



**JEWISH COUNCIL FOR YOUTH SERVICES**

# North Suburban Day Camp Parent Handbook



Dear JCYS North Suburban Day Camp Parents,

Welcome to Summer of 2025. This handbook will be a guide to prepare you and your child for a summer to remember. We have recently reviewed, edited and updated the information so please read it carefully.

In this handbook you will find answers to frequently asked questions, a basic sample of daily activities, and the most effective ways to communicate with the camp administrative team. Open and constant communication with our camp families is something we strive for here at JCYS North.

The guidebook, along with weekly emails and the website, should keep you up to date on your child's daily activities; but, as always, never hesitate to call the office if you ever need anything.

Yours in Camping,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Graham Little', is positioned below the text 'Yours in Camping,'.

Graham Little

Director—JCYS North Suburban Day Camp



**How to Reach Us**

*Camp Director*

Graham Little .....847.279.0900 x 123

glittle@jcys.org

*Registration/Payments*

Lane Hussey .....312.726.8891 x 112

lhussey@jcys.org

*Camp address*

JCYS North Suburban Day Camp

1700 Weiland Rd

Buffalo Grove, Illinois 60089



## Program Overview

At North Suburban Day Camp our campers establish roots and develop skills to last a lifetime. All of this takes place in the framework of a wholesome, positive environment.

## Mission, Goals, and Objectives

**JCYS Mission:** Guided by Jewish values and culture, Jewish Council for Youth Services provides educational and recreational programs for Chicagoland's children and through board service, develops the next generation of Jewish civic leaders.

**Purpose:** To provide programs that cultivate experiences that intentionally develop children's values, curiosity, and respect for the world around them.

*Goal 1: To provide a safe and nurturing environment JCYS will:*

- a. Review all policies and procedures on an annual basis
- b. Hire and train only the highest quality staff
- c. Treat all campers fairly and respectfully
- d. Provide activities which utilize the unique natural setting of its camp and promote stewardship

*Goal 2: To stimulate curiosity and learning in camp's unique environment JCYS will:*

- a. Provide diverse activities that facilitate learning in any environment
- b. Provide activities which utilize the unique setting of camp and foster an understanding of sustainability.
- c. Emphasize an awareness of nature, respecting it as one would a friend.

*Goal 3: To instill the values of JCYS Day Camps. The values are:*

- a. Integrity
- b. Empathy
- c. Respect
- d. Stewardship
- e. Equality
- f. Tikkun Olam

**North Suburban Day Camp instills these values in its participants by:**

- Believing that people are more important than possessions
  - Emphasizing self-discovery and interpersonal relationships
  - Believing that trying is more important than winning
  - Promoting stewardship which cultivates appreciation of the natural environment
  - Adhering to, and promoting, the principles of Tikkun Olam.
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- ◇ **North Suburban Day Camp demonstrates a commitment to people over possessions by:**
    - ◆ Providing scholarship for families in need
    - ◆ Investing in the hiring, training, and development of qualified staff
    - ◆ Managing behaviors in a caring manner that engages both the camp and the camper family
  - ◇ **North Suburban Day Camp emphasizes self discovery and interpersonal relationships by:**
    - ◆ Implementing it's PLAY FAIR Philosophy for campers and staff
    - ◆ Providing weekly time for reflection and sharing during Shabbat
    - ◆ Providing campers with choices for programming that engages individual interests.
  - ◇ **North Suburban Day Camp demonstrates a belief that trying is more important than doing by:**
    - ◆ Providing competitive activities that require the cooperation of the group versus showcasing individual skills
    - ◆ Teaching the importance of winning and losing with grace
    - ◆ Encouraging campers to challenge themselves and take safe and meaningful risks
  - ◇ **North Suburban Day Camp promotes stewardship which cultivates an appreciation of the natural environment by:**
    - ◆ Providing activities that focus on learning about the natural world and our place in it
    - ◆ Encouraging daily clean up of litter around camp grounds
    - ◆ Creating a camp schedule that emphasizes Outdoor Living Skills as well as environmental education
  - ◇ **North Suburban Day Camp promotes the principles of Tikkun Olam by:**
    - ◆ Providing opportunities for service learning
    - ◆ Providing time for group discussion for conflict resolution
    - ◆ Teaching the importance of environmental stewardship
    - ◆ Celebrating good deeds

## What Unit is My Child In?

### *Junior Village*

1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

### *Senior Village*

Trailblazers .....4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

## Before Camp Begins

Please make sure we have all your forms before camp begins. They provide our staff information that allows us to best meet your child's needs.

