

Berwyn Park District Summer Camp Parent Handbook 2026



CAMP LOCATIONS

Freedom Park
Happy Campers (Ages 3-5)
Hours: 9am-1pm
Afternoon Enrichment 1-3:45
3701 Scoville
p: 708-788-1701

Proksa Park Activity Center
Adventure Camp (1st-4th Grade)
Hours: 9am-4pm
3001 S. Wisconsin Ave
p: 708-795-2892

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BERWYN park district

Welcome to Summer Camp at the Berwyn Park District! We cannot wait to start off Summer with you. This handbook is designed to give you, the parents/guardians, an overview of our procedures so we can all have a fun and safe summer. You will be able to access this handbook at berwynparks.org. All forms are required at the time of registration. The forms are designed to keep your camper safe.

MISSION

To enrich the quality of life of the community by providing superior parks, facilities, and recreational services in a fiscally responsible manner.

CAMP GOALS

- Emphasize the teaching and learning of skills and activities.
- Teach and instill the concept of teamwork through planned activities.
- Create mutual respect for other people and their ideas, thoughts, and actions.
- Introduce campers to new activities.
- Teach campers proper social skills, i.e., good sportsmanship.
- Maintain a safe and respectful learning environment.
- Emphasize fun in activities and de-emphasize competition.
- Provide positive role models for the children.



PREPARING FOR YOUR DAY AT CAMP

What to pack each day- 1 snack, lunch filled water bottle, sunscreen, swim items if it's a swim day. (PLEASE LABEL ALL BELONGINGS)

- **WATER** - Campers should bring a refillable water bottle every day. Camp Staff will make sure your camper drinks plenty of water every day and will take several breaks each day to stay hydrated.
- **ATTIRE** Your camper will be participating in physical activities outside and inside throughout the day. Dress your camper in lightweight synthetic clothing. We will often be involved in messy art projects, etc., and while precautions such as wearing smocks will be taken whenever possible, easy-to-care-for play clothes are best. Please be sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. We suggest that children come to the program dressed in layers each day as temperatures can vary depending on our activity and the time of day. Gym shoes are required every day. Sandals, flip-flops, Crocs, and other open-toed shoes are not allowed. Sunscreen application every day is important since campers will be outside for a large part of the day.
- **SNACKS & LUNCHES**- Campers are asked to pack a lunch and an afternoon snack "snack." Please do not send your camper with any food that contains nuts. **The Berwyn Park District is nut free.**
- **POOL/SWIM DAYS – Adventure Camp** will travel (walk) to the Berwyn Recreation Center approximately one day per week weather permitting. Please send your camper with a bathing suit, towel, and plastic bag to place any wet articles in after swimming. If your camper would like to bring goggles (no nose piece goggles allowed by pool) please label them clearly, as this is an item that tends to get lost easily. Campers are responsible for their own swimming items. Puddle jumpers and life vests are allowed, they must say Coast Guard Approved.
- **SUNSCREEN GUIDELINES**- We recommend you purchase a roll-on or spray sunscreen for easy and effective application. We will not provide sunscreen for your child. We recommend that you apply sunscreen to your child before they come to the program site for the day. Camp staff will not be able to help administer sunscreen. Please write your campers name on the sunscreen bottle and place it in a Ziploc bag.
- **PERSONAL ITEMS**- Toys from home should stay at home. This includes toys, toy guns/weapons, expensive personal items, candy, and gum. Absolutely no trading cards. If campers are seen with trading cards they will be put away for the day, and the adult picking up the camper will have to pick it up at the end of the day. Please work with us on this issue by not sending your camper with trading cards or other toys. Do not send your camper with any video game systems, cell phones, or MP3 players as they will be removed and returned at the end of day. **If your camper does bring an electronic device to camp the Park District is not responsible if it is broken, damaged or stolen while camp.** If you need to speak to your camper, please call the Park District directly. 708-795-2892.



