2009 PARENT HANDBOOK
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Dear Parents:

Welcome to the Texas 4-H Conference Center! We know there are many choices when it comes to summer camp and we thank you for choosing to send your child(ren) to the 4-H Conference Center.

PLEASE READ THIS BOOKLET! KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

This booklet will help you understand the procedures and policies regarding your child's stay at the 4-H Conference Center. A careful reading will answer many questions and help you prepare your child for camp. Together, we can work to give your camper a positive growing experience that will last a lifetime.

IMPORTANT POINTS

To save you time and frustration, please remember:

1. All registrations require full payment at time of registration.

2. Refunds will be issued if written cancellation is received within seven days of the start of the camp session. A cancellation service charge will be applied.

3. Make sure to read and sign all four pages of the Release Forms and bring them to camp, DO NOT MAIL. Adults serving as Chaperones must also complete the Release Forms.

4. All medications, prescription and non-prescription, must be in the original container with dosage information, listed on the Health Statement, and given to the Camp Nurse upon arrival. The Camp Nurse will dispense all medications.

Please review the above items. If you have any additional concerns, please feel free to contact our Director, Darlene Locke or Laci Chapman, Extension Assistant. Again, welcome to YOUR Texas 4-H Conference Center. We look forward to providing your child with a safe and happy outdoor experience.

5600 FM 3021, Brownwood, TX 76801 * p: 325-784-5482
e-mail: texas4-hcenter@ag.tamu.edu web: http://texas4h-ctr.tamu.edu

2009 Calendar of Events

Listed below are dates of the various camp sessions and the arrival and departure times for each.

Session	Date (arrival and departure time)	Youth	Adult
County Camp			
I	July 1 (1 p.m.) - July 3 (3 p.m.)	$165	$85
II	July 6 (1 p.m.) - July 8 (11 a.m.)	$155	$75
III	July 8 (1 p.m.) - July 10 (11 a.m.)	$155	$75
IV	July 13 (3 p.m.) - July 16 (11 a.m.)	$205	$100
Registration Opens on 4-H Connect March 21-June 19, 2009	Participants register on 4-H Connect paying full amount with credit card or County/Club check; county office approves registration. $75 cancellation fee, if cancellation received 7 days prior to start of camp.		
Prime Time			
I (12-13 years)	July 19 (2:00 p.m.) - July 22 (10:00 a.m.)	$205	$100
II (9-11 years)	July 22 (2:00 p.m.) - July 25 (10:00 a.m.)	$205	$100
Registration Opens on 4-H Connect February 15 - July 3, 2009	Participants register on 4-H Connect paying full amount with credit card or County/Club check; county office approves registration. $75 cancellation fee, if cancellation received 7 days prior to start of camp.		
SpecTra '09			
	July 27 (11:00 a.m.) - July 31 (11:45 a.m.)	$300	$220
Registration Opens on 4-H Connect March 1 - July 17, 2009	Participants register on 4-H Connect paying full amount with credit card or County/Club check; county office approves registration. $75 cancellation fee, if cancellation received 7 days prior to start of camp.		
Shooting Sports Camp			
	June 3 (2:00 pm) - June 6 (11:00 am)	$195	$121
Registration Opens on 4-H Connect March 1, 2009	Participants register on 4-H Connect paying full amount with credit card or County/Club check; county office approves registration. $75 cancellation fee, if cancellation received 7 days prior to start of camp.		

Technology Camp			
	June 17 (2:00 pm) - June 19 (3:00 pm)	$175	$85
Registration Opens on 4-H Connect March 1,2009	Participants register on 4-H Connect paying full amount with credit card or County/Club check; county office approves registration. $75 cancellation fee, if cancellation received 7 days prior to start of camp session.		
Mission Possible			
Campers	July 1 (1:00 pm) - July 3 (3:00 pm)	$125	$85
Mentors (must complete application and be selected)	June 30 (10:30 am) - July 3 (3:00 pm)	$50	
February 15	Participants register with Texas 4-H Conference Center, 325/784-5482. $50 cancellation fee, if cancellation received 7 days prior to start of camp session.		