## First Day Preparations

- **Label** everything with your child's name.
- Be sure your child is ready for the bus on time.
- Pack a backpack or camp bag with:
  - ◇ WATER BOTTLE!
  - ◇ Lunch
  - ◇ Towel & bathing suit
  - ◇ Sunscreen
  - ◇ Bug spray
  - ◇ Dependent on weather, a light jacket or sweatshirt
- Dress your child in comfortable clothing that can get dirty.
- Junior Village campers may wear their bathing suits to camp on Monday, Tuesdays and Thursdays (underneath their clothing). This makes it easy for them to be ready to swim right away.
- Please do not send your child with any valuable personal items. JCYS NORTH is a screen-free environment and electronics with screens are prohibited. (See Page 13 for additional information on cell phones)
- Water stations will be available at camp and we encourage campers to stay hydrated throughout the day. If your child does not bring a water bottle, we will give them one. Every water bottle given after the first occurrence will incur a \$2 fee. PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND A WATER BOTTLE EVERY DAY!

## Medications at Camp

If your child is going to require medication at camp, please follow these guidelines. Medications are dispensed by our administrative staff and are kept in locked storage

- For the safety of all campers, no camper will be allowed to keep medication in their possession. Exceptions made for inhalers/epi-pens, all medications.
- A **Medication Form** signed by the parent and the doctor must be on file at camp. Verbal permission from parents is not sufficient.
- Give the medication in the original packaging and Medication Form to the director at check-in
- Call to alert the camp administrative staff that the medication is coming.

## **Payment**

Payments are due on June 1 (Sessions 1-4), and July 1 (Sessions 5-9) with the completion of a Tuition Express automatic payment form. If automatic payments are not set up then 50% of your camp fees will be due April 1st with the remainder due May 1st. Deposits will be applied to your balances. **Late Payments may result in being dropped from a session.** Please review our detailed financial policies on our website.

## **Federal Child Care ID**

The federal tax ID number for JCYS is **36-2193616**.

## **Before Camp Care**

We offer Before Camp Care at the JCYS Northwest Family Center in Buffalo Grove. You may drop your child at the Northwest Center between 7:30-9:00 AM. Breakfast is NOT provided. Before Camp Care is FREE but you must be registered so we can properly account for all campers.

## **After Camp Care**

After Camp-Care is offered at the Northwest Family Center. During After Camp Care your child will be able to continue to enjoy camp activities like Sports, GaGa, and Arts and Crafts. After Camp Care runs 3:00-5:30 p.m. After Camp Care is FREE but you must be registered so we can properly account for all campers. Snack is served after 4:45.

## **Inclement Weather**

Day Camp operates rain or shine. We have indoor programs designed to keep your camper engaged in the case of inclement weather.

In the case of severe weather we will follow our emergency weather action plan and escort all campers to the appropriate locations. These locations are all inside the Northwest Family Center unless we are on a field trip. We will remain in the building until the National Weather Service has indicated that the danger has passed. Regular programming will resume at the discretion of the camp leadership. Emergency locations for field trips are determined prior to attending the venue.

## **Camper Absences**

If your camper is going to be absent from camp please call the camp office @ **847.279.0900**. If no one is available please leave a message.

## **Dropping off and Picking Up Your Child from Camp**

JCYS NORTH operates a drive thru drop off and pick up. Drop off begins at 8:30 and pick up begins at 2:50. When pulling into camp follow the parking lot around past the front of the building and arrive at the back of the building with your passenger side door facing the fence. We will have traffic cones out to initially help direct traffic. A staff member will greet you at your car and direct your camper to their group. Pick up will work in a similar fashion. All campers **MUST** be signed in and out.

If you will be picking up your child from camp early, please let us know ahead of time. This way we can have them ready and waiting for you when you arrive. We suggest you use email or call the office. When you arrive at Camp, park in the visitor parking and then come into the lobby. Your child will be waiting for you or will arrive shortly. You must sign your child out. This procedure helps to ensure camper safety.

## **Late Pick-Up Policy/Fee**

It is important that parents understand the need for punctuality regarding picking up children. Late pick-ups cause anxiety in children as well as significant inconvenience and cost to JCYS and its staff. Accordingly, late pick-ups will incur the following fees:

- **1st instance: a friendly reminder**
- **2nd instance: \$15 fee for up to 15 minutes, and \$10 for each additional quarter hour**
- **3rd and subsequent instances: \$25 fee for up to 15 minutes, and \$15 for each additional quarter hour**

The parent/guardian should notify the JCYS Family Center once they know they will be late for pick-up. This will not excuse the Late Pick-Up Policy/Fees. Late fees will not be assessed when lateness is due to severe weather, train derailment, accidents, etc.

The JCYS Family Center leadership team may, at their discretion, ask a family to leave the program if late pick-up is chronic (e.g., more than five times over the course of the year).

Please note: If the parent/guardian or emergency contacts cannot be reached after 60 minutes, JCYS staff is required by our DCFS licensing standards to contact the proper authorities.

