

Updated: 3/28/2025

2025 Parent Handbook



North Salem Day Camp at Mt. Lakes

201 Hawley Road

North Salem, NY 10560

Camp Phone: (914)669-8758

Off-Season Phone, Recreation Dept: (914)669-5665

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Camp Philosophy

To provide campers with a varied and wholesome camping experience through a broad range of programs and outdoor experiences designed specifically for each age group.

Locations and Contact Information

Our day camp is located within beautiful Sal J. Prezioso Mountain Lakes Park- 201 Hawley Road, North Salem, NY. There are two camps located on the Mt. Lakes grounds. We are located on the *second* camp ground (Camp Hemlock), just passed Camp Morty.

During camp hours in June - August, administrative staff is also located here. We can be reached at (914) 669-8758. This is the camp phone number. All other hours, we are located in the Recreation Office at 3 Owens Road, PO Box 163, Croton Falls, NY 10519 and can be reached at (914) 669-5665. We can always be reached via email at camp@northsalemny.gov

Camp Schedule

A separate calendar will be provided to all camp families. Camp begins at 9am and ends at 3:10pm.

Session 1	June 30 th – July 11 th (no camp July 4 th)
Session 2	July 14 th – July 25 th
Session 3	July 28 th – August 8 th

Transportation

Busing is mandatory for all campers, CITs, and most staff. Space is limited on the campgrounds and we cannot accommodate extra vehicles. Bus will pickup and drop off from Pequenakonck (PQ) Elementary School at 173 June Road, North Salem.

Morning drop off at PQ Elementary is from 8:35-8:55am. Buses leave promptly at 9am. Campers may arrive at PQ for bus pick-up no earlier than 8:35am. Late arrivals will need to drive to the camp at Mt. Lakes Park. The road into our camp is a one-way road so late arrivals will need to wait for the buses to leave before entering the grounds (about 9:45am).

Afternoon pickup at PQ Elementary is from 3:10-3:20pm. Early dismissals will need to be picked up from the camp at Mt. Lakes Park prior to 2:30pm. A note is required for all early dismissals, to be turned in to the counselor immediately upon arrival in the morning.

****There will be no daily drop-offs/pick-ups at Mt. Lakes Park****

Camp Arrival Procedures

First Day

On your camper's first day, you will have the opportunity to speak *very briefly* to your child's head counselor. We know there may be things you would like to discuss with the counselor at greater length so, if possible, we suggest that you write a note and give it to the counselor at morning drop-off.

Daily Morning Drop-Off

Parents will follow the directions of signs and our staff to our drop-off zone. Staff will assist

campers out of the car. Staff will be available to help younger children who need assistance getting to their correct groups.

Once campers have made it to their groups, they will be greeted by their counselors. Any notes should be handed in to counselors at this time. Staff will collect lunches in a group bag. Please make sure lunches are labeled with your camper's name and group. Group lunch bags will be placed in our walk-in refrigerator, to be retrieved during your camper's lunch period. There are no scheduled snack periods, but if your camper would like to eat a snack during the day, they may keep a small, non-perishable snack in their bag to eat as they are hungry and as activities allow. Remember, we are outside in the heat and backpacks often get thrown around during the day- make sure any snacks will be able to survive these conditions.

Late arrivals

Camp begins at 9am. Please try to refrain from dropping campers off late; it disrupts classes and activities. Late arrivals will need to drive to the camp at Mt. Lakes Park. The road into our camp is a one-way road so late arrivals will need to wait for the buses to leave before entering the grounds. Late drop-offs may not arrive prior to 9:45am so as not to interfere with our buses coming in and out of the camp via the one-way section of the road. Thank you for your cooperation.

Camp Dismissal Procedures

If your camper is part of a carpool, or will be on select days, please send a note to camp (to each group involved) detailing this carpool. If a change occurs and your camper will be dismissed in a different way than what is on file with us, please send a note that morning detailing this change. As a safety measure, we cannot take dismissal changes over the phone throughout the day- we have no way to prove with whom we are speaking- therefore, we need a written and signed note.