CAMP LIFE

When do I bring my child(ren) to camp?
Please see the information above for the arrival time for each of the camps. Please keep in mind that several of our camp sessions run back to back and staff need time to close out one camp and prepare for the next. Please DO NOT arrive earlier than listed. If you have child(ren) attending Prime Time I and other children attending Prime Time II (Wednesday is turn-around) you must make provisions for their care. The 4-H Conference Center will NOT be responsible for children left unattended. We just do not have the manpower to chaperone youth between the two sessions. You are welcome to bring a picnic lunch and eat on our grounds during the intercession.

Medications will be collected at check in – please have them with you, not packed into luggage (this includes over the counter and "as needed" medications.)

PETS ARE NOT ALLOWED, except service animals. Please leave pets at home, as it will be too hot to leave them unattended in your vehicle.

When do I pick up my camper(s)?
Please see the information above for the departure time for each of the camps. The campers' final assembly is in the Auditorium and includes a slide show of camp activities; parents are welcome to attend this final assembly. At the conclusion of the assembly, campers will be dismissed to return to their dormitories to collect their belongings.

Weather permitting, a table will be set up in the main parking lot. At this table, parents (or whoever is picking up the camper) will present a photo identification. The person must be listed on the Release Form (page 3) authorizing the release. Release Forms will NOT be returned, if you need a copy for traveling purposes, please make those arrangements before coming to camp. The 4-H Conference Center will keep the Release Forms on file. Staff at the Dismissal Table will issue a "ticket" containing the camper's name and dorm number. The "ticket" is then to be presented to the staff in the dorm and the camper is released. Please confirm that your camper has picked up any and all medications from the Health Room. Medications left at the Center will be mailed, at the owner's expense..

Parking during dismissal: You may park in the main parking lot or travel behind the dormitories. Please be cautious as there is much activity during this period. Youth are excited and running about, in all directions.

Homesickness
Homesickness is usually a result of the discomfort of being in strange surroundings. The Camp Staff is trained to deal with homesickness by providing extra patience and attention and by keeping the camper active. Most campers quickly recover because they are having so much fun and meeting new people. If there is a serious problem, you will be called. Otherwise, "No news is good news" is what you should expect.

What are the Top 5 things I can do to help prepare for Camp? (Excerpt from "Summer Camp

Handbook" by Dr. Chris Thurber. Available at bookstores.)

1. Do not make a "pick-up deal."
Promising "If you feel homesick, I'll come and get you" undermines children's confidence and dramatically intensifies homesickness. Instead, normalize their anxiety, talk positively about camp, and what they can expect to experience.

2. Double-check the camp's packing list.
Many seasons of experience have helped your child's camp directors refine the packing list to include all the essentials. So, if it says "no spaghetti strap tops" help them pack accordingly; "lake shoes" means shoes they can get muddy that will not upset mom. If it says "no electronics," then leave the video games at home.

3. Spend practice time away from home.
Nothing builds confidence and teaches a child how to cope with time away from home better than time away from home. Send them to grandma's... without their pet, without their video games, pack like they were going to camp.

4. Label everything.
It's easy to lose things at camp where there is communal living quarters. Label everything if you want to be able to claim it. From the toothbrush and toothpaste to shoes and clothing. In the dorms, there will be lots of stuff, it is much easier to identify if it is labeled.

5. Double check the opening and closing dates and times.
Get a good start by arriving on the correct date at the correct time. Use a wall calendar in the months preceding camp to make an exciting count down to the big day.

And, based on my personal experience with many families coming to the 4-H Conference Center, know where you are going! This packet includes a map, be sure to have it handy when you make the drive to Brownwood.

