

Safari Camp

2024 Parents Information Packet



What kind of FUN are campers in for?

- ❖ New Friends
- ❖ Sports & Games
- ❖ Arts & Crafts
- ❖ Swimming
- ❖ Weekly Field Trips

Mission Statement

It is the intent and purpose of the Biddeford Recreation Department to provide supplemental educational, recreational, cultural, and social opportunities for members of the community.

Updated March 2024

Safari Camp

The summer camp registration form and inclusion form must be fully completed, signed and either submitted to the Rec.

Office or scanned/ emailed to summercamp@biddefordmaine.org by

Monday, June 3.

Any back balances and remaining camp balance MUST BE PAID IN FULL before camp begins or a payment plan must be initiated that will completely pay for camp by August 16.

Safari Cell Phone: 207-298-5091 (Active starting June 17).

Email: summercamp@biddefordmaine.org

Thank you!!

Safari Camp Goals

Goal 1: Have fun!

Objective: Camp is meant to be fun! Participants are provided with a variety of different camp activities and experiences, each of which is designed to be enjoyed by all.

Outcome: Participants enjoy the camp experience each day and look forward to returning the next day.

GOAL 2: Make new friends.

Objective: Participants are provided opportunities to develop new friendships by participating in and experiencing camp activities with others.

Outcome: Participants develop new friendships and broadens the scope of existing friendships.

GOAL 3: Introduce new experiences.

Objective: Participants will be exposed to a variety of new activities and experiences during both on campus activities and field trips.

Outcome: Tries new activities. Learns new skills. Takes healthy risks.

GOAL 4: Expose participants to local, natural, outdoor environments.

Objective: By operating field trips to outdoor locations within our local region, campers gain an appreciation for the outdoors and recreation activities.

Outcome: Participant is comfortable participating in a variety of outdoor activities and understands how to do so safely.

GOAL 5: Develop well-adjusted and confident individuals, with an emphasis on respect, kindness, and character.

Objective: Participants are provided daily opportunities to learn the significance of establishing and maintaining respect, empathy, and character.

Outcome: Learns and utilizes tools to live in community.

Camper–Parent Agreement

As a condition of enrollment in our program, parents, guardians and caregivers are required to review the following behavioral expectations with their child. By registering for camp, both the parent and the camper agree to abide by the behavioral expectations listed below. **Please sit and discuss these expectations with your child before camp begins.**

- I will treat everyone, both campers and staff, with respect and consideration.
- I understand that there will be no fighting, teasing, foul language or abusive behavior.
- I will obey all of the camp rules and follow all reasonable instructions provided by camp staff. I will stay supervised at all times. I understand that sneaking/running away from staff members and/or identified boundaries is very unsafe and may result in immediate expulsion.
- I understand that to be a camp friend I will not deliberately or maliciously exclude other campers or form exclusive groups (cliques).
- I understand that Cell phones or other similar devices are not permitted at camp. I understand that any electronic device that can: send or receive a phone call or text messages, play a DVD, access the Internet or send or receive e-mail is not permitted at camp.
- I understand that dangerous items are not permitted at camp. No weapons, drugs, alcohol, vape pens, cigarettes, matches, fireworks or other contraband may be brought into camp or used while at camp.
- I know I am responsible for my own actions. If I make a mess, I will clean it up, if I break something, I will do my best to fix it.
- I will be responsible for my own possessions. I know that if my clothing or any possessions are lost, damaged or stolen, camp is not responsible. I will not bring expensive clothing, cameras, jewelry and other valuable items to camp.
- I understand that camp does not operate a “finders–keepers, losers–weepers” policy. If I find something that does not belong to me, I will turn it in to my counselor.
- I will inform my counselor or camp director if I am unhappy or if someone in camp is making my summer less than perfect. I understand that their job is to help me.
- I understand the sole purpose of the counselors is to ensure my safety and happiness and I should expect the same respect, understanding and attention that I will show to them.

Safari Summer Camp Rules

Discipline Policy

Behavior issues which may warrant progressive disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

Endangering another person's well-being,
Swearing or verbal abuse to staff or campers,
Inability to follow reasonable staff directions,
Stealing or destruction of property,
Disrespecting staff or campers,
Inappropriate behavior on the bus, at the beach or on field trips,
Breaking any of the general program rules.