Pick-up is at 3:10pm. Parents will follow the directions of signs and our staff to the next available parking space. Parents will park their car and pick up their children from each group. Each child must be signed out with their head counselor before being released to a parent or caregiver.

Early Dismissal

If you must pick your child up early, please send a note that morning detailing this change. As a safety measure, we cannot take dismissal changes over the phone throughout the day- we have no way to prove with whom we are speaking- therefore, we need a written and signed note.

Early pick-ups must be before 2:30pm so as not to interfere with our buses coming in and out of the camp via the one-way section of the road. Thank you for your cooperation.

Bus Rules

All campers and CITs must follow the below rules at all times on or near the buses:

- Buses will leave the bus stop at 9:00am. Children should be at PQ NO LATER than 5 minutes before the bus is due to leave to allow for proper attendance checks. If you anticipate a difficult goodbye with your child, please arrive early. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DELAY THE BUSES DEPARTURE.** This will cause every child on the bus to arrive to camp late and your child will not be permitted to board.
 - **Any parent found using their vehicle to block the buses departure will have**

the police called – this is a serious safety violation!

- All bus safety rules apply. Children should remain seated while the bus is in motion with their seatbelts securely fastened.
- Any child causing a dangerous situation will be suspended from the bus without return of payment. Parents will need to transport this camper to/from camp daily for the remainder of camp in accordance with our Late Arrival and Early Dismissal Policies above. Please make sure your child understands this. It is for the protection of all the children, the bus driver and others on the road.
- Children will only be released to an adult. In the event an adult is not present to pick up the camper we will first attempt to contact the parent/guardian via their emergency number. If unable to contact the parent/guardian and after a reasonable amount of time waiting the child will then be brought to the Police Station to wait for the arrival of the parent/guardian of the child.
- Parents are not allowed on the bus for any reason, including to assist a child with their seatbelt. Our camp counselors are happy to assist all campers.

Group Dynamics

Campers are assigned to groups according to the grade they will be entering in September of the upcoming school year. All groups are assigned at least one head counselor (a High School graduate or at least 18 years old) and at least one junior counselor (16 or 17 years old).

Every group will adhere to the ratio of 1 counselor to 12 campers, although our groups generally have much less campers, with a ratio closer to 1:8. All counselors are assigned to a specific camp group for the duration of the camp season and are required to assist in all activities and events. All staff members participate in an extensive orientation and training program prior to the start of camp.

We do our best to make groups based upon parent/guardian placement requests (to put friends together, etc.), however, requests are not guaranteed and all groups are final.

Daily Schedules

Each group will follow a schedule that changes daily. This schedule is prepared by the Directors and is subject to change due to weather conditions, special events and programming etc. Each day is broken into six periods of 40 minutes each. All groups are scheduled for one lunch period and one swim period every day, along with a rotation of special events and activities (see: *Special Events and Activities*).

A calendar of special events will be sent home via email before the camp season starts. Please look for weekly newsletters and important information sent home in backpacks, via email and/or our website: www.northsalemdaycamp.org/parents

Special Events and Activities

Swimming

Weather permitting, all campers are scheduled for at least one swim period per day. Preschool through second graders will also receive instructional swim lessons as needed, in addition to their free swim. The time of day each group is scheduled will rotate daily. Double swim periods are occasionally scheduled, weather and schedule permitting. All campers are given a swim test by our

Pool Staff during their first two days at camp, prior to being allowed free swim. The swim test classifies campers based on their ability and will be shown by colored wristbands:

- *A Non-Swimmer* or “*No Band*” swimmer is restricted to the shallow end of the pool in water no deeper than chest deep (2 feet).
- *Beginners* or “*Red Bands*” are allowed in the section of the pool with a maximum depth of 4 feet.
- *Intermediate* or “*Yellow Bands*” are allowed in the section of the pool with a maximum depth of 5 feet.
- *Advanced* or “*Blue Bands*” are allowed in all sections of the pool. Our pool has a maximum depth of 12 feet.