Telephones
Phone calls to or from campers are not allowed. The calls tend to defeat a sense of independence and interrupt the camp environment. They can also cause homesickness as well as unspoken hard feelings. **Please do not send cell phones with your campers. Not only are the phones distracting, the 4-H Conference Center will not be responsible for loss or damage. Cell phones may be taken from campers and will be secured in the Administration Office. It is the camper's responsibility to pick up the phone before leaving camp. If they fail to do so, mailing is at the owner's expense.**

Staff members are not allowed to have or use cell phones while on duty, unless given explicit permission due to location of an activity. Please help us keep camp a special place by keeping "Camp Unplugged." Remember, **you will always be contacted by a 4-H Conference Center Staff if there is the need.** We ask for your cooperation, not to keep you secluded from your child, but to encourage their personal growth and developing a sense of independence. If you do

receive a call from your child, please call the Center to let staff know so that the child's issue can be addressed. We are committed to helping improve the situation.

Emergency messages will be taken at Camp, at (325) 784-5482. Phones are answered Monday - Friday during business hours (8am-5pm). If the call is after 5 pm, please ask for Extension 12 if leaving a message. **If it is an emergency or needs immediate attention, please call 325-642-9427.**

Behavioral Expectations and Guidelines

The Texas 4-H Youth Development Program recognizes that positive discipline teaches and encourages the healthy development of a child's self-esteem. The 4-H Conference Center does not allow the use of corporal or physical punishment. Instead, staff employ positive discipline techniques, which include praising, calling attention to appropriate behavior and acting as positive role models to influence and reinforce positive behavior. The staff sets limits that are developmentally appropriate and consistently enforced.

Staff will encourage and assist all children in following the camp rules. All campers will be given an orientation on the first day of camp. All questions will be answered and the rules will be explained during this orientation.

At Camp, we train our staff on preventing, recognizing and dealing with bullying. However, we need your help as the parent to help us ward off and correct bullying behavior and to get bullied children to speak up when they are bullied.

The following information is from Dr. Joel Haber, PhD and his website, www.RespectU.com. Dr. Haber has 20+ years' experience in violence prevention.

What is it? Bullying is any intentional, repeated hurtful act – including inflicting physical pain, name calling, exclusion, defacing property, hurtful pranks and public humiliation. You can be part of the solution – through awareness, insight, and action.

What can I do to help prepare my child for camp?

Bullying another child is a no tolerance policy at camp and while we do our best to detect and prevent bullying, children can be sneaky. Therefore, we ask that you coach your child in speaking out. Tell your child to find their counselor, Doc Locke, Ms. Laci Chapman, or any of the 4-H Conference Center Staff and tell them if they are being bullied while at camp. Let them know we will do our best to help them resolve the problem. If they tell their counselors and still feel nothing is changing, then they must go to Doc Locke or Ms. Chapman. It is imperative that the bullied child speaks out, and preferably while at camp. Please do not hesitate to call us if your child waits until he/she returns home to speak out. Although this is not the best situation, we still want to help resolve the situation.

T-Shirt Shoppe
The 4-H Conference Center does have a gift shop where campers can purchase items such as 4-H pens, pencils and other inexpensive trinkets. Also there are a number of t-shirts, sweatshirts, flip flops, etc. available. Prices range from $.50 to $40.00 with the average price of a t-shirt being $12.00.

Rather than campers keeping the money in the dorms, parents are encouraged to "deposit" their child's gift shop money during registration. The money will be kept in an envelope, labeled with the camper's name and dorm number, in the T-Shirt Shoppe. During those times the shop is open the camper simply selects their items for purchase and the appropriate amount of money is taken from the envelope and a receipt placed in the envelope. At the conclusion of camp, please return to the T-Shirt Shoppe for any unspent money. The shop is usually open during camp registration and dismissal.

Mail
Campers enjoy receiving mail, even during a three day camp! There are a couple of options.

