

WESTFORD PARKS & RECREATION



PARENT HANDBOOK

Summer at Destination
Exploration 2020

Westford Parks & Recreation
65 Main Street 3rd Floor
Westford, MA 01886

Phone: 978-692-5532 **Fax:** 978-392-4471

Summer at Destination Exploration 978-799-1007

Serving ages 6-13, Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. One, two, three, or four-day options, as well as a full-week option, are available.

PROCEDURES

REGISTRATION

Registration for all summer programming is available at www.westfordrec.com. Create an account (if you do not already have one) and follow the steps, adding all household members and completing all required questions and documentation. If you are having trouble accessing an old account, please give the office a call and we can help.

One, Two, Three, Four-Day or Full Week Program

- \$80 per day, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. or \$355 per week.
- Once registered, no switching of selected days.
- Sibling discount applies to full week registration only.

DEADLINES

Full Week: Sign up is due the Thursday prior to the week your child is attending.

Single Day: Sign up is due the business day before 12 p.m.

A \$25 late fee will apply to any registration received after the deadlines.

PAYMENTS: Credit card payments can be made directly through the westfordrec.com website for no additional fee. Checks may be dropped off at the Recreation Office, 65 Main Street. Our drop box is located on the side of the building adjacent to the tennis courts. Registration is NOT complete until payment is received.

**Children will not be accepted at any program without prior registration.

Due to new restrictions, our *Summer at Destination Exploration* DOES have a maximum capacity of 60 participants.

ABSENCES

The program director must be notified if your child will be absent. You may also call the Recreation Office at any time and leave a message at 978-692-5532.

SIGN-IN PROCEDURE

All children should be brought to the program by a parent/guardian or authorized individual. When you arrive at Destination Exploration (located at the upper camp) staff will direct you to the drop off check point near dining hall. Please remain in your vehicle at all times, and please wear your face covering. Once a staff member has completed a "Daily Health and Wellness Screening" your child may exit the vehicle on the driver's side and given hand sanitizer before joining their group.

SIGN-OUT PROCEDURE

Your child will not be released from the program unless a parent/guardian or authorized adult signs them out. (You may be asked to show ID.) All adults picking up your child must be authorized on your *Child Info Form*. In case of emergency, telephone authorization will be accepted after verification.

WHAT TO BRING

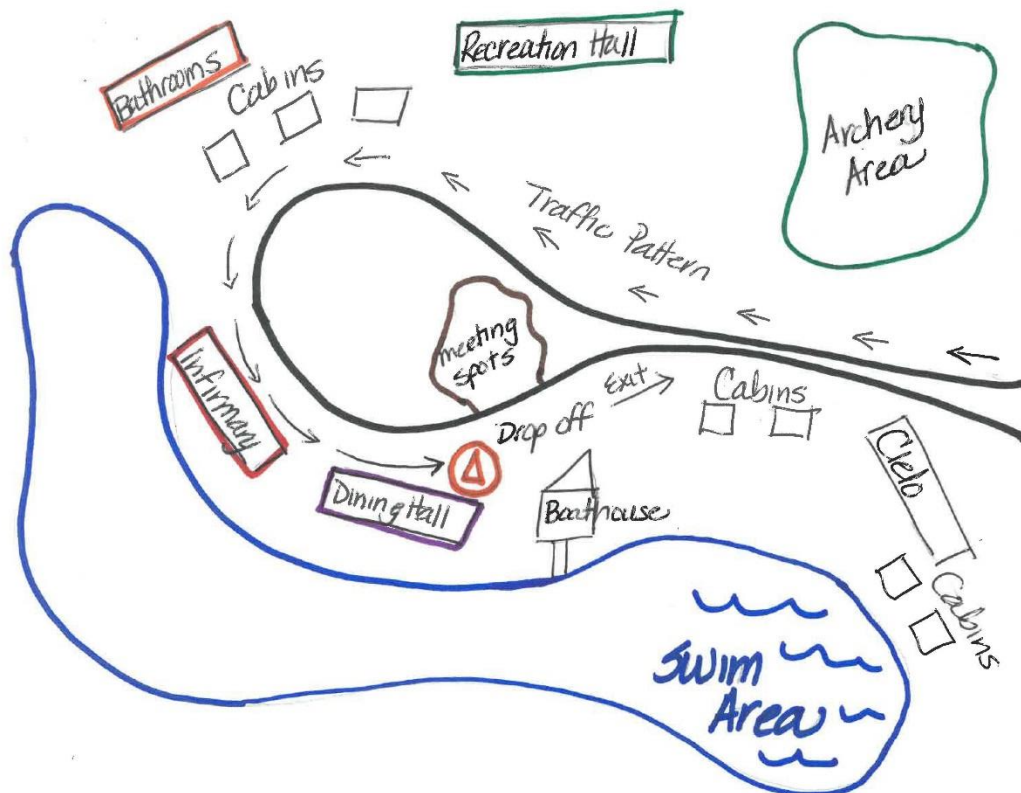
Your child should bring a face covering, snack, lunch and drink, bathing suit and 2 towels, change of clothes, sneakers and sandals/water shoes, sunscreen, insect repellent with DEET, and refillable water bottle. Pack a pair of light-colored long pants and long sleeve shirt that can be tucked in. Rain gear and a sun hat are advisable. PFD (life jacket) if swim test is not passed. Please label all belongings.