## **Camp Activities**

### **Swim Program**

Campers at JCYS NORTH will swim multiple times per week at The Family Aquatic Center in Wheeling. Children will be transported via chartered school bus. Campers will be grouped according to swim ability and those campers who do not pass the swim test must stay with their group in the designated areas while supervised by staff. Swim tests are administered by park district staff and not JCYS.

### **Snacks**

During before and after camp care we will serve a snack. Snacks are usually icy pops, granola bars or other light and healthy snack foods. Breakfast is not served during early care. Early Care snacks are not available after 8:15.

### **Explorer Focus/ Hobbies**

This is your child's opportunity to sign up for an activity they enjoy doing or want to learn more about. Focus is offered to Explorers only. Camper's Choice is for Senior Village campers. These programs are not offered to Pioneers. Possible choices include cooking, arts and crafts, sports and more. Camper's Choice/Focus allows children to make a decision which influences their weekly schedule. This helps teach good decision-making and independence. New choices will be offered every two weeks.



## **Your Camper's Health**

If your child contracts a contagious illness or condition (for example; COVID-19, strep throat, chicken pox, ringworm or lice) during the season you are required to inform us so that we can protect the overall health of our camp community. Your family will have anonymity.

### **Health Services**

Administrative staff certified in First Aid and CPR will attend to minor scratches, cuts and bruises. In the case of minor illness, we will make your child comfortable and call you to arrange pick-up at the camp. If emergency care is needed, campers will be taken to Condell Hospital in Libertyville via ambulance unless we are away from camp. In this case we will utilize the nearest facility if an emergency arises. You will be notified any time your child visits the Health Center. Camp does not provide transportation to the hospital in personal or agency vehicles.

### **The Sun**

It is a big change for your child to go from being inside a school to being outdoors all day. While we are diligent about having campers reapply sunscreen, sunburn can still occur. You can help us in sunburn protection by making sure your child has sunscreen on before they arrive at camp and by discussing the importance of sunscreen usage with them. As well as showing proper application.

We also encourage our campers to:

- Wear a hat!
- Wear protective clothing (light colored, loose)
- Wear waterproof sunscreen, minimum SPF 15, and apply 30- 60 minutes before exposure.
- (Remember earlobes, tops of feet and neck. Use sunscreen even in hazy, cloudy weather.)
- Reapply sunscreen regularly.
- Stay hydrated – drink a lot of water.

### **Mosquitoes**

Please discuss the importance of reapplying bug spray with your camper as well as assuring they have their own bug spray to use at camp. JCYS does not provide bug spray.

### **Custody**

In the case of divorce or separation, we must provide equal access to both natural parents, custodial and non-custodial, unless there is a legally binding document that specifically removes a parent's rights. A legally binding document is a certified court order or other legal paper that prohibits the parent's access to the child. A certified court order is also required if restrictions were placed on when and where a parent might contact, visit or pick up a child. A handwritten note, a telephone call or comments on the registration form are not legally acceptable. We must have a copy of certified court orders noting the restrictions. This information is confidential and is shared on a limited basis with those camp staff responsible for your child's welfare.

### **Communication**

You will receive an email or call from your camper's unit head prior to the summer. Should you need to ask a question, please feel free to email him or her or call the office. You will also receive weekly communication from the camp administrative staff. It is imperative that you read each email from the camp as there is important information about upcoming trips, schedules and special events/theme days.

## **Camper/Staff Communication**

We recognize that campers and staff will develop close, trusting relationships during the summer. These relationships are healthy, wholesome, and beneficial to campers and staff. We also recognize that it is natural for campers to want to keep in touch with their favorite counselors after camp.

As a camp, we do not encourage or sanction the exchange of contact information between campers and staff, nor do we take responsibility for what may occur as the result of such contact.

Therefore, it is our policy to forbid the exchange of contact information of any kind between campers and staff, whether paid or volunteer. This includes, but is not limited to, phone numbers, emails, addresses, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or other social media.

If a parent or legal guardian wishes their child to exchange such information with a camp staff member, the parent or legal guardian assumes responsibility for whatever may occur as a result.

## **Bringing Your Child to Camp**

If you will be dropping off your child at camp late, please call the main office. Park in the main lot and enter the lobby. You will be required to show picture ID to gain access to the lobby. The office staff will contact a member of the administrative team to come pick up your child. You must sign in your camper and then leave your child with the supervisor in charge.

## **Cell Phones/Mobile Devices at Camp**

JCYS NORTH is a screen free environment. We understand that allowing your child to have a cell phone/mobile device in case of an emergency is all too relevant in light of current events. In order to be sensitive to this we have enacted the following interpretation of our screen free policy. Parents who choose to send their child to camp with a mobile device should be aware of the following guidelines. We encourage you to review these guidelines with your camper.