Option 1: Bunk1
Bunk1 is a one-way email system that allows you to send an e-mail to your child and we will print the e-mail and distribute to them during lunch. This service is provided by Bunk1 and detailed information on how to set up an account is attached. There is a small fee. Please note, the camper can not respond, it is one-way. Also, e-mails arriving the final day of camp are not guaranteed to reach your camper. (Bunk1 "dumps" all of the e-mails for the 4-H Conference Center each morning around 3:00 a.m., but we may not always be able to retrieve them by the 11:00 a.m. departure.) Bunk1 also serves as a place where our staff daily posts camp photos. Parents may download these photos.

Option 2: Standard Mail
For the USPS, United States Postal Service, use the following address:
Camper's Name and Camp Session (County Camp, Prime Time, Mission Possible, etc.)
Texas 4-H Conference Center
5600 FM 3021
Brownwood, TX 76801

The above address will also work for UPS or Fed EX. Again, please note packages are delivered daily, but usually not until after 2:00 p.m. each day.

If you desire your camper to write home while at camp, please prepare them with self-addressed, stamped post cards or envelopes.

CAMPER INFORMATION and HEALTH TOPICS

Release Forms
All persons (including Adult Chaperones) participating in any activities at the Texas 4-H Conference Center must complete the 4-page Release Forms. This packet contains: Camp and Enrichment Program Waiver, Indemnification, and Medical Treatment Authorization Form, Consent to Participate, and a Health Statement.

The completed forms are to be brought to the 4-H Conference Center and presented at Registration. The forms WILL NOT be returned to the camper or to anyone else. The forms are kept on file at the 4-H Conference Center. If you or anyone needs a copy (example, camper riding with someone other than the parent) please make a copy before coming to camp.

Health and Safety
The health and safety of campers is one of our number one priorities. A camp nurse is on duty twenty-four hours a day and is responsible for daily health needs of campers, including dispensing of medication. At registration on opening day of any camp, all medications including over the counter and "as needed" medications are to be given to the Camp Nurse, along with instructions. All medications **MUST BE IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER and LABELED WITH THE CHILD'S NAME**. Prescriptions must be in the original container with the child's full name, date, physician's name and complete directions written in English. Certain over-the-counter medications are available at camp and are administered by the Camp Nurse. Please mark on the Release Forms those medications that may be given to your child as symptoms warrant. You are advised to send only the amount that would be needed during their camp session, in the event the child forgets to return to the Nurse's office at the end of camp to retrieve remaining medications.

Emergencies
Parents will be notified in the event of serious camper illness, injury or emergency. If you need to contact your child in an emergency, call the 4-H Conference Center Office at (325) 784-5482 during business hours. In the evenings the phone is answered by the Health Office. If you are still unable to reach someone, please contact Darlene Locke at (325) 642-9427.

Insurance and Medical Expenses
As parent/guardian you are responsible for any and all medical costs incurred by your child while they are participating in the Texas 4-H Conference Center youth programs.

Special Accommodations
The 4-H Conference Center strives to meet every individual needs' to the best of our ability. Please indicate any special accommodation needs on the registration form. Food allergies or special food preparation, especially, should be noted so that other food sources can be prepared. If you have specific concerns in this area, please contact Dr. Darlene Locke, Director at (325) 784-5482.

Dorm assignments are by county groups. However, if your camper desires to room with someone (of the same gender) from another county, please note that on the Registration Form under Special Accommodations and we will make every effort to meet the request. We can not guarantee the request will be made, but we will try.

Dress During Camp
The 4-H Conference Center encourages parents to help us in having all youth adhere to the dress code and policies.

Items not allowed: tops with spaghetti straps, halter type tops, strapless or backless shirts, shirts that reveal the midriff, excessively loose fitting pants or jeans, short shorts or skirts, clothing advertising or referencing alcohol, drugs, violence or having sexual content.

Two-piece swimsuits are allowed, but should adequately cover all body parts.

