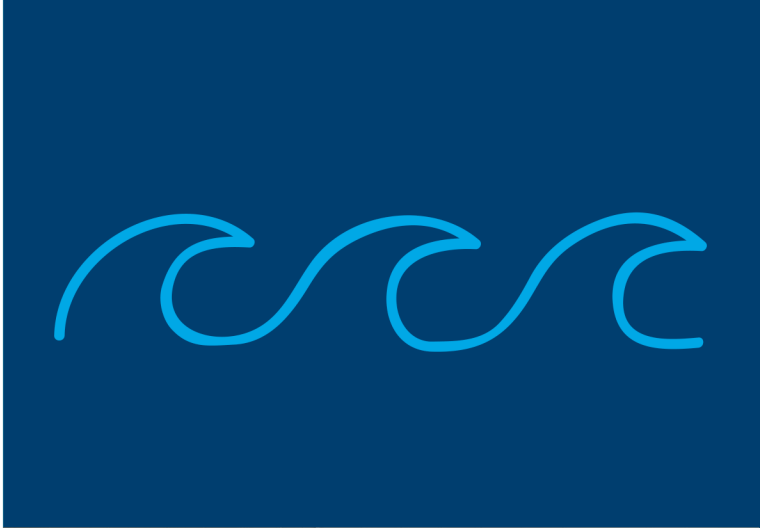


**NorthPort**  
FLORIDA  
PARKS & RECREATION



# SUMMER CAMP

## PARENT HANDBOOK



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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the North Port Parks & Recreation Department's Camp program! We're thrilled to have you on board for an exhilarating camp season filled with opportunities for campers to embrace the great outdoors, engage in structured group activities, and cultivate lasting friendships. This handbook is your comprehensive guide, offering essential policies and procedures to ensure the safety and organization of our programs. We encourage you to go through this information with your child to guarantee a fantastic and successful summer camp experience for all campers! Below I have listed our vision and mission that our organization strives to fulfill in each of our offerings.

*Vision*

*To be a recognized leader in providing parks, facilities, and programs that increase wellness and enrich life experiences within our community.*

*Mission*

*To promote healthy and socially rewarding activities through the preservation of cultural resources and the provision of diverse high-quality parks and natural resources.*

Parents/Guardians should expect enriching curriculum, fun field trips, and a safe environment for their campers. Our camp team has worked diligently to identify themes which will not only peak the interest of our campers but allow them make connections and identify interests. We are committed to encourage our campers through positive affirmations and redirect behaviors when modifications are needed.

On behalf of our department, I thank you for choosing North Port Parks & Recreation to provide for your summer camp and recreational needs. Have a safe and enjoyable time!

All my best,

*Shelby Mendelson*



**Shelby Mendelson, CPRP**

**Recreation Manager**

4970 City Hall Blvd., North Port, FL 34286

Office: 941-429-x3561 Cell: 941-374-7160



*Accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Park & Recreation Agencies by the National Recreation & Park Association*

### **Parent Orientation**

Parent orientation night will be scheduled for the Thursday prior to the start of camp at the George Mullen Activity Center.

- 6:00 pm: CIT Parent Orientation
- 6:30 pm: Teen Xtreme Orientation
- 7:00 pm: GMAC Orientation

During this event, you can meet the staff, learn about camp policies and procedures, see photos from the previous camp season and ask camp related questions. Camp forms will also be available.

### **Camp Staff Contact Information**

Our program encourages open communication to ensure that your child has the best camp experience. Please contact the camp leaders below should you have any questions or concerns.

**The GMAC Camp program is led by Curtis Champion, Recreation Supervisor.**

O: [941-240-8122](tel:941-240-8122) | C: [941-302-4869](tel:941-302-4869) | [ccampion@northportfl.gov](mailto:ccampion@northportfl.gov)

George Mullen Activity Center

1602 Kramer Way

North Port, FL 34286

(941) 240-8125

**The Teen Xtreme Camp program is led by Alex Romero, Recreation Program Coordinator.**

O: [941-240-8120](tel:941-240-8120) | C: [941-302-7134](tel:941-302-7134) | [aromero@northportfl.gov](mailto:aromero@northportfl.gov)

Morgan Family Community Center

W. Price Blvd.

North Port, FL 34291

- Both camps have a Head Camp Counselor and Camp Counselors that are hired seasonally. Counselors are a mix of students, parents, and teachers who all share a common goal to make the summer a fun, safe, and positive experience for all campers.
- All staff attend training which includes First Aid/CPR, service standards, activity development, safety, and security procedures, as well as, undergoing state and local criminal background checks, state sexual predator background checks, and a substance screening.

### **Ratios/Camper Groups**

Group sizes vary depending on enrollment, age of campers, and specific group needs. Campers are grouped in similar age groups as assigned by the Recreation Supervisor. Special requests for grouping specific children together will not be accepted.

### **Personal Items**

Campers should not bring any personal items or electronics to camp unless approved by staff. Staff is not responsible for personal items, if lost or stolen. This includes cell phones, tablets, smart watches, blankets, toys, etc.