Field Trips (Adventure Camp)

All field trips are dependent upon weather, transportation and rules of the field trips facility rules and regulations. **FIELD TRIPS TAKE PLACE EVERY WEDNESDAY.**

- All campers MUST wear their Berwyn Park District camp T-shirt.
- Wear appropriate clothing for the trip.
- Campers are to bring money to camp only when recommended or allowed. This will be communicated by camp staff. Campers are responsible for all money that is brought to camp. Counselors will not be responsible for any camper belongings or money.
- We do not allow parent attendance on Field Trips.
- Campers must be on time the day of the field trip 8:55-9:05. Campers are not allowed to be dropped off or picked up at the field trip location. Please plan accordingly for personal appointments.

Swimming/Water Days

Happy Campers- Will participate in water activities on site once to twice per week. Please refer to the calendar for these scheduled activities.

- Campers are required to wear appropriately fit lined swimwear to camp on the scheduled day.
- Apply Sunscreen before coming to camp.



Adventure Camp- Will participate in water activities on site, and water themed field trips. Please refer to the calendar for these scheduled activities.

Swim Wear- Plain clothes are NOT permitted to participate in water activities.

- Girls must have a full, fitting swimsuit.
- Boys must have lined / fitted swim trunks.
- Swim Shirts are allowed but must be form fitting swim shirt (rash guard) **plain t-shirts are not permitted at pools.**

Adventure camp participants will also partake in water activities and water park field trips. Any child marked as a “non-swimmer” on their Emergency Form will be restricted to shallow pool locations at all facilities with no exception, and they will not be allowed to go on waterslides or in the lazy river (at some locations). However, if they are marked as a swimmer on the emergency form, they will be allowed in the deep end and on all water structures with no restrictions. Please note that we will always have to follow the rules of the facility, in which case some children must be of a certain height to use a structure. We do not accept “maybe’s” or “sort-of’s” on our emergency form, so please review and select this information carefully.

Procedures

REGISTRATION

So that staff can be adequately prepared for the first day of each camp session, all campers must be registered and have submitted a Participant Emergency Form by 4pm on the Wednesday before each camp session. Staff are unable to accept registration or take payment on site. Please be aware that your child will not be allowed into camp unless they are pre-registered and have a Participant Emergency Form on file.

HOW TO REGISTER

The deadline for each weekly session of summer camp is the Wednesday before that session begins. Registration hours are Monday through Friday, 9am-4pm.

WAITING LISTS

The program you are interested in may be full at times. You may sign up to be on a waiting list by providing your name, phone number and program of interest at the Proksa Park Activity Center. You will be contacted when an opening is available. You will have 24 hours to register. If you have not registered within that 24-hour period, your name will be taken off the waiting list. Please note that waiting lists do not guarantee a spot in the program.

PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS WITHDRAWAL/REFUNDS

No refunds will be given for Summer Camp. Prorated refunds may be issued if accompanied by a signed physician’s note. The prorated refund will be determined once the note is received. Full refunds may be offered in the event the park district cancels the program. After a session begins no refunds are issued. Medical refunds require a doctor’s note. *Due to the discount, no refunds or proration will be issued for full-run sessions of programs.

Payment Procedures

A \$30 non-refundable deposit is required for each camp session. (see chart below). Deposits will be applied to the cost of each weekly session. Camp balance payments will be split between May 13th and June 10th and July 8th. Payments can be made online or in person at Proksa or Freedom. Families with camp balances after the deadline date run the risk of having their camps cancelled.



Week 1	June 9 – June 13 th Payment Due: May 9th	Registration Deadline date: 6/4/2025
Week 2	June 16 th - June 20th Payment Due: May 9th	Registration Deadline date: 6/11/2025
Week 3	June 23rd – June 27 th Payment Due: May 9th	Registration Deadline date: 6/18/2025
Week 4	June 30th- July 2nd Payment Due: June 13th	Registration Deadline date: 6/25/2025
Week 5	July 7 th - July 11 th Payment Due: June 13th	Registration Deadline date: 7/2/2025

Week 6	July 14 th - July 18 th	Payment Due: June 13 th	Registration Deadline date: 7/9/2025
Week 7	July 21 st - July 25 th	Payment Due: July 11 th	Registration Deadline date: 7/16/2025
Week 8	July 28 th – August 1 st	Payment Due: July 11 th	Registration Deadline date: 7/23/2025
Week 9	August 4 th - August 8 th	Payment Due: July 11 th	Registration Deadline date: 7/30/2025



DAILY SIGN IN/OUT PROCEDURES

Upon arrival each day, a camp counselor will check in your child at drop off. Children will be released to an authorized person listed on the camper form at the end of the day. People picking up your child will have to provide an ID to confirm their identity, and they are on the pickup approval list you provide at registration.