- Cell Phones and mobiles devices must remain in your child's backpack at all times.
- At no time during the camp day are campers allowed to be using their cell phones/mobile devices.
- Campers who are found to be using their cell phones/mobile devices while at camp will have them confiscated. Devices will be returned directly to parents when the camper is picked up.
- Multiple violations of this policy may result in additional consequences.
- Campers are not allowed to take pictures of other children or to post any photos of other children on any social media pages or websites.
- Inappropriate usage of cell phones/mobile devices, including accessing/sharing age-restricted content, may result in dismissal from the camp program.
- JCYS NORTH is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen phones/devices.

## **Behavior Expectations While on the Bus**

Keeping your children safe is our number one priority. In order to ensure a safe ride, we must be firm about behavior during transportation. If a camper is misbehaving on the bus (i.e. foul language, inappropriate behavior, disturbing fellow campers, and/or not following bus rules) the following steps will be taken:

1. A verbal warning
2. A note and/or phone call to the parents
3. Suspension from camp the following day
4. Expelled from camp for the remainder of the session/summer

## **Behavior Expectations and Consequences**

At JCYS NORTH, staff and children interact as a team to promote the development of self-esteem, creativity and fun. Because of the outdoor setting and types of activities offered, children are expected to behave in a manner that does not:

- decrease the enjoyment of the other children
- cause harm to themselves, other children or staff.
- Cause destruction, or loss, of JCYS property

Behavior that is not tolerated in the groups includes:

- swearing
- fighting
- hitting, kicking or otherwise hurting children and/or staff
- being disrespectful to other children or to the program staff
- destruction /theft of JCYS equipment or personal property
- possession of knives or weapons of any kind will result in immediate suspension from the program.

Consequences that are utilized are:

- warnings with redirection
- a counseling session with a counselor and/or unit leader
- a counseling session with the Camp Director
- phone call home by and/or meeting with Camp Director
- probation, suspension and/or termination from the program, depending on the extent of the situation.

Unit leaders are encouraged to discuss behavior issues with parents early on so we can work to keep severe consequences to a minimum.

## **PLAY FAIR**

JCYS NORTH subscribes to a PLAY FAIR philosophy for all campers and staff. This philosophy is outlined in detail below. Each week staff will review this philosophy on the first day as well as use it for reflection on Fridays.

**Participate to the best of your ability**

**Leave your hands to yourself**

**Accept other's differences**

**You are responsible for your own actions**

**Follow all the rules**

**Ask for help if you need it**

**Insist on being treated equally**

**Respect yourself, others, staff, property, and the environment**

### Participate to the best of your ability

- Staff spend many hours preparing activities that are enjoyable for all campers, please try every activity you encounter. Day camp is designed to be an active experience, not a time to sit around.

### Leave your hands to yourself

- Physical aggression is not tolerated at JCYS North Suburban Day Camp. Do not poke, tickle, squeeze, push, punch, slap, or grab ANY camper or staff member.
- Fighting, even play-fighting, will not be tolerated. All parties involved will be disciplined.

### Accept other's differences

- Everyone at day camp is unique, that is what makes it such a great place.
- Do not put others down because of the way they look, talk, or act.

### You are responsible for your own actions

- You have ultimate control over whether or not you decide to participate in something that will later involve you being disciplined.
- Think before you succumb to peer pressure
- If someone is forcing you to participate in an activity that will result in you being disciplined you have a responsibility to approach a counselor and ask for help.

### Follow all the rules

- Rules at camp are in place to keep everyone safe and to ensure camps is enjoyed by all.
- There will be consequences for not following the rules, they include:
  - ◊ Time-out/ Loss of privilege
  - ◊ Behavioral note sent home
  - ◊ Meeting with parent(s)
  - ◊ Suspension
  - ◊ Dismissal

### Ask for help if you need it

- It is acceptable to ask for assistance if you are having difficulty with an activity at camp
- If another camper is calling you names, threatening to harm you, physically harming you, stealing from you, or forcing you into a situation you are uncomfortable with you must tell a staff member so they can get you the help you need. If you don't bring a problem to the attention of camp staff it is more difficult to solve the problem.
- If you feel your friend is being bullied you have a responsibility to tell the camp staff

### Insist on being treated equally

- All campers deserve respect from camp staff.
- You have the right to be praised and disciplined in the same manner as everyone else
- You deserve to be listened to when you have questions and concerns

### Respect yourself, others, staff, property, and the environment

- Don't put yourself down, it just makes others think it's okay to do the same
- Don't put others down, we are all unique and we all deserve to be treated fairly and with respect.
- Camp staff are here to help you be safe and have an enjoyable summer. They are giving their time to you, treat them with the same respect you would a teacher, principal, or parent.
- The natural environment, as well as camp equipment, supplies, and buildings, are here for everyone's enjoyment, when you intentionally misuse, abuse, or deface them everyone suffers.