



*Multi-Sport Athletic Development & Confidence Based Learning
for Children Between the Ages of Seven and Sixteen*

A Message from Jeffrey M. Bell

Director

The Susquehannock Camps

Greetings! Welcome to Camp Susquehannock.

As a parent, athlete, former camper at Susquehannock and now Director, I thought it important to share with you the real benefit and impact Camp Susquehannock can have on the lives of children.

Children are the most precious things in our lives. We want them to be safe. We want them to be successful and we want them to have the ability to take advantage of every opportunity. To do this they need to be well rounded, diverse, resilient, confident young people. This doesn't just "happen"...it takes some work.

Our Purpose is to Provide Multi-Sport Athletic Development and Confidence Based Learning for Children Between the Ages of Seven and Sixteen

What do I mean by this? Let me start with the athletic component.

In today's ultra-competitive athletic landscape more and more children are specializing at an early age with the hopes of "making it big" or receiving a full scholarship to a university. While this can be tantalizing and sound very appealing it can also be very detrimental. New research shows that children who specialize at a young age are more susceptible to serious injury, lack of self-confidence and decreased overall athleticism.

Studies at UCLA and Loyola University in Chicago Show Sport Diversification Actually Has a Positive, Protective Effect and Provides Significant Performance Benefits.

In fact, the study found that children who played multiple "attacking" sports like Basketball, Soccer or Lacrosse developed the unconscious ability to read bodies and game situations allowing them to master their sport of choice in a much shorter time period. (Data presented at the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine showed that the average athlete at UCLA did not start specializing until 15.4 years of age. In other words, kids can wait until they are at least 16 years of age.)



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The objective at Camp Susquehannock is to develop well rounded, multi-sport athletes. We want children to leave camp with a broad spectrum of athletic skills. You see, when kids are exposed to a variety of sports they develop a diversified skill set which helps them learn about their bodies. They learn how their body works, what it can do best, how far they can push it all while developing superior coordination between the eyes, hands, feet and core. They become stronger, more agile, durable and less prone to injury.

Camp Susquehannock Develops the Key Traits for Success in Sports and Life... CONFIDENCE!

Confidence is so important in every aspect of life. It enables people to not only reach great achievements but enjoy life to a much fuller extent. Confidence is something that comes from the self. It can't be created with false accolades, meaningless words of encouragement or praise lacking of any substance. True confidence is achieved, it is earned ...and when you achieve it: you know it!

You can be pat on the back, told you're the best at everything you do, encouraged and placed in winning situations but that only provides temporary, false confidence. Not real...true...life lasting confidence.

At Camp Susquehannock Children Not Only Develop Confidence, They Develop Grit!

Grit is the first cousin to confidence. Grit can't be bought, borrowed or faked. Grit comes from consistently showing up for life every day. It comes from consistently stretching your comfort zone ...and when you combine grit with confidence you get a "hardy soul." (The people of Camp Susquehannock are "hardy souls"!)

Let's not fool ourselves. Children are smart, they know the difference between false confidence and earned confidence. They may not be able to articulate it but they can feel it, sense it and understand it. When they get the opportunity to overcome a challenge and accomplish something new: they smile, they grow and they mature.

This is true of all ages. I don't care if you're seven years old, fifteen years old, twenty, thirty or sixty. When you try something new or are presented with a life



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challenge and you pop out the other side with some level of success, it feels good! You feel good about yourself. That's when confidence is built.

Camp Susquehannock Puts Children in Situations Where They Can Develop Real, True, Self Confidence and It's Done Through Sports.

It may be as simple as introducing a young child to a new sport or activity. If a child is older or more advanced it could mean learning to hit a pitch to the opposite field, a behind the back pass in basketball, executing a corner kick with the opposite foot, learning to sail a boat or swimming the entire length of our beloved Tripp Lake! Whatever the activity, it makes no difference.

The goal is to put children in situations where they can learn and have success overcoming challenges, trying new sports, learning new skills and developing sportsmanship. When they do this they not only increase their athletic diversity but they develop a sense of inclusion. They'll now have something new (in common) with other people. Which means their social confidence will increase...and this type of confidence translates to leadership.

With heightened confidence these children will be the first ones to raise their hand when a coach or teacher needs a volunteer for something new, not just sit back as a silent observer. This confidence will stick with them for the rest of their lives. They will walk a little taller, smile a bit brighter and look for opportunities where others may turn their head.

Independence, Respect for Others and the Simple Joy of Saying Please and Thank You

Your child will live in a cabin with two counselors and children of the same age. (Cell phones are prohibited. The kids will be "unplugged".) They will learn to adapt and respect each other's habits. They will clean their cabin, make their beds on a daily basis and write real-letters-home-every-Sunday!

Meals will be served family style. The kids will say please and thank you and they will participate in setting the table, serving the food and cleaning up.



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Teamwork & Competition

When the children arrive the staff will assess the experience and athletic ability of the children and place them on teams with those of a similar skill set. They will spend the entire session with this team learning, competing and growing as both individuals and a team.

The mornings consist of a series of athletic clinics designed to teach and develop skills in a particular sport. After lunch the teams will have the opportunity to apply the skills learned in an actual game. From there they will head to the lake for a free swim and then up to the dining hall for dinner. After dinner they will participate in a variety of evening activities with “lights out” between 8:30 PM and 10:30 PM (Their days will be full and sleep should come easy.)

In Summary Campers Will Develop the Following:

- *Confidence in Learning and Trying New Things**
- * The Skills and Physical Development of a Diversified Multi-Sport Athlete**
- *The Ability and Willingness to Adapt to New Challenges**
- *The Fun of Being Part of a Team**
- *The Excitement of Winning and the Lessons Learned from Losing**
- *The Value in Sportsmanship and What it Means to be a Person of High Character**
- *The Joy of Making New Friends and the Bonds of a Lifetime**

[I was blessed to be a camper at Susquehannock for seven years.](#) I learned how to play Basketball, Baseball, Football and Soccer. I learned how to canoe, sail, ride a horse, swim, dive and hike in the woods. I learned teamwork, sportsmanship and to respect others. I learned how to be independent, dedicated and above all I learned about friendship.



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When the Children Leave Camp They Will have Created Lifelong Bonds.

These bonds withstand the test of time. Five, ten, twenty or thirty plus years may pass without seeing a friend from camp and the day you finally run into each other, you feel as though you just saw them yesterday ...you simply pick up where you left off. It's a wonderful feeling; we have all experienced it at one time or another and it's something that makes Camp Susquehannock special.

A Few Final Words

Camp Susquehannock is a special place. It was started by King Shafer in 1905. The Shafer family has managed and been heavily involved in the camp ever since. The methods and traditions have been passed down through generations. Thousands of campers have come through the program and the camp remains one of the premier multi-sport summer camps in the country.

When you send your child to camp it will most likely be the longest time they have been away from home. Rest assured, while all the things I just described are wonderful... the greatest priority we have is your child's safety!

We take great pride in your child's happiness and success. Camp Susquehannock is a non-profit organization. We do this to make an impact on children. Our gift is watching them develop the skills they need to succeed in sports and in life. **That** is the big reward: the big payoff for us!

So please, give us the opportunity to support the development, growth and education of your child. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me directly. I hope to hear from you soon. I can be reached at jbell@susquehannock.com.

I look forward to speaking with you sometime in the near future.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Bell

Jeffrey M. Bell
Director
The Susquehannock Camps



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