



NEWTON
Parks & Recreation

SPECIALTY CAMPS PARENT HANDBOOK

At Nahanton Park

455 Nahanton St, Newton, MA 02459

At Emerson Community Center

51 Pettee St, Newton, MA 02464

SPECIALTY CAMPS PARENT HANDBOOK 2024

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BASIC CAMP INFORMATION

Our Specialty Camps have varying grade requirements depending on the program. Grades listed are what your child will be entering in the Fall. The grade restrictions are put in place by the instructors to ensure age appropriateness of activities.

The Specialty Camps are offered by week, with different specialties being offered during the summer. Campers sign up for the specific specialty option listed for that week and may sign up for multiple weeks if they are interested.

Specialty Camps at **Nahanton Park** run June 24 – August 1 and run Monday – Thursday with Friday as a rain date (except the 4th of July week which will run July 1, 2, 3 and 5). These programs run from 1:30 – 3:30 PM. Please see the website for specific specialty offerings. These programs are outdoors. Please have your child put on sunscreen and bug spray before arriving.

Specialty Camps at **Emerson Community Center** run August 19 – August 30 and run Monday – Friday rain or shine. There is a morning option from 8:30 – 11:30 AM, and an afternoon option from 12:30 – 3:30 PM. A sport and a STEM option are each offered during the morning and afternoon session. Campers pick 1 option for the morning and/or 1 option for the afternoon and participate in that option for the week. Please see the website for specific specialty offerings. These programs occur both indoors and outdoors depending on the program and the weather. Campers signed up for both a morning and afternoon option can bring a lunch and stay with camp staff in between the two programs. There is also an afternoon extended day option offered at Emerson.

WHAT TO BRING

All campers should bring a water bottle and snack to camp each day. Campers should wear comfortable clothes and sneakers to camp. Specific specialty programs may require additional items such as a badminton racket, snack or lunch, and those items will be emailed in advance of the program. If campers are signed up for both a morning and afternoon specialty camp at Emerson they should also bring a lunch.

Many of our specialty camps often require constructing, gluing, using a variety of tools, or playing sports. It's best to wear comfortable, but not baggy clothes. Please avoid wearing things that hang or dangle, either from clothes, or jewelry that may hang or get caught on something. Campers with long hair may want to bring something to tie their hair back with during the specialty instruction.

ALL ITEMS BROUGHT TO CAMP SHOULD HAVE THE CHILD'S NAME ON THEM!
Items that are left behind at camp will be placed in a lost and found bin. Please check this bin at the end of each week to make sure you have all of your camper's belongings.

ENROLLED SESSIONS

To see what you are enrolled in go online to www.newtonmarec.com and click on the account tab to log in. Once logged in, click on the registrations button to see what your child is registered for.

REGISTRATION AND CAMP PAPERWORK

Registration for our Specialty Camps for Newton residents will begin on January 31st and continue until the program fills. A waiting list will be started once groups fill. Non-residents will be able to register starting March 1st if space allows. Registration is available at www.newtonmarec.com Additional information for each camp can be found online at <https://www.newtonma.gov/camps>

Newton Parks & Recreation is using ePACT- an online system to collect and manage our participants' emergency information and waiver releases. With ePACT you can securely add, manage and share your child's key health and emergency contact details with us.

Why are we using ePACT?

- **Saves You Time:** Once your account is created, your basic information will automatically transfer to each program you are signed up for. This will save you time in filling out the online form and waiver for each additional program you sign up for. In future years, you'll only need to review the information and make any changes, then resubmit the online form, taking less than a minute! You can also begin filling out the form and the information will automatically save, allowing you to go back to finish the form later.
- **Saves Paper:** The online database allows you to fill out forms without having to print them out. Organization Administrators can also access the forms electronically through a secure log in procedure eliminating the need to print out the forms.
- **Improved privacy and security:** Paper forms can be lost or misplaced. ePACT's privacy and security measures exceed those of online banks and they are HIPPA compliant.

Next Steps

After March 15th you will receive an email invitation that will guide you through a few quick steps to set up your account and share your child's information with us. If your child is a returning camper, you will only need to reconfirm your information, sign this year's waivers, and upload a new physical form. All paperwork needs to be submitted by May 15th.

TUITION

Camp fees are per week that your child is signed up. A \$30.00 non-refundable deposit per week is due with the registration. There will be no refund of your deposit and deposits are not transferrable from camp to camp. Scholarships are available to Newton residents that qualify. Scholarship applications are available online at www.newtonma.gov/camps and are due by May 1st.

Final payments are due May 15th. A \$25.00 late fee will be assessed for registrations, paperwork and payments received after May 15th. There will be no refunds issued for programs after May 15 unless the space is filled by another camper.

CAMPER EXPECTATIONS

For the enjoyment and safety of everyone involved at our Specialty Camps, campers are expected to adhere to the following rules while at camp:

1. Campers that are not feeling well or have a contagious disease must stay home.
2. Listen to the counselors or leaders at all times. If someone or something is bothering you, let a staff person know so they can help you.
3. Stay with your group throughout the day and never go anywhere alone. If you need to leave the group tell a staff person and they will send someone with you.
4. Be kind to each other and respect the rights and beliefs of everyone at camp. Be understanding of each other's differences and abilities and include others in your activities. If someone is doing something that is bothering you, please tell them first and ask them to stop, then talk to a staff person if you need help.
5. Fighting, bullying, or physically aggressive behavior toward staff members or campers will not be tolerated and may be cause for dismissal from camp.
6. Respect camp property and shared materials. If it doesn't belong to you, be sure to ask before using it, and use it carefully and appropriately to avoid breaking it.
7. Please do not bring unnecessary belongings to camp to avoid misplacing or losing such items. Camp is not responsible for lost or misplaced items. Campers may be asked to put certain items in their locker or backpack if it is becoming a distraction.
8. Most important – HAVE FUN AND ENJOY THE SUMMER!!!!!!