Please encourage campers to leave their colored wristbands on - the wristbands are an important safety measure and it is important that all campers wear their wristbands as long as possible. Cutting them off each day leads to confusion and shorter swim time.

We use a Buddy System – Each day, campers will be paired in twos based on their swimming ability. Please note: this may not always be a camper’s best friend; it is for safety purposes only. Each pair will receive a “buddy number” and will listen for this number during buddy checks. Buddy checks take place every 15 minutes. Pool Staff will blow their whistles and call “Buddy Check”, signaling all campers to get out of the pool, find their buddy, and remain silent while listening for their number. Once all buddies have checked in, everyone will be allowed back into the pool.

It is helpful for campers to come to camp each day wearing their bathing suits under their clothing. Please pack a change of clothes- if a group’s swim class occurs early in the day, campers will be encouraged to change out of their bathing suits. We have changing rooms available for campers to use.

Outdoor Skills & Nature

Campers will be taught basic outdoor skills at an age appropriate level. Some examples of skills that campers will learn are: orienteering, shelter building, campfire safety, outdoor cooking, and fishing. Campers will observe and interact with nature and learn about local animals and plants. Campers hike to streams to look for wildlife and engage in a pond-study. Our instructors have had extensive training and experience in outdoor skills and have a passion for nature and the outdoors.

Lake Activities

We have a rowboat, pedal boats, canoes and kayaks for campers 4th grade and up to learn to use on our lake. Campers will be under the supervision of qualified waterfront lifeguards who are experienced boaters.

Archery

Under the guidance of an experienced and trained archer, campers 4th grade and up will learn to use the bows safely while shooting at foam targets in a controlled environment.

Other Daily Activities

Music, Yoga, Art, Games, Sports, and Trash to Treasure (our “green” recycling arts and crafts program).

Lunch & Snack

Food services are not provided. A camper's lunch should be packed in a disposable bag or lunch box. The bag or lunch box should be marked with the child's full name and group. All lunches are collected upon camper's arrival and placed in a walk-in refrigerator, to be accessed only during designated lunch periods by staff. Lunches cannot be accessed by campers prior to their lunch period.

There are no scheduled snack periods, but if your camper would like to eat a snack during the day, they may keep a small, non-perishable snack in their bag to eat as they are hungry and as activities allow. Remember, we are outside in the heat and backpacks often get thrown around during the day - make sure any snacks will be able to survive these conditions. Pre-K and Kindergarten snack times will be given at the discretion of the counselors as schedules permit.

Nut Allergies

While we are not a peanut and tree nut-free camp, we would urge you to please try to avoid sending nut products whenever possible to help out our fellow campers. We will have a "nut-free" table available at lunch as well as a "nut-free" area in our walk-in refrigerators for those campers that need it. Staff will be aware of your child's allergy but we recommend that you label your child's lunch bag "nut-free" and speak with your camper's counselor if you would like your child to eat at the "nut-free" table and their lunch to be placed in the "nut-free" area of the refrigerator. Hand washing before and after eating is stressed to all campers and staff.

Please reach out if you would like to speak to us more about our nut allergy procedures or other allergy precautions.

Medical Information

Illness/Injuries

If a child becomes ill during camp hours, camp medical staff will contact the parent/guardians. If the parents are not available, the emergency contact provided on the registration form will be notified.

Medications

Camp medical staff will observe a camper while he/she administers prescription medications. However, before we can store and observe campers' administering the required medication, we must have an official form signed by the pediatrician and parent. This includes Epi-Pens and Benadryl.

Do not send medication to camp if we do not have this form on file. All medication must be in original containers with prescription label. *If you plan to send a generic drug to camp, please be sure your doctor has written the prescription for the generic drug.* We can only accept medications EXACTLY as written, as per the Westchester County Department of Health.

Daily Attendance and Absence Procedures

For the safety of all campers, attendance will be taken at the beginning and end of each camp day, as well as before and after each activity. If your child will be absent there is no need to call the office, unless it will be a long-term absence due to illness or injury.

