

Summer Day Camp Parent Information Packet

2021



NISRA

Northern Illinois
Special Recreation Association

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP EVERYDAY?

- Camp bag (please check bags daily for important information)
- Sack Lunch and beverage
- Water Bottle
- Sunscreen (spray)
- Bug spray/Insect repellent
- Change of clothes
- Diapers/Wipes (if applicable)
- Mask/Extra Mask



Please label everything! Campers should wear comfortable clothes to camp every day. Formal clothes are not recommended. Gym shoes and socks are preferred. All campers will receive a camp T-shirt. Please have your child wear camp t-shirt for special events.

Lunches should be clearly labeled with child's name. Camp sites do not have the ability to heat food and may not have access to a refrigerator. Please do not send valuables, toys or money to camp. Staff will take special care to assist campers with their belongings; however, NISRA will not be responsible for any items lost at camp.

WHAT NOT TO BRING TO CAMP

No staff, camper, parent, visitor, or anyone else coming onto camp sites may bring any alcohol, drugs, animals or weapons. Anything perceived as such will be confiscated and given to authorities or to parents or guardians. NISRA provides all sports equipment so please have your camper leave all sports equipment at home.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

If you will be bringing your child to camp, you will be asked to sign him/her in and out of camp each day. Please take the time to do this in order to ensure the safety of all campers. If your child is riding the bus, the driver will be asked to do this to verify arrival and departure.

ABSENCE POLICY

If your child will be absent or arriving late to camp, please notify the NISRA office at 815-459-0737. If you are calling before 7:30am, please leave a message on the general mailbox, after 7:30am speak with the front office staff.

LATE PICK UP POLICY

Participants must be picked up at the designated end of the program. Late pick-up creates additional costs and potential delays of staff getting to another program. If a participant has not been picked up at the scheduled program end time, the parent/guardian/group home staff will be contacted. After the ten-minute wait period, if the participant has not been picked up, emergency contacts will be called. If NISRA has no contact from a parent/guardian/group home or a responsible party from the emergency contacts, then police will be called and the participant will be taken into protective custody until a parent or guardian can be located. If an unexpected emergency arises that will delay the pick-up of a participant, please call the NISRA office and leave a detailed message in the emergency mailbox.

When a late pick up occurs:

- One (1) no-fee written reminder, per season, will be given.
- Reminders will be documented through a parent or guardian's signature on the Late Pick-Up Form.
- Five (5) minutes of time will be allotted as a "grace period" following the advertised programs times.
- After one (1) documented reminder, a \$5.00 per each cumulated five (5) minutes fee will be assessed. This bill must be paid in full prior to future registrations.

MEDICATION & PERSONAL MEDICAL CARE

If your child will need to take medication during camp hours, you must complete the Medication Permission Form, available at the NISRA office or available on the website. NISRA must receive the form at the office prior to the administration of medication at camp.

Please DO NOT send medication in camper's lunch.

ALL medications must be sent in a child proof pharmacy provided bottle with the dosage information printed on the label. Your pharmacy will usually provide you with an additional empty bottle to use for camp medication. Medication must be handed directly to a NISRA camp staff (please ask for the Site Director) or NISRA bus driver at the pick-up point and it will be locked in a secure location at camp. Please send the weeks supply of medication on each Monday. **Weekly pill box organizers will not be accepted.**

If your child requires personal medical care (ex., VNS, G-tube, Diabetes, PKU, EpiPen) or other conditions (ex., shunts) please contact the Manager of Day Camp & Outreach. For all approved personal medical care, a Personal Medical Care Training Protocol and scheduled training with appropriate staff is required before the first day of camp.

MEDICAL PROCEDURES AND EMERGENCIES

All site directors are trained in First Aid & CPR and carry a first aid kit. In the case of minor injury or illness, basic first aid will be provided and parent/guardian will be notified, via phone call or note home. In the case of a more serious emergency, staff will call 911 and parents will be notified immediately. Please provide alternate phone numbers if you cannot be reached during the day.

If a camper experiences any degree of seizures and does not have a current Seizure Questionnaire on file with NISRA, please fill out the questionnaire located at the back of the summer day camp brochure, download a form from the NISRA website or call the NISRA office to have one sent to you by mail. If the camper has an existing seizure plan that is used at school, you may attach it to the questionnaire as additional information.