Behaviors

1. Children must remain under the supervision of a counselor at all times.
2. Campers must always remain with their designated group.
3. Children are not allowed to leave the facility or activity area without permission at any time during the program.
4. All behavior should be appropriate or disciplinary action will be taken. Swearing or aggressive behavior will not be tolerated. Respect should be given to each other, counselors, adults, patrons on the beach, in the park and on field trips. **WE HAVE A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR ANY PHYSICAL VIOLENCE.**

Consequences

1st offense—A verbal warning will be given to the parent or guardian regarding the problem/incident at the time of pick-up.

2nd offense—A written notice from the director will be given to the parent or guardian regarding the problem/incident at the time of pick-up.

3rd offense-- Immediate suspension from camp. Parent or guardian is notified by the director and parents must remove child from camp. Camper may not return to camp until a meeting with camp staff and their parent or guardian has taken place to discuss their behavior and reentry to the program. **No pro-rated refund will be provided for days missed due to suspension.**

4th offense--Suspension for the remainder of camp. **No refunds will be given.**

***Note:** Director reserves the right to advance the consequences depending on the severity of the action or behavior. Especially those incidents that involve the inability to stay with one's group or may cause physical harm.

Riding on the Bus

Campers and staff will be asked to observe the following rules while being transported to field trip locations:

1. No standing or moving while bus is in motion.
2. Seatbelts must be worn when provided and can only be unlatched once a vehicle comes to a complete stop.
3. Exits must not be blocked.
4. No food is to be consumed on the bus.
5. Behavior and conversations should be polite and respectful. Keep your hands/feet to yourself and do not yell or scream.
6. Do not toss or throw items.
7. Campers that are experiencing illness should express their discomfort to their counselor immediately.

Swimming

1. Campers must remain under the supervision of their counselors. Camp counselors will be in or around the water's edge at all times. In addition, lifeguards will be on duty at all times during swimming activities.
2. Running, throwing sand or rocks or horseplay is not allowed.
3. Water shoes and sand toys may be brought to the beach but are your child's responsibility. Please label all toys and clothing.

Sick Policy

If a child is exhibiting symptoms of a potentially contagious condition, or is feeling sick and cannot participate in camp activities, the following steps are to take place:

1. Parent or guardian will be notified and MUST MAKE immediate arrangements for the child to be picked up from camp (regardless of location).

2. Child may return when they can safely and appropriately participate in camp activities.

Lice Policy

Please note that our lice policy is different to the lice policy employed by Biddeford schools. **Campers with lice, eggs, or nits may not attend camp.**

If a child is found to have lice at camp, the following steps are to take place:

1. Parent or guardian will be notified and must arrange for the child to be picked up from camp as soon as possible.

2. Child may return when a note from the child's doctor or nurse clears the camper. A clearance or receipt from a professional hair lice removal company will also be accepted.

3. Camp families will be notified of the presence of lice at camp the day we are informed of their prior presence or the day lice are found.

Parent Notifications

Parent notifications may be made in writing via text blasts, email blasts, flyers and/or signage at the sign in area/ front desk. Notifications may also be made directly in person by site staff or via phone calls. Open communication is very important to the success of your child's experience. Therefore, it is important that your Biddeford Recreation account is up to date with your current contact information and it matches what is on your registration form. **We recommend you check your account details during the online registration process to ensure all information is correct.**

Sunscreen

We do our best to prevent sunburns; however, there may be times when campers are sunburned. Please help us prevent sunburns by putting sunscreen on your child before camp each day and remind your child that the counselors will help them to re-apply sunscreen throughout the day. Also, please make sure you send plenty of sunscreen with your child, along with a hat and shirt

that can get wet. If the sunrays are strong, your child will wear these items in the water.

Camp Shirts

On field trip days for Safari, your camper needs their camp shirt for safety purposes. If your child comes to camp without their shirt, you will be asked to go home and get it or pay the \$12.00 for a new one or your child will not be able to attend camp that day.

Early Pick-Up Notice

You must notify the Camp Director at drop off if you have a plan to pick up your child early from camp.

Meals & Snacks

Free breakfast and lunch will be provided for those parents who wish to take advantage of it. A menu will be provided at the beginning of camp. These meals are provided through the Biddeford School system and their participation in the *Meals for Kids* program.

All snacks, alternate meals, or supplementary foods are the responsibility of the parent. Please ensure that you pack a sufficient amount of snacks for your child each day. Remember that children are usually more active at camp than at school and the day at camp is longer than a school day – please pack accordingly.

Lost & Found

We will collect lost and found items on a daily basis. It is the camper's responsibility to check the lost and found for misplaced items. Unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to a local charity at the end of camp. Biddeford Recreation and summer camp staff will not accept responsibility for any lost or stolen items.

Day Camp Refund Policy

If you wish to cancel your child's camp registration before camp begins, you will receive a full refund, less a \$25 processing fee.

