

2019

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 270 Titicus Road and can be reached at (914) 669-5665. We can always be reached via email at camp@northsalemny.org

Camp Schedule

A separate calendar will be provided to all camp families. Camp begins on Monday, July 1st and ends Friday, August 2nd. Camp runs Monday through Friday during this time. There will be no camp on Thursday and Friday, July 4th and 5th in observance of the Fourth of July. Camp begins at 9am and ends at 3pm. Campers may arrive no earlier than 8:30am. Campers should be on the campgrounds and ready to begin by 9am – our first activity starts at 9am sharp.

Chain of Command

- Camp Director
- Assistant Camp Director
- Security/ Medical Staff
- Pool Director/ House Leaders
- Specialists/ Waterfront Staff
- Head Counselors
- Junior Counselors
- Counselors-in-Training (CITs)

Camp Arrival Procedures

On the first day of camp, the arrival procedure is a bit different than other days. If parents wish to walk their campers into camp and meet the counselors, they can park and walk their camper to our welcome desk. Campers being dropped off will also be directed to our welcome desk. At our welcome desk, you will find out your camper's group assignment. Staff will assist in helping your camper to their group (and parents also, if they wish to meet the counselors). If your camper takes the bus, staff will assist him/her in getting to the correct group.

Parent/Carpool Drop off

On a regular day, 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.

Bus Drop Off

Attendance will be taken as campers board the bus by bus monitors. If your child has a change of plans (is not taking the bus in the afternoon) a note is REQUIRED BOTH TO THE BUS MONITOR AND NORTH SALEM DAY CAMP. This is to ensure no child is left behind on Camp property. Once the bus arrives to camp, campers will depart the bus and walk to their group. Staff will be available to help younger children who need assistance getting to their correct groups.

Arrival at camp

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 activities begin at 9am sharp. Please try to refrain from dropping campers off late; it disrupts classes and activities. If you must drop a camper off late, please park your car and walk your camper to check in with security. Your camper's lunch will be placed with their groups' lunches in the refrigerator. *You will need to walk your camper through our camp grounds to meet their group once they have checked in.* Keep in mind; some activities are a 5-10 minute walk from our drop-off zone.

****Bus Riders:** If you drop your child off at camp in the morning and they are to take the bus in the afternoon, please be sure to send a note with your camper and alert our security guard of this change. This is to ensure no child is left behind on Camp property after the buses have departed in the afternoon.

Camp Dismissal Procedures

Pickup on Campgrounds

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 BEGINS at 3:00pm. Some parents prefer to get to camp earlier and wait until 3pm. The car line can get quite long in the first few days of camp. We typically get to the end of the pick-up line and all campers are dismissed by 3:30. Therefore, it is not necessary to get to the camp for exactly 3:00. A good rule of thumb is to aim to be at the camp grounds by 3:10-3:15. Please place a sign in your window with your camper's names and groups. If you have a carpool with many campers, it is helpful to create a carpool name- we've had some very creative ones! *We encourage carpooling!*

As you approach the camp grounds for pick-up, you will be met by a staff member with a two-way radio. Please give your name to this staff member and it will be called out to our camp

groups. A counselor will then escort your child to the pick-up zone to await your arrival. If you need to assist your young children with buckling their seatbelts, please be courteous and pull up to our "buckle-up area." If you have a question or need to speak with a staff member, we ask that you please park your car. All of these will help the line to move quickly and efficiently for everyone!

*If you plan on picking your camper up early, please do so prior to 1:45pm. Cars begin to line up at this time and the buses arrive. After 1:45, parents will not be able to get to the front of the pickup line for an early dismissal. Thank you for your cooperation.

Bus Dismissal

If your camper is enrolled on the bus but will NOT be taking the bus on select days, please send a note to camp (to each group involved) detailing this arrangement on the first day. 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. *Without a dismissal change note, your child will be dismissed on the bus.*

Bus Rules

If you have signed up and paid for the bus in full, you will receive a "bus tag" prior to the start of camp. Please affix this tag to your camper's backpack. Campers will not be permitted to board the bus without this tag. Each bus stop has a different colored tag.

- Buses will leave their bus stops promptly (see exact times sent in bus welcome letter). Children should be on the bus 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. The bus will not wait for children to leave their cars. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DELAY THE BUSES DEPARTURE.** This will cause 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 and their children will be immediately removed from the bus for the remainder of camp without refund – this is a serious safety violation!**
- Campers are not to run toward the bus as it pulls into the bus stop. Please ensure campers stay on designated sidewalk/curb/grass until the bus monitors have signaled that it is okay to approach the bus. Any camper in violation of this will be given a verbal warning and will have to wait until all campers have boarded the bus before they can board. Further violation of this will result in suspension from the bus without return of payment. Please make sure your child(ren) understands this. This is a very serious safety issue.
- 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. Please make sure your child(ren) 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 at their designated stop, the bus monitors 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 Somers Police Station to wait for the arrival of the parent/guardian of the child.