Youth may wear Evening type dresses at The Gala during SpecTra; this may include strapless dresses or dresses with spaghetti straps. Please be conservative in your choice of evening wear.

Shoes: Campers are to wear athletic, tennis type shoes or strap type sandals to activities down at the Lakeside (canoeing, archery, riflery). Closed toe shoes are also required for Challenge Course activities. Campers may NOT wear flip-flops or other type of backless sandals while traveling on the nature trail down to the lake. Campers are advised to bring “lake shoes” that are closed toe and have a back or at least strap onto the foot (teva style) and can be worn into the lake. These shoes may become wet and/or muddy.

Campers are NOT allowed to wear flip-flops or other type of backless sandals during the evening dance and recreation activities.

Staff may instruct a youth to return to their dorm and change their clothing if any items are not within the guidelines.

Practical Jokes and Pranks
The 4-H Conference Center has a no tolerance policy on practical jokes and pranks during camp. While these may be fun, often times one or just a few youth are singled out and emotional or physical damage can occur. So, please, leave the shaving cream, water balloons, and other items for pranking at home.

Help us keep the 4-H Conference Center Camps UNPLUGGED!

Camp is designed to allow your child to enjoy the true feeling of childhood. It's a time for them to build strong friendships, create lifelong memories, learn from their peers and counselors, experience nature, and all the joys of camp!

Please help us by not allowing your camper to bring the following items (or similar items) to camp:

- cell phones
- pagers
- Mp3 players/iPods
- Video games
- Any other electronic or media devices

The items are distracting and pose the potential for being lost, broken or otherwise damaged for which the 4-H Conference Center will not be responsible. Again, to reiterate our telephone policy, phone calls to or from campers are not allowed. The calls tend to defeat a sense of independence and interrupt the camp environment. They can also cause homesickness as well as unspoken hard feelings. **Please do not send cell phones with your campers. Not only are the phones distracting, the 4-H Conference Center will not be responsible for loss or damage. Cell phones and other electronic devices listed above may be taken from campers and will be secured in the Administration Office. It is the camper's responsibility to pick up the item before leaving camp. If they fail to do so, mailing is at the owner's expense.**

Staff members are not allowed to have or use cell phones while on duty, unless given explicit permission due to location of an activity. Please help us keep camp a special place by keeping "Camp Unplugged." Remember, **you will always be contacted by a 4-H Conference Center Staff if there is the need.** We ask for your cooperation, not to keep you secluded from your child, but to encourage their personal growth and developing a sense of independence. If you do receive a call from your child, please call the Center to let staff know so that the child's issue can be addressed. We are committed to helping improve the situation.

Emergency messages will be taken at Camp, at (325) 784-5482. Phones are answered Monday - Friday during business hours (8am-5pm). If the call is after 5 pm, please ask for Extension 12 if leaving a message. **If it is an emergency or needs immediate attention, please call (325) 642-9427.**

We look forward to providing your camper with an experience of a lifetime... UNPLUGGED!

Parents Need to Know: Camper-Staff Relationship Policy

As the caretakers of your child(ren) during their time at the Texas 4-H Conference Center, we strive to protect them from harm in every way possible. We want to inform you of our policy which addresses the relationship between a 4-H Conference Center staff member and your camper(s). Please read the agreement below that all 4-H Conference Center Staff members are required to sign during their training. **Please help us protect all of our campers by reporting any violations of this policy to Dr. Darlene Locke, Director or Ms. Laci Chapman, Extension Assistant, at (325) 784-5482.**

Staff Must Sign and Agree to the Following Policy:
As a staff member at the Texas 4-H Conference Center, you will meet hundreds of youth. Although you will cherish every memory, it is imperative for the safety of both the youth and yourself that the relationship does not continue beyond your interaction here at the 4-H Conference Center. Please read the following agreement carefully and sign at the bottom of the page. Note that the terms "children," "child", "youth" and "camper" refer to any retreat or summer camp participant under the age of 18 or any other child you encounter through the Texas 4-H Youth Development Program.