Campers are not allowed to have phones out during the camp day. If they are observed on their phones by a staff member, they will be warned to put it away. If a second offense occurs, the phone will be collected by the head camp counselor and returned at the end of the day. If a camper continues to need reminders, we will communicate a plan with the camper's parents to discuss having the phone not brought to camp.

### **Attire & Daily Packing List**

Campers participate in various activities throughout the day, both indoor and outdoor. Please provide your child with the proper attire and packed belongings based on the planned activities.

1. Daily Needs:
  - Packed lunch (GMAC weeks 2-9 lunch is provided by Sarasota County Schools Food and Nutrition)
  - Two healthy snacks (We do not permit outside soda, candy, and gum during camp)
  - Reusable water bottle
  - Comfortable lightweight clothing
  - Tennis shoes or sneakers
2. Recommended:
  - Hats
  - Sunscreen
  - Change of clothes
  - Open toed shoes for North Port Aquatic Center

### **Sarasota County Schools Food and Nutrition Services**

Sarasota County Schools Food and Nutrition Services provides free lunch to participating campers at our GMAC camp program Weeks 2-9. If your child will not be participating in this program, a packed lunch is needed daily. Teen Xtreme campers will need to provide packed lunches and snacks daily.

Parents should make sure to clearly label lunch containers. Please keep in mind that we do not refrigerate or heat lunches/snacks. All campers must pack a lunch on all field trip days.

### **Health/Medical Concerns**

For the well-being of all campers, any child with an illness that is contagious and can be passed on to others should refrain from attending camp. If a child has one or more of the following symptoms, he/she will not be allowed to attend camp that day:

- Temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Recurrent vomiting or diarrhea
- Lice

If we observe a child is not feeling well at camp and is unable to participate, staff will call a parent/guardian/emergency contact to make arrangements for the child to be picked up. It is imperative for the parent/guardian/emergency contact to return our call within one hour.

\*\*If your child requires prescription medication during camp hours, a self-administration form must be completed

by both parent and pediatrician and submitted to the Recreation Program Coordinator or Recreation Supervisor in advance. Medication must be provided in the proper dose with current prescription documentation. All medications are secured until the time of administration.

### **Camp Hygiene**

Campers must maintain good hygiene to ensure a safe and enjoyable time at camp:

- There will be absolutely no food sharing.
- Staff will sanitize high touch areas throughout the day.
- Campers and Counselors will be washing their hands before meals and periodically throughout the day.
- We will have hand sanitizer throughout the campus for campers to use.

### **Sign-In & Sign-Out Procedures**

#### **GMAC Camp Sign-In:**

**Arrival:** Regular camp day begins at 8:30 a.m.

**Departure:** Regular camp day ends at 4:30 p.m.

Drop-off and Pick-up will be located outside the front doors. Pull up under the carport and a staff member will meet you at your car. Please have your car tag visibly displayed in your front window. If you are dropping off after 9am or picking up before 4pm, please call 941-240-8125 and a staff member will meet you at the designated camp spot.

#### **Teen Xtreme Camp Sign-In:**

**Arrival:** Regular camp day begins at 8:45 a.m.

**Departure:** Regular camp day ends at 4:45 p.m.

Drop-off and Pick-up will be located outside the Morgan Family Community Center on the far left-hand side in the designated camp spots. A staff member will meet you at your car. If you are dropping off after 9am or picking up before 3pm, please call 941.429.3555 and a staff member will meet you at the designated camp spot.

#### **Camp Sign-Out:**

Two (2) car tags per family will be provided for pick up. Please have your car tag visibly displayed in your front window. All authorized persons on the Camp Registration Form MUST have a photo identification available at pick up.

\*\*Teen Xtreme campers have the opportunity to have self-sign-out authorization by their parent/guardian. Please contact Alex Romero, Recreation Program Coordinator, for more information.

#### **Attendance**

Attendance is taken regularly throughout the day.

**Please note there is no camp on May 27, June 19, and July 4**

#### **Late Fees**

A fee will be charged when children are picked up late from camp.

Ten dollars (\$10) per 15 minutes will be charged per camper.

Children may not return to camp until the late fees are paid.

## **Field Trips**

- On scheduled field trip days, please have your child at camp by 8:30 a.m. for GMAC and 8:45 a.m. for Teen Xtreme to participate, unless otherwise noted.
- Please reference the Daily Scoop for accurate return times.
- If you miss the bus for a field trip, you can bring your child to the field trip location after contacting the Recreation Supervisor or Coordinator for your camp.
- If your child does not want to attend the field trip, alternate arrangements for child care must be made by the parent outside of camp.
- Registration fees include the cost of all field trips. Refer to the field trip schedule for destinations. Field trips are subject to change.
- A Summer Camp registration form must be signed by the parent or guardian. This form will cover all trips unless additional information is required by the field trip vendor.
- On field trip days, remember to provide your child(ren) with the proper attire including camp shirt, sunscreen, lunch and beverages in non-glass containers. Label personal items with your child's name.
- We encourage parents to be frugal (less than \$20) if sending spending money with campers. Staff is not responsible for a camper's personal money.
- For late arrivals or early dismissals on field trip days, parents will be responsible for getting children to or from the field trip site.
- Children must be signed in and/or out with a counselor at the field trip location with authorized persons identification.