- If your child has a change of plans (is not taking the bus in the afternoon) a note is REQUIRED BOTH TO THE BUS MONITOR AND NORTH SALEM DAY CAMP. This is to ensure no child is left behind on Camp property. Without a dismissal change note, your child will be dismissed on the bus.
- At no time will additional children be permitted to ride the bus. If you are responsible for transporting another child to or from camp or if your child is having a friend over after camp, it will be necessary for you to drive the children.
- Children will only be dismissed from the bus stop in which they are signed up for. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Group Dynamics

Campers will be assigned according to the grade they will be entering in September of the upcoming school year. Upper-aged groups are generally assigned according to gender, based upon enrollment and parent requests. 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). Younger groups are also assigned one or more Counselors-in-Training (CITs).

Our CIT program includes selected 12-14 year olds who are participating in our training program. CIT assignments are changed mid-way through camp in order to give each CIT a complete camp counselor experience through different groups and settings.

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, all groups are final as of May 1st and requests may not be honored after this date.

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 eight periods of 35 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*).

*The Pre-K group does not swim in the pool daily but has access to water toys. The Pre-K group will be scheduled at the pool one time during the last week of camp as a special treat to prepare them for the following camp season.

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

Special Events and Activities

Swimming

Weather permitting, all campers are scheduled for at least one swim period per day. Kindergarten through second graders will also receive two instructional swim periods per week, in addition to their free swim periods. 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 the first two days of 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

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. Our instructors have had extensive training and experience in outdoor skills.

Nature

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 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. 3rd graders will have the opportunity during the last week of camp to try out

these activities in preparation for next summer!

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

Special Activities

More information about special activities will be in each weekly newsletter. We have many performers, activities, and programs booked throughout the camp season for every grade level. The ice cream truck, snow cone truck, and cupcake truck will make appearances at camp. The trucks make visits on Wednesdays after Lunch – see calendar for schedule. These are optional activities. If your child would like to participate, please send a few dollars to camp with them in a labeled bag or envelope on the days the trucks will be at camp. Pizza Day and Barbecue Day are included in tuition.

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

Medical Information

Illness/Injuries

When 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 should be packed every day.
- Sneakers are a must! 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. We try to display lost and found items at dismissal in the last week of camp.

Parent/Guardian Visits to Camp

On the first day of camp, parents/guardians are welcome to park and walk their campers into camp. There will be tables with staff to assist you in finding your camper's group. Please use this time to familiarize yourself with your camper's group and counselors. *There are no formal parent visit days.* Anytime you need to visit camp, first check in with Camp Security before entering the grounds for any reason.

*Please be advised that there is limited parking on the first day, if you plan to visit please try to make arrangements for a carpool.

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 as our Health Director to supervise all camp health operations. This person 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 Blackboard Connect system to distribute information via text to the phone numbers provided on each camper's registration forms.

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. If you do not receive a welcome email one week prior to the start of camp, please be sure your email is set up to allow emails from camp@northsalemny.org . If there is still a problem, please contact us to update your information.

Discipline

At times, disciplinary action may be necessary in order to ensure the safety of campers and staff. 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 campers. Disciplinary action will be in response to any one of the following:

1. Camper’s repeated refusal to follow the instructions of Counselors/Directors.
2. Camper’s verbal abuse of a staff person or another camper.
3. Camper’s striking, biting, kicking or physically abusing a staff person or fellow camper.
4. Intentional damage or taking of private property.
5. Repeated instigation or physical or mental aggression.
6. Behavior that puts the camper 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 must be mature and acknowledge their responsibility for their own behavior, as well as their own property. Additionally, campers 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/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 or staff will yield immediate dismissal from camp.

North Salem Day Camp Refund Policy

A full refund will be given if the program is cancelled by the Recreation Department prior to the program's start.

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). Proof of re-location must be presented.

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) will be made. A doctor's medical note (no faxes, e-mails, or copies) must accompany the request, and the request must be made prior to the end of the program.

If a camper must withdraw from camp during the first two days 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).

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).

Refunds will not be given for scheduling conflicts.

A \$20.00 processing fee for all approved refunds will be assessed, except for programs cancelled by the Recreation Department.

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.