Directions within *Summer at Destination Exploration*

Site Cell#: 978-799-1007

Driving directions:

- Entrance to East Boston Camps is across from Stony Brook Acres, 1 Plain Road.
- Follow the road onto the property. Please follow the 10 MPH limit and be aware of other pedestrians/vehicles.
- Follow the road and signs for Westford Recreation program.



REQUIREMENTS FOR SWIMMING AND BOATING

Town of Westford Lifeguards will administer the assessment, in which the swimmer must obtain a level 3. This includes swimming 25 yards front crawl, 25 yards breaststroke, and treading water for a minute and a half. The lifeguards will determine the level of the individual swimmers. Swimmers must demonstrate the strokes with ease and may not touch the ground while swimming. If the child does not reach a level 3, they may still swim, but will be required to wear a life preserver that is coast guard certified (provided by the parent). Participants who choose to use the paddleboards must be a level 3 swimmer and must also wear a life preserver while out on the water. Swimmers must reach a level 4 in order to use the raft.

CHRISTIAN'S LAW

Swim Tests are required for all program participants. All tests will be scheduled on a weekly basis by program Site Directors during regular program hours. Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L.) c. 111, §127A^{1/2}, commonly referred to as "Christian's Law", states that all municipal programs must issue a swim assessment for children participating in the program.

GROUP SIZE

- Group sizes will be less than or equal to 12. This includes 2 staff per group.
- Staff will be assigned to a specific cohort/group of participants each day.
- Staff will not float between groups, unless needed to provide supervision of specialized activities such as archery, science, swimming. In these situations, staff will adhere to social distancing requirements.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Physical distancing will be encouraged for children and staff at all times.
- Social distancing will be practiced within and between groups/cohorts.
- Cohort/group use of communal spaces will be staggered to ensure social distancing.
- Whenever 6 feet of physical distancing is not possible between/among participants and staff, face coverings must be worn.
- Participant and staff belongings will be stored in a manner where they do not touch.
- Most of our program activities are scheduled to be held in an outdoor setting to promote social distancing.

HYGIENE AND HAND WASHING

- Children and staff must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer often, making sure to wash all surfaces of their hands (e.g., front and back, wrists, between fingers).
- The program will have adequate soap, water, and disposable paper towels available and readily accessible to participants and staff.
- Throughout the day, staff will reinforce that staff and children must be regularly washing their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and should wash hands whenever the following criteria are met:
 - Upon entry into and exit from program space;
 - When coming into the program space from outside activities;
 - Before and after eating;
 - After sneezing, coughing or nose blowing;
 - After using the bathroom;
- Parents are required to regularly wash all non-disposable face coverings.
- Program staff will incorporate use/disposal techniques for face coverings into their morning meetings with the children.



PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Parents will be required to provide appropriate face coverings for their child.
- The staff will encourage the wearing of face coverings throughout the day.
- Whenever 6 feet of physical distancing is not possible, face coverings must be worn.
- Parents are required to educate children on proper use and disposal of face coverings.



ALLERGIES, DIETARY RESTRICTIONS, AND SPECIAL LIMITATIONS

We ask that you please inform us, in writing, if your child has any allergies, dietary restrictions, or chronic health problems so that an individual plan may be arranged for your child. These are posted in a private area for staff notices. If your child has an EpiPen® Auto-Injector, other device used to administer epinephrine, or an albuterol inhaler, you **MUST PROVIDE ONE STRICTLY FOR OUR USE**. We will do our best to plan activities that accommodate your child's special needs; at times, you may be requested to send a special snack.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Recreation staff cannot administer medication, unless required in an emergency. Please administer medication before start of program or make the necessary arrangements with the program director to have a parent/guardian or authorized individual administer the medication during program hours. All medication must be labeled in original container, with child's name, name of the drug, dosage, and directions for its administration and storage. Topical nonprescription medications may be administered to a child only with written parent/guardian authorization.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

Emergency information must be kept up to date. Staff must be able to contact parents in the event of an accident or emergency. If any changes occur in address, telephone numbers, or medical information, please notify the **Recreation Department in writing immediately**. Recreation Staff are trained in First Aid and CPR procedures and will provide basic care. Medical emergencies are handled in the most expedient way possible. Under normal emergency circumstances, the staff person in charge will call the local fire department and ambulance to transport your child to the nearest hospital or medical facility. Every effort will be made to contact you. A staff member will stay with your child until your arrival.