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Please carefully consider your child's ability and interest in the specialty program before signing them up. Some programs have a zero tolerance policy for unsafe behaviors (archery).

For various reasons, children sometimes exhibit inappropriate behavior. The staff will assist the child in the learning process of appropriate and acceptable behaviors at camp.

If a child is misbehaving, camp staff will try to re-direct the child or give the child choices to change their behavior or may have the child sit out for part of the program. Camp staff will reinforce improved behavior and compliment acceptable behavior. If a child is not responding to the camp staff and continues to exhibit inappropriate behavior, the child's parents will be called and the child may be sent home.

Anyone showing aggressive or abusive behavior towards themselves, other campers or staff, or children running away from or hiding from the group will be sent home. Children that are sent home may be allowed back at camp with conditions. If the behavior continues on additional days, the child will be dismissed from the program.

If your child is exhibiting unsafe behavior during a specific activity, they may have to sit out or may be removed from the program. The Specialty Camp instructors running the program are responsible for determining if a child needs to be removed from the program. Tuition will not be returned if a child is removed from a program. Please consider this when signing up your child.

CAMPER GROUPS

Campers may be divided into smaller groups for more specialized instruction during the specialty camps. The instructors, coaches and teachers will decide what groups campers should be in considering grade, ability, and other factors.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL INFORMATION

Specific drop off and pick up information for each location will be emailed before the start of camp. This will allow us to provide the most up to date information for each program.

Late Pick Up

We understand that at times traffic may be bad or there may be an emergency that prevents you from picking up your child on time. If you are going to be late, please call the camp to let us know you will be late.

We will have a staff person stay with your child until you are able to pick your child up or arrangements can be made to have your child picked up. Please note that we do have to pay the staff that are staying late with your child so a fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for campers that are picked up late. Parents that are consistently late picking up their child may be dismissed from the program.

Helpful Things to Know

1. A Camp Director will be available during drop off and pick up to answer any questions.
2. Directors can relay questions to instructors or coaches of our Specialty Camps.
3. Please try to be on time when dropping off. Instructors will do their best to catch kids up that are late, but instruction or activities may be delayed for late arrivals.
4. If your child is leaving early please let the Directors know during drop off.

STAFF

The strength of the program lies in our qualified, enthusiastic, caring and responsible camp staff. Instructors, coaches and teachers are teamed with carefully screened high school and college students to provide the skills and energy needed to ensure the success and enjoyment of each camper. Staff are trained in First Aid and CPR. All staff must pass Cori/Sori checks to work at the program. The staff and the program meet the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Camping standards and the Newton Health Department licenses the program.

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

Our Specialty Camps are certified by the Newton Health Department. In addition, our camps make a strong effort to prevent the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and keeping the facility clean and disinfected. Parents should do a health assessment on their child each day before coming to camp. If your child is not feeling well or has covid, please do not send them to camp. If your child feels unwell during the camp day, parents will be called to pick up their child.

FIRST AID

Campers will get first aid for bumps or scrapes they get while playing. Any time that first aid is administered to a camper, the date, camper name, injury, treatment, and the person administering first aid is recorded in the first aid log book in the camp office. In the rare case that the injury is severe and 911 is called, parents will be contacted immediately. If the parents can not be reached, the emergency contact will be called. If a child needs to leave camp in an ambulance, a staff member will go with the child to the hospital and stay with the child until a parent or the emergency contact arrives.

ALLERGY GUIDELINES

Many children have allergies to a variety of foods and the environment. It is important that parents talk with the Recreation Manager to ensure that all staff at the program are aware of potential allergens and reactions to look out for. Our camps are not nut or allergen free, as we allow participants to bring in what they wish for snack and lunch.

Newton Parks and Recreation has developed the following guidelines to ensure the safety of all of our campers:

- Maintain a no sharing/no trading policy on food that is brought from home
- Monitor snack and lunch to ensure that children are eating their own food
- Separate areas may be set up for eating if a child's allergies are severe
- Ensure children wash hands before and after eating to avoid coming into contact with potential allergens
- Wash all tables or countertops before and after all activities involving food
- All staff are trained in the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and what to do if an allergic reaction occurs
- Several staff at the program are trained in the administration of epi pens

MEDICATION

If your child will be taking any kind of medication that they will need to be given at camp, you must notify the Camp Director. The camp is only able to administer oral medication, inhalers, and epi pens. Parents must fill out the appropriate paperwork per Health Department and State regulations. Campers are not allowed to store or keep medications in their backpacks. Appropriate camp paperwork needs to be filled out in order for the camp to administer medication.

Medication must be brought to camp in its original container with correct administration and dosing information written in English. Please put all medication in a zip lock bag with your child's name on it.

IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PARENTS

Submit balances before the program starts.

Please be on time when dropping off and picking up your child.

Explain the camp rules to your child before starting camp.

Complete camp paperwork on time to ensure your child can attend camp.

Items brought to camp should have your child's name on them.

Advice camp directors and counselors of any health concerns your child might have.

Look through the lost and found if your child is missing any of their belongings.

Tell us if there are any unique things that we need to know about your child.

Yearly physicals need to be uploaded as part of your child's paperwork.

Check email reminders for notices pertaining to camp.

Always call the camp when your child will be late or absent.

Masks are optional and based on your comfort level.

Pack a water bottle and sunscreen each day.

Smile and enjoy the summer!