GAGA        | CHALLENGE |
| SUMMER          | FOOD        | ROPES     |
| HIKING          | DINING HALL | PIPELINE  |

M F C H A L L E N G E X I J F O O D S H  
 K Z S I N G I N G J G R O V E L A N D T  
 L A D Y B U G G C B A W U J S U M M E R  
 C A M P P I P E L I N E F V I D N R N Q  
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 R Y S Q M X K F Y O S E M I T E C L N J  
 Q B E E R R O P E S S U N S H I N E E E H B