TICKS AND DEET

Ticks are part of our natural world, and as such, we know that children and staff can be exposed to ticks anywhere in nature, whether it is a schoolyard or hiking trail. It is our intention to raise awareness about how to prevent tick related illnesses in general and not to cause you alarm. Deer ticks, which can be smaller than a freckle and are extremely hard to see, contain the bacterium which causes Lyme disease. Typical symptoms of Lyme include fever, headache, fatigue, and a characteristic skin rash and can lead to a serious disease. Steps to prevent Lyme disease include using insect repellent containing DEET, removing ticks promptly and wholly (body AND head), and wearing lightly colored long-sleeved shirts and pants. It is suggested that you check your child daily for ticks. Pay close attention to waistlines, groin, under arms, behind knees, ears, and around the hair line. A tick bite itself does not cause infection. In order to transmit a disease, a tick would need to be attached for at least 24 hours, which is why daily tick checks are so effective. If you find one, pull the entire tick straight out, and save it for lab testing. Putting hydrogen peroxide on the wound is recommended. For tips on proper tick removal and additional information, check the CDC's website:
http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing_a_tick.html

RULES, BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT, AND DISCIPLINE

Westford Recreation staff is trained to use positive behavior management techniques. In all situations, we communicate with the child's parent(s). If it is not possible to resolve the issue, we may determine that dismissal from the program is necessary. We believe in a positive approach to managing children's behavior using redirection and dialogue. Our goal is to assist in developing self-control and engaging children in socially acceptable behaviors. Adults will model, coach, and encourage guidance techniques of discipline that are fair, consistent, and respectful of children. This is based on the understanding of individual needs and behavior of children at varying developmental levels. Simple and understandable rules are established so expectations and limitations for children are clearly defined. Acceptable guidance techniques of our staff include:

- Focusing on and reinforcing positive behavior by using encouragement and words of praise.
- Anticipating problem-triggering situations.
- Limiting the child's participation in any action that triggers unacceptable behaviors.
- Soliciting cooperation.
- Involving children in setting of rules and in discussion on how to handle inappropriate behavior.
- Providing alternatives to undesirable behavior.
- Allowing the chance to regroup and regain control in a quiet and relaxed area.
- Removing the child from stressful situations.

Staff may remove a child from an activity, if necessary. Parents will be contacted as the need arises. If children are physically or emotionally harming themselves or others, or are a threat to the safety of others, parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

PROCEDURE FOR INAPPROPRIATE AND/OR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

1. If a child is not cooperating or following the rules, we will first try to redirect the behavior through adult intervention and guidance techniques. We will attempt to provide options and choices for a child to help bring about positive change. **If the issue is of a serious nature, you will be called for immediate pickup of your child.**
2. If a child is unable to gain control, the child will be given a warning that he/she will have to take time away from the group to gain control.
3. If a child does not respond to the warning or if the behavior requires immediate adult intervention and consequences, the child will be removed from the group. The child will indicate when he/she is ready to return to the group after talking with an adult. An incident report will be issued, and the child's parent/guardian will be required to sign the report to acknowledge receipt.

After three incident reports have been recorded, your child will be suspended and/or removed from the program.

No refunds or credits will be given. PLEASE NOTE: Depending on the circumstance, it is at the discretion of the program director and the Assistant Director of the Recreation Department to decide the length of suspension period, a termination decision, and/or if a child needs to be picked up immediately.

POLICIES

AGE REQUIREMENTS

Destination Exploration is designed for ages 6-13. These requirements are set up out of concern for your child's safety and well-being and will be STRICTLY ENFORCED. Violators will be removed from program with NO reimbursement of fees. PROOF OF AGE MAY BE REQUIRED IF DEEMED NECESSARY.

RECEIPTS, FLEXIBLE SPENDING AND COMPANY REIMBURSEMENT FORMS

Receipts may take up to two weeks to generate and process. Please plan accordingly. If you require a *Flexible Spending or Company Reimbursement Form* signature, please bring the documentation directly to the Parks & Recreation Department for signature.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

We do not discriminate by any means protected by law, including race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability. We will provide reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities. However, we may restrict admission of children if we would need to hire another staff member specifically for the purpose of caring for your child.