Ticks/Bugs

It is suggested that all campers wear long, light-colored socks to camp. Please do daily-tick checks of your campers after camp each day. We clear the paths that campers use frequently, but there will be times when campers are hiking in the woods or are on paths that are less traveled.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Campers should come to camp in comfortable clothing that will enable them to be active. Shorts, jeans, skorts, t-shirts, etc. are recommended. Dresses and skirts are not appropriate day camp attire.

- Ponchos/raincoats must be packed every day.
- Sneakers are a must! Crocs, sandals, flip-flops, summer shoes, etc. should not be worn. Parents/guardians will be called to bring sneakers in the event a camper arrives to camp without appropriate footwear. Campers walk on all types of terrain and for safety purposes, sneakers must be worn at all times. Campers who canoe may wear beach shoes during the canoe period only.
- All campers should pack a bathing suit and towel every day.
- Sunscreen/ Bug spray - Because it is a long day and campers will be in the pool at some point during the day, reapplying sunscreen and bug spray is recommended. Campers must be able to apply this themselves. Sprays, rather than lotions, are preferred. Counselors can only supervise the application of lotions and may not assist any campers with this. Any campers that need further assistance can ask our medical staff to help.
 - Westchester County Department of Health requires all campers to have written permission to carry/use sunscreen and bug spray. This permission is granted by parents/guardians as a part of the initial online registration.
- Water bottle – there are water stations located around the campgrounds. Campers are encouraged to drink water all day long and can refill their bottles at any time. On very hot days, we suggest filling a water bottle half way and then freezing it over night. In the morning, fill the rest with water – your camper will have ice cold water all day!
- ***All clothing and personal belongings must be labeled with the camper's name and group.***

Do not bring unnecessary items to camp, such as: toys, video games, radios, roller skates, skateboards, tablets, cell phones, etc. These can be a distraction to camp activities and a source of many issues amongst campers. The counselors are not responsible for these items. All personal items are the responsibility of each camper.

Electronics Policy

Campers are not permitted use of ANY electronic devices during camp hours, unless otherwise medically necessary. Special considerations can be petitioned for from administration.

Lost and Found

In order to help keep the amount of lost and found items to a minimum, we ask that ALL clothing and personal belongings are labeled with your camper's name. If something does go missing, the Lost and Found is located in our Mess Hall at the entrance of the camp grounds. If

your child has misplaced something, notify his/her counselor.

Emergency Procedures

Westchester County Department of Health regulations require a medical person to be onsite and certified in CPR and first aid for every 200 campers. We attempt to exceed this requirement by having multiple staff certified in First Aid and CPR. In addition, we employ an LPN and RN to supervise all camp health operations. Medical personnel is on site during all camp hours to respond to any medical emergency. We have safety plans in place with local first responders. In all cases, the camper's parents or emergency contact person listed on the camper's registration form will be notified.

In case of a camp emergency, we will use the Community Pass and Camp Doc systems to distribute information via email and text to the contacts provided at camper registration. It is important to check both accounts for accuracy and that you have opted into the text messaging from community pass if you wish.

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, camp activities will continue as planned. Outdoor activities that cannot be done in the rain will be rescheduled or replaced with alternative activities. Most activities, however, will be done rain or shine. Campers will swim and participate in outdoor activities until rain becomes too heavy or a thunderstorm occurs. Please be sure to send campers with a raincoat or poncho every day.

Directors will have access to up-to-the-minute weather forecasts and will advise staff to move their groups to their designated indoor shelters if weather necessitates. All staff and campers will remain in these shelters until an "all clear" signal is given by Directors. In the event a storm begins shortly before dismissal, campers will be held in place until it is deemed safe to move by Directors. This could potentially delay dismissal. *Camper and staff safety is our number one priority.*

Camp Communications

Throughout the summer, you will be receiving informational emails, flyers and newsletters promoting special camp activities and events at camp and around North Salem. Please check camper's backpacks for this information and please be sure you have provided us with a current email on your camper's application. Please be sure your email is set up to allow emails from camp@northsalemny.gov and recreation@northsalemny.gov

