

Mosholu Country Day Camp



Parent Handbook

Welcome

We are excited that you have selected Mosholu Montefiore Community Center's Country Day Camp for your child. Selecting a summer program can be a very difficult decision for parents and children, but we assure you, that you have made a great choice. It is our pleasure to welcome your family to our camp community, and look forward to having you with us for a long time to come. Camp is a special place and your child will have a wonderful experience with us.

Mosholu campers will have an opportunity to participate in an array of events such as swimming, music, art, trips, archery, tennis, golf and many more. We strive to provide the best social, recreational and educational opportunities for our camping community.

We created this manual to help guide parents through a successful summer. The manual offers helpful hints and tips that answer many of the questions that parents may have about our camp policies and procedures.

Documentation

Prior to sending your child to camp, your child's medical, transportation and emergency contact information must be completely filled out and on file with us. In order for us to provide the highest quality service for your child, we must have all necessary information in our records. This is not an option; it is a New York State requirement and allows your child a safe experience at camp.

Emergency Contact

It is extremely important that the camp office receives all of your contact information. If something should occur involving your child while he/she is in our care, we will need to contact you. All of your information must be up to date. It is difficult to call or contact parents if we do not have the appropriate contact information. Please make sure that if you are not available, your emergency contact person is someone who will be available to help. Remember your child's safety and well being is our primary concern. Please do not give us the number of a person that lives far away or will be unable to pick up your child in an emergency.

Medical Information

Every child attending camp is required to have a medical form on file. The New York State Board of Health has strict regulations prohibiting children from attending camp if they do not have a medical form completely filled out. Under no circumstance are campers allowed to attend the program until they have submitted a completed medical form to our camp office. Medical forms must be signed by the parent/guardian and stamped, dated and signed by a physician. This form is good for one year from the date of the exam. Please be sure to complete both sides of the form so your child does not miss one day of the summer program.

Medication

If your child is to receive physician ordered medication, you must prepare the child to take the medication by him/herself when at camp. The camp will not store or administer any medication. Medication must be self-administered.

Asthma Pumps- We are asking parents to supply the child with an asthma pump that will stay in the child's bag at all times. We are requesting that the pump be in the camp bag to serve as a precaution just in case the child has an episode on the bus while traveling to or from the campgrounds.

Any and all medications MUST be written on the child's medical form.

Serious Illness or Accident Procedure

If your child is ill or has sustained an injury, our staff is prepared to handle it. In the case of sickness, we will escort your child to the camp nurse or EMT and call you to notify you of the circumstance. If your child is too sick to continue the camp day, we will contact you and discuss your coming to camp to pick your child up.

If your child is sick the morning before camp, please do not send your child to camp. It is extremely hot and uncomfortable and your child will feel better with rest and care at home. It is also important to understand that your child can get the other campers and staff members sick. Sometimes, it is best to take a day off, so that the children's bodies can rest and recharge, and the campers can enjoy the rest of the summer. There is nothing worse than feeling too sick to

play or swim and watching the other campers enjoy the day.

In the case of an accident, our camp nurse or EMT will evaluate the situation. If it is necessary to take your child to the hospital, we will contact you and discuss the situation. Whether it is serious or not, our staff will send home a note telling you about the situation and what we thought. If you feel that the child should be checked out by a medical professional anyway, please let us know, as we attempt to keep accurate records of all situations that occur in our care.

If the injury is serious, we will call you and talk with you through our decision making process. The closest hospital to the camp is Nyack Hospital, but in certain circumstances it might make sense to have you come and pick up the child, or meet you at another location. It is essential that we have your updated contact information so that this process can work.

Often parents treat late nights and overnights as time off. Please remember that children get sick or hurt during these events as well, and that it might be a good idea for you to remain available by phone.

Camp Lunch

All campers should bring lunch to camp each day. The lunch should be clearly labeled, with the campers name and group on it. At the campgrounds we will take the camper's lunch and refrigerate it until lunch time. If the camper is on a trip we suggest packing the lunch in a portable cooler bag, it will not be refrigerated during the trip.

SNACK

Each day, we will provide your children with a small snack and drink in the early afternoon. The snack will typically be juice and cookies. Should your child desire something different, please send it to camp. The snack can be included in the lunch bag and when the child receives the bag at lunchtime, he/she can remove the snack and place it in his/her camp bag until snack time.

Transportation

Transportation is a big concern in camp. We are interested in making sure your child is picked up and dropped off on time. We expect that the bus will be at the stop on time, however if there is an issue you can call us at (718) 882-4000 ext.312.