If your child has attended at least 2 days of camp, you will receive a 75% refund of the remaining weeks your child is registered for, less a \$25 processing fee.

If your child has attended more than 50% of the weeks they are registered for, there will be no refund.

Money at Camp

Please do not send your child to camp with money. Your child will not need to purchase anything during their time at camp. This includes during field trips, where all expenses are covered by your tuition including entrance fees and snacks.

While it may be tempting to provide your child with money to purchase a souvenir or an additional treat during one of our trips, we ask that you please do not do so. In our experience, the presence of money creates a number of issues that disrupt and diminish the camp experience including:

- Disparity and hurt feelings due to the 'haves and have nots',
- Theft/loss of money (and the upset feelings associated with the theft or loss),
- Taking staff away from activity supervision in order to supervise concession spending,
- Behavioral issues associated with the consumption of large amounts of sugar,
- Missing planned/ scheduled activities while waiting in line.

Biddeford Recreation staff members will not be held responsible for the safekeeping of money during trips. Any money known to have arrived at camp will be held in the camp office and returned during checkout.

Late Fees

Campers must be picked up from camp no later than 5:00pm each day.

There will be a \$10 LATE FEE for every 10 minutes that a parent is late for pick up.

Late fees will be invoiced through your MyRec account. Payment must be made within two weeks of the invoice date. Cash will not be accepted at pick up.

Frequent or repeated late pick-ups and/or non-payment of late fees may result in a suspension from the camp program for the child or suspension of the adult's MyRec account.

American with Disabilities Act

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the City of Biddeford invites you to identify any physical or mental disability or behavior that would preclude your child from fully participating in the Biddeford Recreation programs. The City is committed to these requirements of the Act mentioned above. In this regard, the City, to the extent required by law, will provide reasonable accommodations to participants who require them in order for them to participate in the program. Individuals with disabilities are not required to self-identify at any time. The City is only required to provide reasonable accommodations for known disabilities. The City is not required to search medical files in order to determine the existence of a disability. If your child needs reasonable accommodations in order for them to participate in the program, you must contact the office at least 2 weeks before the start of the program.

The Biddeford Recreation Department strives to provide opportunities for campers of all abilities. All campers must be able to participate safely in our programs. We do not provide one-on-one supervision and retain the right to not enroll or remove a student from our program if he or she is not able to participate safely.*

Issues & Omissions

Any issues or omissions not covered in the Safari Camp Parent Handbook are at the discretion of the Youth & Family Services Program Coordinator.

Frequently Asked Questions

What should my child bring to summer camp each day?

**Please ensure that your camper's name is clearly labeled on all of their belongings.*

Food/ Drink/ Personal Care

- A healthy lunch (FREE breakfast and lunch will be available for those parents who would like to utilize it)
- Enough snacks for an exciting day
- Refillable water bottle
- Sunscreen & bug spray

Clothing

- Change of shorts or comfortable pants
- Change of T-shirt that your child can play in and get dirty
- Spare pair of closed-toe shoes
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Sweater
- Baseball cap
- Spare socks
- Swimsuit

Other Items

- Small backpack
- Towel
- Sunglasses
- Hair band

Are there things that my child should NOT bring to camp?

Please help us ensure these items are not brought to camp by reviewing what your child has packed before departing for camp. Please understand that if any

of the items listed below are found at camp they will be held in the office and returned during checkout.

- Medications
- Valuables
- Money
- Any electronic devices
- Mobile phones/phone watches/Google Glass/etc.
- iPod, MP3 players, etc.
- iPad, tablet, kindle, or laptop computer
- Gaming devices
- Video/DVD players
- Any item that may be considered a weapon (knives, utility tools/multi-tools, swords, etc.)
- Drugs, cigarettes, vape pens, matches, lighters
- Water/squirt guns

Can camp staff distribute medication?

NO. We are not allowed to distribute any medications.

Campers may however self-administer their own medication if their parent or guardian has completed a permission form. Medication sent to camp should not exceed the dosage for one day and must be in its original container with the prescription label which contains the camper's name, prescribed dosage, the name of the medication and the prescribing doctor. Please contact the Camp Director if you will require a medication self-administer permission form.

What if my child has an assigned Education Technician and/or Support Staff in a school setting?

Please be aware that while at camp your child will be required to have one-on-one care in the form of an educational technician or support staff member at your own expense if:

- Your child has an education technician and/or any other school staff person (other than the classroom teacher) assigned to them in any type of school setting (including but not limited to classrooms, gym, recess, after school activities, assemblies, and/or field trips).