REFUND POLICY

Due to staffing requirements, requests for refunds or transfers will be decided on an individual basis, once reviewed by the Assistant Director. Refunds will be provided for sickness/injury when documented by a healthcare professional.

ILLNESS POLICY

Please refer to the "Guidelines for Keeping Your Child Home" form located on the Westford Recreation website, under the Summer at Destination Exploration page.

LATE PICKUP POLICY

If your child is not picked up from the program by 3:40pm, or by the end of the pickup line, a call will be made to a parent/guardian. After 3:45pm late fees will apply. After three occurrences, you will be asked to schedule a meeting with the Director to discuss continued enrollment. If parent/guardian cannot be reached, a call will be made to the "Emergency Contacts" on your child's form. The person contacted will be asked to pick up your child. If we are unable to contact anyone after 4pm, the staff member in charge will call the Police Department and a report of action will be placed in the child's file. It is at the staff's discretion to remain at the program site or drop your child off at the Police Department. PLEASE NOTE: The Recreation Department is compassionate to parents' needs and understand that most parents are "working parents" and may, from time to time, miss their train, get stuck in traffic, etc. However, we also feel that if you cannot be on time to pick up your child, other arrangements should be made by you. Please keep program phone numbers handy and call if you will be late.

PARENT BEHAVIOR POLICY

Westford Recreation expects that all adults in contact with the staff, program, families, children, and administrators always act respectfully and appropriately. Behavior, which is abusive, disruptive, or uncooperative will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behavior includes parents/guardians or designees arriving on the premises under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

In the event of inappropriate conduct, we will follow these procedures:

- The individual involved will be asked to attend a meeting with the Director, in a timely manner to address the immediate concerns.
- Documentation of the inappropriate conduct and the subsequent meeting will be placed on file.
- When warranted, considerations to suspend, terminate, or decline re-enrollment of the family in the program.
- Families will be informed, in writing, of the decisions made by Westford Recreation.

If we feel your child's safety is being compromised in any way, we will help seek alternative transportation. We may also call the appropriate authorities, if necessary. This decision will be made to ensure the safety and well-being of program children, families, staff, and administrators.

MANDATED REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

All staff members are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. As such, we are required by law to report any suspected incidents of possible child abuse and neglect. Children exhibiting suspicious bruises, abrasions, burns, or other physical marks will be reported to the Department of Social Services. In addition, we are required to report to the appropriate authorities any suspicion of any action or situation which may endanger the life of a child in our care, including alcohol intoxication or drug influence. Children will not be released to parents/guardians or designees who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Police will be called immediately.

COURT ORDERS, CUSTODY AGREEMENTS, AND RESTRAINING ORDERS

Occasionally, programs are put into a difficult position by parents/guardians who are involved in a custody dispute. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify the Recreation Department in these types of situations. Difficulties of this type must be discussed with the directors so that we can clarify our procedures and limitations. The parent/guardian **MUST** bring a legible photocopy of the court order in its entirety. Legally, without said documentation, we **MUST** release the child to any parent/guardian that is picking up. In the absence of a court order, the program cannot deny a parent/guardian access to his or her child. We cannot take word of mouth or written notes from parents/guardians stating any of the above.

Even with a court order, our ability to deny access is limited to promptly notifying the custodial parent/guardian and the proper police authority should unsanctioned contact be attempted or occur at the program. Staff members will be instructed not to place themselves in jeopardy to mediate a family dispute or to attempt to enforce a court order. If an unsanctioned parent/guardian chooses to leave the program with the child with a court order in force, the custodial parent/guardian will be required to sign a waiver acknowledging the program's inability to physically obstruct a hostile effort to take the child from the program.

BULLYING

Refer to Westford Public Schools Bullying Policy and Massachusetts General Laws regarding bullying. Bullying is most commonly defined as an individual being exposed repeatedly over time, to intentional injury or discomfort inflicted by one or more other individuals. Bullying will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion for students and terminations for employees. All allegations of bullying will be promptly and reasonably investigated.

HARASSMENT

Refer to Westford Public Schools Harassment Policy and Massachusetts General Laws regarding harassment. All contact and communication will be free from all forms of harassment due to race, gender, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, and physical or emotional challenges.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE BAN

We ask that all participants leave their personal electronic devices (e.g. cell phone, iPod, tablet, etc.) at home. These expensive items are often damaged or lost and our staff cannot ensure the safety of such equipment. If you wish to send program-specific electronics, please discuss it with the program director. Westford Parks & Recreation will assume no liability for these devices.