In order for us to have an effective transportation department, we must inform parents that being on time at the assigned stop in the morning and afternoon, are essential for the entire bus run. There are times that you might get caught up trying to get your child ready for camp in the morning and run a little late to the bus stop. Please understand that WE CANNOT hold the bus to wait for anyone. In the afternoon, if the parent is not at the bus stop when the child is supposed to be picked up, the bus counselor and the driver have been informed to continue dropping the other campers off on their designated route, and we will try to contact the parent to find out where your are. If we are unable to reach the parent/guardian the child will be brought back to the community center.

Please understand that any child picked up late will have a fee assessed. The late fee is initially \$20.00 and after 6:15 it goes up \$1 a minute. Parents who have their children picked up at a bus stop beside the Community Center will probably have to come to the center to pick up their child. We cannot have the busses wait at stops for parents. It is unsafe and extremely costly. Parents, we do not want your money. We just would appreciate if you are at the stop on time. Your child, as well as the staff, wants to go home after a long day at camp.

Helpful Tips for Transportation

- . • If you know you are going to be late, contact the camp office immediately.
- . • In the afternoon, the bus coming from camp may run late at times so be patient. If you are concerned, call the camp office.
- . • In the case of a major bus delay or problem, we will attempt to send out a mass email. Unfortunately we do not have the ability to call everybody in such a short amount of time.
- . • Sometimes parents have concerns regarding issues that may have happened at camp. Please don't speak to the bus counselor or other counselors waiting for the bus regarding those issues. Write a note addressed to the Unit Leader and give into the bus counselor who will give it to the Unit Leader. The Unit Leader will call you back and address the issue. The counselor staff may not be aware of important details.
- . • Always have somebody you know on standby to pick up your child, just in case you are late.
- . • In order to allow any child to walk home by him/herself, the parent must give the bus counselor a note. This note should be given to the counselor on the first day of camp even if you have written it on the camp application.

Processing Paper Work

As far as switching bus stops goes, we cannot make any last minute changes. In order to process the paper work properly we need at least two days notice. Changes go into effect on the following Monday. We will not switch any bus stop based on a child telling us. We must have a parent come into the camp office and fill out a change form. We are aware that things come up, however, we are unable to make any last minute switches because it can become confusing for the staff as well as the campers. We only want to make sure your child is safe.

Swimming

Our swim program has proven to be beneficial in teaching children to swim. Before children are allowed in the water they are tested and put into level appropriate swim groups. Each child receives a wristband when entering the pool area; the wristband indicates what depth the child is able to swim. These wrist bands stay at camp. Blue wristbands indicate a Beginner swimmer Orange wristbands indicate an Intermediate swimmer Red wristbands indicate an exceptionally good swimmer. Regardless of the level; we will continue to teach the camper how to improve their swimming skills.

Your child will be swimming twice a day. He or she will need two bathing suits each day. Cut-off shorts will not be allowed in the pool. We do not allow any floatation devices in the pool area as it creates a false sense of security for children who think they are safe in the water with these materials. Also, children should not be sent with any type of snorkel or mask to camp. We do, however allow children to wear goggles that cover the eyes only. The pool area is guarded by lots of lifeguards in addition to all of the counselors and supervisors who watch over your children daily. The swim program is an important part of our camp, and your child being prepared. It is an essential part in the learning and Improvement of their swimming skills.

Camper's Necessities

Why do you send your children to camp?

You send them because you want to provide a safe, fun and learning experience. Please remember that this is camp. As much as we know you want to have your child look their best with new sneakers, pants, shirts and etc., remember they are going to get dirty. So, take this into consideration when you dress your child. Be prepared for them to look like they had a lot of fun during the course of the day. Clothes will get dirty! This is the sign of a fun camp day.

You should label your child's clothing clearly with first and last names. We have a tremendous amount of lost and found and we cannot guarantee that everything that your child loses will be found and returned. However, labeling the clothing will help us. Label everything, even underwear. When you are at home, please teach and practice with your child to take off their clothing and place it in their camp bag in an organized fashion. Our counselors are available to assist your child but your child should also learn to do it on their own.

Send sunscreen! You may also want to teach your child to apply sunscreen and to ask a counselor for help with it.

It is understandable that parents would like to know their child is only a phone call away, but our policy is that there are no cell phones allowed at camp. If your child needs to contact you due to an emergency, their Unit Leader will contact you. We will not take any responsibility for lost or stolen cell phones, games, i-pods, or electrical devices. These items do not belong in camp. We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

Units

Unit Leaders are responsible for their groups. If you should have any concerns, you should direct your questions to the Unit Leaders.

The Units are divided according to the grade your child will be attending in September when they return to school. Counselors work for the Unit Leader and have been asked to direct you to their supervisors to answer your questions and concerns. The younger the campers are the more counselors we assign to supervise them.