- Your child is placed in a specially designed classroom setup other than a regular classroom for other than strictly educational purposes.

The one-on-one care adult assigned to your child must be approved by the Recreation Department prior to participation in the summer camp program.

What does the Inclusion Coordinator do?

In an effort to better serve members of our camp population who may require additional support or accommodations to be successful at camp, Biddeford Recreation has introduced an Inclusion Coordinator position. The Inclusion Coordinator will work with campers and their families to identify barriers to inclusion (such as physical, behavioral, emotional or mental health issues) and formulate plans to overcome any identified issues. The Inclusion Coordinator will work with camp staff to ensure they are familiar with, and consistently administering, inclusion plans with their campers.

The Inclusion Coordinator's role is to support a successful summer camp experience of all campers. The inclusion coordinator, however, can only formulate inclusion plans for those whose needs they are familiar with. If your child has faced any difficulty or challenges during the school year, that were not purely academic in nature (including, but not limited to, allergies, emotional outbursts, ADHD, anxiety, depression, physical aggression or the development and implementation of an IEP), it is strongly encouraged that you contact the Inclusion Coordinator to discuss your child's needs. We understand that there are often stigmas associated with many of these issues and that this can cause parents to be cautious about sharing details about their child's needs. We want every child in our program to be successful and enjoy their summer – the more information we have about a child's needs, the better! Please help us to help your child by providing as much information to us as you can.

The Inclusion Coordinator is scheduled to begin working on June 3rd and can be contacted at inclusion@biddefordmaine.org from that date forward.

How do I get in touch with the camp in the event of an emergency, or how will they get in touch with me?

If there is an issue and you need to reach the camp or your child's counselor, you can call the Camp Director on 207-468-3775 or email summercamp@biddefordmaine.org.

If the camp director has to contact you, they will reach out via phone or email. Please ensure that all of the contact details you have provided to the camp are up to date and able to receive calls or emails.

What will drop-off and pick-up procedures look like?

Camp operates from 8:00am until 5:00pm. PLEASE DO NOT DROP YOUR CAMPER OFF EARLIER THAN 8:00am. There will be no staff available to watch your camper.

Please plan to drop your child to camp between 8:00am and 9:00am. Arrivals after 9:00am will need to be arranged with the camp director.

Drop off and pick up will take place at the ground floor camp access door, accessible from the car park on the Clark St. side of the J. Richard Martin Community Center building.

When dropping your camper off, please report to the camp access door and check your camper in with the staff member recording daily attendance. Once checked in, your child will make their way to their assigned camp room and you will be free to leave.

Whenever we are returning from field trips, campers will be asked to return to their “camp rooms” in order to be dismissed. Please do not collect your child directly from the bus. This will ensure all campers are fully accounted for prior to being dismissed. We will aim to be back at camp by 4:00pm each day.

Please schedule your campers’ pick up between 4:00pm and 5:00pm. Pick-ups prior to 4pm will need to be arranged with the camp director.

Camp staff will be using an application called PikMyKid to maintain accurate attendance records throughout the day. The App allows parents to announce their arrival from their phones before they have arrived to the community center. Once a parent announces their actual or approaching arrival, staff members will prepare their camper for departure and bring them to the camp access door for dismissal.

*If delegating a new pick up person for your camper on the PikMyKid app, please be aware this change has to occur no later than 12:00pm that day.

*Please do not use the app or your phone while driving!

What does the weekly schedule look like?

The schedule is going to be filled with outdoor adventures, action-packed trips, and memories to last a lifetime. A tentative summer camp calendar is available for viewing on the Safari Camp Webpage. *All days, trips and events are subject to change.*

What happens on rainy days?

Campers will remain at the Community Center for the day, engaged in activities. In addition, a small indoor trip may be planned locally. All field trips are subject to change.

Covid-19 procedures?

We ask that your camper remains at home if they are not feeling well or has any symptoms of Covid-19. *We will be following CDC guidelines in regards to Covid-19.*

What is the cost of sending my child to Safari and when is payment due?

Rates are available on the [Safari Camp web page](#). Camp fees support this program. In order for us to provide this service to your family, it is important that payments be made on schedule.

All outstanding balances **must be paid** prior to camp commencing. The only exception to this requirement is for families that have set up, and committed to, a payment plan that will completely pay for camp by August 16th. Payment plans/ automatic electronic payments will be required for all families with outstanding balances by June 14th. If a payment plan has not been set up by June 21st, your child will not be permitted to attend camp until a payment plan has been initiated.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to call the Recreation Department at 207 283-0841.