COMMUNICATION AT CAMP

If you need to talk to the site director or get a message to your child's counselor, please call the NISRA office 815-459-0737 and we will get a message to the camp. Keep in mind we have many camps so the office staff will most likely ask what camp the child is attending. Morning messages are forwarded to camps by approximately 10:00am each day. Emergency messages will be forwarded as soon as possible.

Timely transportation communication is vital to NISRA's pick up and drop off schedule. Please call the NISRA office immediately if you will be late or in the case of an emergency.

We suggest that campers who are non-verbal bring a notebook to camp daily for the counselor and parents to communicate. Notes will be sent home to inform you of your child's progress and interests at camp. An introductory newsletter will be posted the first week of camp. The introductory newsletter will provide you with camp specific information, field trip information and reminders.

The NISRA website camp pages located at www.nisra.org, will inform you of camp activities or changes.

CAMP STAFF

NISRA camp staff are selected based upon their previous recreation experiences, ability to teach and adapt activities, and enthusiasm for working with children. Staff at the camps include high school and college students, paraprofessionals from special education classes and college graduates who are working in special education or related fields. Background checks are completed on all NISRA employees.

Camp staff and volunteers attend a comprehensive orientation. The orientation as well as camper specific trainings covers general information about disabilities, creating/adapting activities, behavior management, lifting and transferring participants, first aid and emergency procedures. Each staff member also receives a NISRA Summer Day Camp Policy & Procedure Manual.



TRANSPORTATION

As a reminder, refer to your Summer Day Camp brochure for Pick-up and Drop-off times and locations. Parents will not be receiving transportation letters since the information has been pre-determined.

It is NISRA's policy that children must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or authorized adult when picking up or dropping off from camp. The bus will wait at the pick-up/drop-off point for 5 minutes. If no one is present, the child will be dropped off at the NISRA office. All attempts will be made to contact family or emergency contact. If no one is at the NISRA office, the child will be dropped off at the local police department.

If your child will not be going home on the bus, we must have written permission from parent/guardians. NISRA will not release children from camp or any pick up / drop off location to someone other than a parent/guardian. Written permission must be provided to NISRA prior to the start of camp to provide ample time to get a copy to the camp staff.

If your child's bus needs have changed since registering or has additional special equipment needs, i.e. harness, wheelchair access, air conditioning, please notify the NISRA office immediately.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Although NISRA recognizes that many campers have special behavioral challenges, guidelines have been established to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all campers. NISRA campers are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior during camp. The behavior code of conduct expects summer day campers to:

1. Show respect to all campers and counselors, and take direction from counselors.
2. Refrain from using abusive language.
3. Refrain from causing bodily harm to self, other campers and counselors.

A positive approach will be used regarding discipline. NISRA will work closely with parents/guardians to develop behavior management plans. If inappropriate, disruptive or destructive behavior occurs, a prompt resolution will be sought. NISRA reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any camper whose behavior endangers the safety of him/herself or others. If your child is hospitalized for behaviors during summer day camp, please contact the Manager of Summer Day Camp before he/she returns to camp.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT & HANDLE WITH CARE

Handle with Care is a behavior management system where staff will learn strategies to keep campers and staff safe through the use of verbal de-escalation skills, self-defense and physical restraints.

All staff that use Handle with Care have completed a training course. For more information regarding Handle with Care and how NISRA implements the program, contact the NISRA Office.

CUSTODIAL ISSUES

The obligation of NISRA staff is to ensure a safe and fun environment for your child. We do not have the ability to resolve custody issues or to be mediators. NISRA is not able to interpret or make rules relating to custody agreements. If there is an order of protection, or other court document stating a child cannot be released to a parent/guardian, that information needs to be submitted to the NISRA office and reviewed by staff prior to the start of camp.

NISRA employees are legally mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect, and shall receive annual in-service training as to their responsibilities under the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

CAMP SITE DAMAGE POLICY

Families will be financially responsible for any loss/damages to the various camp locations and may be subject to the locations damage policy.

NISRA's Mission: Enriching the lives of people with disabilities through meaningful recreation experiences.