TRIPS

For those units that travel, parents should use discretion when giving spending money to your children. They do not need to have a large amount of spending money in order to have fun. Children, who bring too much money, tend to play with it and lose it. On late nights we will send a notice home indicating how much money we recommend you send, based upon what we think your child would need for that day.

LATE NIGHTS

Late nights will occur during the summer. Our travel groups will have various dates, where children will be brought back to the center or a location in Co-op City, at predetermined times. It is important that parents are patient and assist us in keeping your children safe. We require all children to be signed out.

Non-travel groups will be involved in late night activities as well. On these days, the children will participate in extra activities at camp and a late night BBQ. Our busses will be stopping at the regular stops exactly 2 hours later than usual. Parents must be on time at the stop, or a late fee will be assessed. All campers who attend camp that day will be staying on the late night, as no busses will be leaving at regular time that day.

OVERNIGHTS

When we send children on overnights, we are in constant contact with both the supervisor and the agency. Should any problem occur we will be able to inform you immediately. After an overnight, campers will be dropped off at their designated bus stops the next day. Notices will go home a few days before this event and overnights are always scheduled in advance and should be on the season calendar.

Overnights at camp are optional and children can go home on regular busses rather than stay, but extended trip overnights are not optional. Any child who does not choose to go, must stay home as we have no alternate program.

There are cases where we need to cancel overnights due to weather issues, please understand that these decisions are out of our control.

RAINY DAY

What happens if it rains?

If you find that it is raining in the morning, this may not indicate that it will do so when we get to camp. The campgrounds are equipped with enough shelters, so that we can conduct program. Units that are on trips will have alternate plans to take them to an indoor facility for the day. Other options for us might include campers being taken to schools.

CALENDERS

Every parent should receive a calendar for the months of July and August. On the calendar you will find important information about upcoming events. Your calendar will inform you of upcoming late-nights, overnight, and special themes days for the month. Please be sure to check the calendar and be prepared. If we have a special dress up day, we would want your child to be involved!

COMMUNICATION

The Day Camp continues to provide quality service for our camp family. Parents, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to speak with the Unit Leader and Assistant Unit Leader or Group Leader. We are here to assist you, and make the summer a great experience for all of our campers.

If you would like to get in contact with someone from camp you must call the camp office at 718-882-4000 extension 312 and the messages will be forwarded to the appropriate supervisor.

Code of Conduct

Inappropriate behavior is unacceptable at camp. We try to keep the environment a special place and expect our staff, campers and parents to join with us in making it a place that is both physically and emotionally safe for everyone. Campers are expected to behave in such a way that no person in the camp feels threatened either physically or emotionally.

The following is a list of offenses that will not be tolerated:

- 1- Campers cannot behave in such a way that it causes a substantial risk to, or results in the injury of themselves, staff members or other campers. This includes, but is not limited to, walking away from the group, throwing rocks or using sticks.
- 2- Campers cannot name call, bully or threaten either physically or mentally any other camper or staff member.
- 3- Campers cannot participate in use of profane language.
- 4- Campers cannot partake in any behavior of a sexual nature that makes any member of the staff or camper feel uncomfortable.
- 5- Campers cannot be in possession of any illegal article, including weapons or drugs.
- 6- Campers cannot be in possession of alcohol, tobacco or fireworks of any kind.

- 7- Campers cannot participate in any illegal activity, not limited to, but including stealing or vandalism.
- 8- Parents of campers, as well as staff members are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that provides a physically and emotionally safe environment for our campers and staff members, so they are expected to follow this code of conduct as well.
- 9- Campers are expected to wear appropriate clothing; this is not limited to, but includes revealing clothing, graphic shirts and loose pants.
- 10- Parents and campers are expected to follow all camp rules and policies including those on the bus, on trips or on the campgrounds.
- 11- Parents are expected to understand that any issues, complaints or concerns, be addressed to supervisors and not taken up with counselors on the bus or while campers are around.

Our camp staff has been trained to work with your children. When a situation becomes consistent with your child's misbehavior you will be informed. Before we bring any situation to your attention we give your child an opportunity to improve the behavior.

First we speak with the child,
Second the child speaks with the Unit Leader,
Third the parent is informed,

At this point, the parent may be called in for a conference and potentially the child may be suspended from the program.

If the behavior persists, the child can be removed from camp.

There is also a strong emphasis on children who use profane language. Certain penalties may vary depending upon the severity of the incident that the child is involved in. There is no refund if your child is removed from camp.

Our goal is to provide your children with a safe and fun experience at camp. In order to do so, we will need parents to take an active role in our camp culture.