I agree to:

- Not communicate with youth outside of Texas 4-H Conference Center programming. This includes telephone calls, text messages, letters, emails, blogs, instant messages, etc.
- Not give gifts or presents to youth, no matter how seemingly insignificant, which are not given to all participants in the program or dorm group.
- Neither have youth in my home nor accompany youth to their homes.
- Not take youth on outings apart from 4-H Conference Center functions.
- Not baby sit or provide care services for the youth I meet at the 4-H Conference Center.
- Not give any youth a ride in my vehicle at any time. (Unless directed by the Director or other Center personnel for emergency, medical, or other appointed reason.)
- Request specific, written permission from the Director of the 4-H Conference Center if I feel there is any reason I need to communicate with a youth outside of 4-H Conference Center programming.

I acknowledge that as an employee I am a representative of the Texas 4-H Conference Center, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, and those campers, parents and other staff members may associate me and my actions with the Conference Center and AgriLife Extension. I recognize that my actions can positively and negatively impact the Center and the 4-H Program, thus I hereby agree to be bound by the general rules as well as those governing online communications both during the period of my employment and after I cease to be employed by the 4-H Conference Center, Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

I will not send, share or post e-mail, blogs, images, or Internet content containing campers name or image. I will not send, share or post e-mails, blogs, images, or Internet content with any content that are cruel, demeaning, disrespectful or intentionally harmful to a member of the

Center community (participant, parent or staff) or that present the Center or the 4-H Program in a negative manner. I will not download, share, send or post material of an inappropriate nature, or which includes nudity, sexual content, violence, drug or alcohol use, illegal actions, or any activity which is against the Center rules. I will respect the boundary between campers and staff members particularly when it comes to my online communications.

I agree that such actions are not in line with the values of the Texas 4-H Conference Center or the Texas 4-H Youth Development Program. I agree that the harm caused by such actions may have a negative impact on my reputation and may injure the self-esteem of members of the Center community and the 4-H Program.

I understand and agree to the terms above and will follow them at all times during and after my employment with the Texas 4-H Conference Center.

*** Staff member and supervisor sign to acknowledge understanding and agreement ***

If you feel that you, another staff member, parent or participant is violating this agreement, please contact Dr. Darlene Locke, Director at (325) 784-5482.

PACKING INFORMATION

What do I bring to camp?
Please MARK EVERY ITEM with the camper's full name. Do not bring expensive items (jewelry) to camp. Pack efficiently.

Checklist of Essential Items – you may think of others, but these are the basics!

Sheets (twin) and light blanket		Beach towel for swimming	
OR sleeping bag		Sunscreen	
Pillow		Sunglasses for outdoor wear	
Bath towel and washcloth		Cap or hat for outdoor wear	
Toiletries		Socks, underwear	
Sturdy athletic type shoes		Shirts & Shorts for activities	
Shower shoes		Sleepwear	
"Lake"shoes		Swimsuit	
Prescription or other medication(s)		Camera	
Laundry bag for dirty clothes!		Money for T-shirt Shoppe	
Water bottle		Rock for Texas Star ceremony*	

* On the opening night of camp (weather permitting) all campers will gather at the Texas Star for the closing ceremony and to reflect on the day's activities. Campers will be allowed to place a rock from their hometown into Texas Star. This has been a 4-H Conference Center tradition since the early 70's when camp opened. Campers may paint their rocks or sign their names on it, or they may choose to leave it in it's natural state. The rock size should be limited to fist-size.