Discipline

At times, disciplinary action may be necessary in order to ensure the safety of all individuals. When identifying a situation that requires disciplinary action, implementing a fair and reasonable solution not only provides protection of health and ensures the safety of camp participants, but also supports the Mission to create an enriched environment for all individuals. Disciplinary action will be in response to any one of the following:

1. Camper's/CIT's repeated refusal to follow the instructions of Counselors/Directors.
2. Camper's/CIT's verbal abuse of a staff person or another camper.
3. Camper's/CIT's striking, biting, kicking or physically abusing any individual.
4. Intentional damage or taking of private property.

5. Repeated instigation or physical or mental aggression.
6. Behavior that puts the Camper/CIT and others in a hazardous situation.
7. Leaving the group without permission from Counselors/Directors.
8. Any form of behavior that a Counselor/Director finds inappropriate or an unreasonable standard of camp behavior.

Behavior

All campers/CITs must be mature and acknowledge their responsibility for their own behavior, as well as their own property. Additionally, campers/CITs must acknowledge their understanding of the rights and property of others.

There is to be no excessive horseplay, loudness, and unruly or abusive language. There will be no physical or emotional abuse, such as hitting, punching, taunting or verbal bashing. It is to be expected that campers will pay attention and follow the rules and regulations in place with regard to all facilities and areas to be visited.

Camper disciplinary actions

The following steps will be used in actions requiring discipline:

1. Verbal warning
2. Contact parent/guardian
3. Parent, Camper/CIT, administration meeting (on site at camp)
4. One or more days suspension from camp (refunds will NOT be provided for missed days)
5. Dismissal from camp (refund will NOT be provided for days missed)

Each instance of discipline, regardless of frequency and nature of offense, will be documented. The administration reserves the right to use all steps or skip any disciplinary step(s) as needed. Instances of behavior resulting in harm to fellow campers/CITs or staff will yield immediate dismissal from camp.

North Salem Day Camp Refund Policy

Registration convenience fees incurred during enrollment are non-refundable for any reason, including program cancellation by the North Salem Recreation Department.

Refunds will not be given for scheduling conflicts.

All refund requests must be made in writing to the Superintendent of Recreation for consideration.

All programs are subject to changes and/or cancellation due to a variety of factors, some of which may not be under the control of the Town of North Salem.

Cancellation by the North Salem Recreation Department

A full refund will be given if the program is cancelled by the Recreation Department prior to the program's start (less registration convenience fees).

Participant Initiated Cancellation

A \$20.00 processing fee for all approved refunds will be assessed for participant initiated cancellation.

Relocation: If a participant moves from Town, a full or pro-rated refund will be made based on the number of days the participant attended (less processing fee and registration convenience fee). Proof of re-location must be presented.

Illness/Injury: If a participant becomes ill or injured for an extended period of time (at least one week), a full or pro-rated refund (less processing fee and registration convenience fee) will be made. A doctor's medical note must accompany the request, and the request must be made prior to the end of the program.

Extenuating Circumstances: If a participant must withdraw from a program during the first two sessions because of extenuating circumstances (such as a physical or emotional inability to complete the program), a pro-rated refund will be issued (less processing fee and registration convenience fee).

Refund Schedule for Participant Initiated Cancellation

Refund requests received prior to June 1st will be issued in full (less processing fee and registration convenience fee).

Refund requests received between June 1st and prior to the first day of camp will be issued for 75% of the tuition fee paid (less processing fee and registration convenience fee).

All refund requests must be made in writing to the Superintendent of Recreation for consideration. Please use this form: www.northsaledaycamp.org/refund-policy

COVID-19 Precautions

We will follow all required guidelines regarding masking and social distancing. We will have more information for you prior to your campers first day based on the most current guidelines at that time.

Frequent sanitizing of shared equipment and high-traffic areas will continue to occur. Each group will have their own set of art supplies to take with them from class to class as needed. Frequent hand washing will be encouraged.