## **Camp Code of Conduct**

The Parks & Recreation Department has established a Code of Conduct based on the guiding principles of respect, safety, behavior, and personal property. When addressing behavioral challenges with campers, staff will refer to the guidelines below when issuing Behavior Modifications and Strikes. Three Behavior Modifications is equivalent to One Strike. It is imperative for the parent/guardian/emergency contact to return our call within one hour. If a camper is a threat to themselves, staff, or another camper, we reserve the right to issue an immediate expulsion.

### **Behavior Modifications:**

- Not following instructions
- Cell phone and/or electronics use
- Not respecting other campers, staff, or property of others
- Using profanity, offensive language, or name-calling
- Teasing or bullying

### **Strikes:**

- Physical aggression
- Intentionally leaving assigned group or designated area
- Display of suggestive behavior
- Stealing
- Use of weapons or look-a-like weapons
- Use of tobacco, vaporizers or drugs

Parents must review the Code of Conduct with their child prior to the start of camp. Should a disciplinary problem arise, staff will first attempt to resolve the problem with the camper and provide clear explanations as to why the specific behavior is inappropriate and help him/her find alternative behavior that fits within the camp guidelines. Parents/guardians will be contacted if the problem affects the safety and well-being of another camper or staff member or if the problem cannot be resolved. In this case, a Three-Strike System for misbehavior is followed:

1. **First Strike:** Written warning with parent conference conducted and a one-day suspension from the program.
2. **Second Strike:** One day suspension from the program, removal from the next field trip (non-refundable), and a parent conference will be conducted.
3. **Third Strike:** Permanent expulsion from the remainder of camp (non-refundable).

**New this year!** We will be implementing a new reward-based system for positive behavior called “Camp Coins.” Campers will have the opportunity to earn special privileges and prizes when they go above and beyond to be an outstanding camper.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. To be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

1. An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
2. Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all of our camp participants that allows them to interact in a relaxed and secure environment. North Port Parks & Recreation Department will not tolerate bullying behavior in our camps. If bullying does occur, all campers should be able to tell staff and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is occurring is expected to tell a staff member. We are committed to addressing concerns that fall under bullying immediately and fairly, informing parents about bullying and disciplinary policies and stressing to all camp participants the importance of choosing respect when interacting with one another.

### **Communication**

Please communicate any questions, comments, or concerns you may have to parks staff. Keeping open communication between parents/guardians and staff is key to a successful camp.

**Parents/Guardians must inform the staff when:**

- Household contact information should be updated (i.e. change in phone #, e-mail, address, etc.)
- Someone other than those listed on your child’s registration will be picking up your child. This information must be in writing and the designee will be asked to show valid identification.



- Your child cannot be picked up on time or your child will be late.
- If your child or member of the household is ill.

**Parents/Guardians will be notified when:**

- Your child is injured or ill.
- Your child is having disciplinary issues.
- Your child has any other issue or incident in camp that you need to be notified and informed of.

**Daily Scoops**

Each week, parents/guardians will receive a Daily Scoop email that outlines field trips, activities, and any important information relative to camp for the week. North Port Parks & Recreation secures an array of onsite presentations and activities to keep your camper engaged. Keep an eye on our social media platforms for weekly camp photos and wrap ups!

**Reasonable Accommodations**

Children of all abilities are invited to enroll in our summer camp programs. During registration, be sure to indicate that an accommodation is necessary for your child so we may contact you prior to camp to discuss reasonable accommodation.

**Change of Emergency Contact Information**

It is important that North Port Parks & Recreation maintains current and accurate records on each child so that parents can be contacted in case of an emergency. This information includes address, phone numbers, email and names of individuals authorized to pick up your child(ren). It is extremely important to the safety of your child(ren) that we be informed of changes. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make any necessary updates if changes occur.

**Camp Forms**

- All forms are due at the time of registration.
- Forms are available at the Morgan Family Community Center, George Mullen Activity Center and online at [www.northportfl.gov/camps](http://www.northportfl.gov/camps)
- Until required paperwork is received and processed, children will not be allowed to participate in the camp program.

**Camp Refunds**

Refunds for summer camp will be considered provided the request is received fourteen (14) days prior to the first day of the first week of camp, minus a \$25 cancellation fee. Pro-rated refunds for medical reasons will be considered based on the date the request is received if accompanied by written documentation from a doctor indicating that the individual is unable to participate in the program.

**Evaluations**

Your feedback is important to us! Evaluation forms will be available for each session of camp and can be found on the City's website. For additional information regarding Summer Camp, call 941-429-PARK (7275).