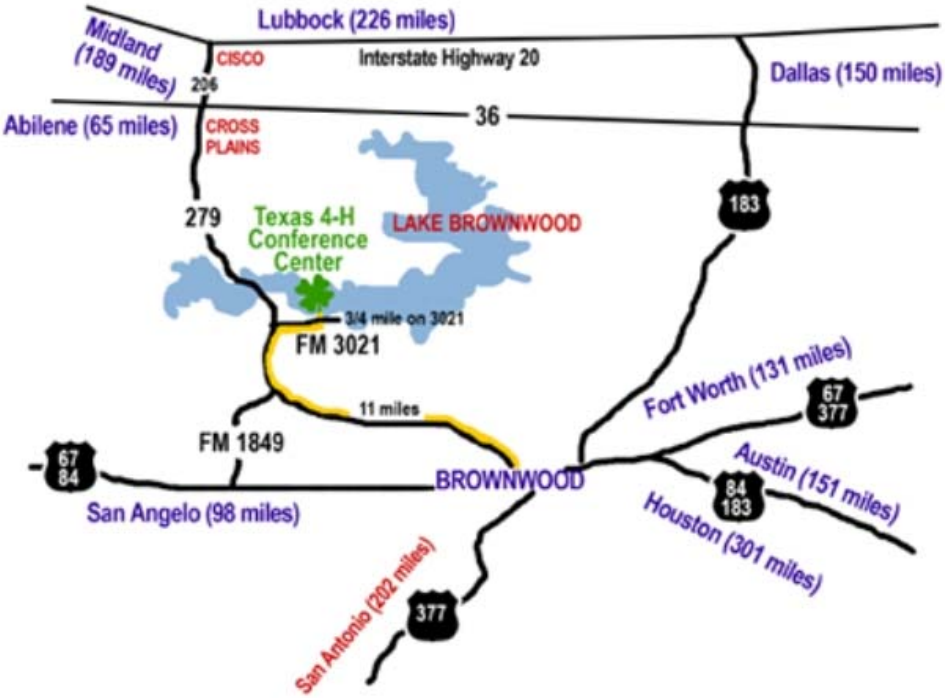
Items to leave at home!

- fireworks, guns, ammunition, knives
- lots of make-up, perfumes, etc.
- candy, snacks, food – draws ants, roaches and other rodents to the dorms
- electronic devices: cell phones, mp3 players, iPods, video games, etc.
- practical joke devices – pranking is not allowed, on any level
- illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco

Specialty camp Packing Information
If you are attending a Speciality Camp such as Shooting Sports or Mission Possible, there may be additional packing information. Please contact the Center or look on the website.

Directions to the Texas 4-H Conference Center:

(Google maps does not work! Please use this information.)



From **Brownwood** travel North on TX-279 11 miles. Turn right on FM Road 3021; then 3/4 mile on the left to the main gate of the Texas 4-H Conference Center.

From **Abilene** travel East on TX-36 to Cross Plains. Turn right onto TX-206. TX-206 becomes TX-279. Travel 21 miles. Turn left onto FM Road 3021; then 3/4 mile on the left to the main gate of the Texas 4-H Conference Center.

From **Dallas/Ft. Worth** travel East on Interstate 20. Exit TX-281 South 28 miles. Turn right onto US-377 South 60 miles. Follow directions above from **Brownwood.**

From **Austin** travel North on US-183 to Goldthwaite. Turn left onto TX-84 West 30.5 miles. Turn left onto Early Blvd/ US-183/ US-377/ US-67/ US-84. Follow directions above from **Brownwood.**

From **San Antonio** travel North on US-87 to Brady. Turn slight right onto US-283 40 miles. Turn right onto US-67/ US-84 13.8 miles. Turn left onto FM-1849 4 miles. Turn left onto TX-279 3 miles. Turn right onto FM Road 3021; then 3/4 mile on the left to the main gate of the Texas 4-H Conference Center.

From **San Angelo** travel North on US-67 to Santa Anna. Turn slight right onto US-67/US-84 13.8 miles. Turn left onto FM-1849 4 miles. Turn left onto TX-279 3 miles. Turn right onto FM Road 3021; then 3/4 mile on the left to the main gate of the Texas 4-H Center.