Staff are unable to release children to any person (related or unrelated) who is not listed on the Camper Authorization Form as an authorized person to pick up a child. This procedure is to ensure the safety of your child while in our care. If you wish to add individuals to the authorized pick-up list, you may do so by submitting changes in writing. More forms are available upon request.

Happy Campers- Drop off and pick up will be done at the front main entrance of Freedom Park. Parents, please walk your child(ren) into the building to sign them in and/or out. Camp begins at 9:00am and ends at 1:00pm each day. *CHILDREN MAY NOT BE DROPPED OFF BEFORE 8:55.*

Adventure Camp- Drop off and pick up is done at the front main entrance of Proksa Park Activity Center. Camp begins at 9:00am and ends at 4:00pm each day. Parents, please walk your child(ren) into the building to sign them in and/or out. *CHILDREN MAY NOT BE DROPPED OFF BEFORE 8:55.*

LATE CHILD PICK-UP

If you are late picking up your camper there is a \$1.00 fee for every minute that you are late. Any camper that is not picked up by 1:00pm or 4:00pm respectively will be brought to the office. Any camper that is not picked up after 15 minutes will be required to pay a late fee of \$30.00. Parents will need to come in and sign out their child and pay the late fee(s).

INFORMATION CHANGES

Please notify the Recreation staff and Camp Director in writing whenever you have a change of address, phone number, employment phone number, authorized guardians, emergency contacts, or pertinent medical information. Emergencies may arise with your child, and it is especially important staff have updated, accurate information.

Communication

Berwyn Park District strives to communicate effectively about our programs through calendars, posted signs about upcoming events, emails, and staff communication during drop off and pick up. If you have questions, please feel free to contact your camp director.

EMAIL ADDRESS ON FILE

Be sure to **update your online account** with an accurate email address that you check. The Thursday prior to your child's first day of the weekly session of camp you will receive an email including a calendar of events. The email will let you know what is planned for camp each week including swim times, dress-up days, as well as special activities and events. Please read through them carefully so that you are aware of specific details that may require something of you or your child to do. (Fill out a waiver, bring an item or wear a specific item of clothing.)

WRITTEN NOTES

Parents should write a note in instances of:

- Early pickup
- Pickup by someone other than those designated as emergency contacts with pickup authorization on your child's form.
- Medication needs (Please review the "Health & Safety" section.)
- Modified activities, extra help, or additional support for your child

Health and Safety

Medications

Campers requiring any type of medication during camp hours must have a signed medication release form on file. Medication cannot be distributed without the fully completed release form and detailed note from the pediatrician/specialist. If your child is taking medication, the medication must be in the original container with the child's full name on the label and the correct dosage enclosed. Medication is to stay at camp, not transported to and from home. Doctors must prescribe a separate prescription, so the camp authorities are given only the required dosage. The medication will not be passed back and forth between parents and the camp. Medication and written instructions must be given to the Camp Director prior to the child's first day at camp.

Illness

If a child arrives at camp and is ill, the parent or guardian will be required to take the child home. If a child becomes ill at camp, the parent or emergency contact person will be notified to pick up the sick child within 30 minutes. Please ensure that the emergency contacts are in the area and are willing to perform as contacts for you children prior to placing them on the Emergency Form.

Children should be kept home, and the office should be notified if they exhibit any of the following symptoms including but not limited to;

- Fever greater than 100
- Rash
- Diarrhea/Vomiting
- Discharge of the eyes

For the safety of all, sick children should be kept home for 24 hours after the last sign of the symptoms disappear and without fever reducing medication before returning to camp.

Toilet Training Policy

Toilet training is an essential self-care skill in early childhood that gives children more independence and freedom than any other skill they will learn during the phase of life. If your child is not 100% toilet trained based on these guidelines, you will be required to withdraw your child from the program until he/she is independent in his/her toileting. The Berwyn Park District is aware that any of our young children may have the occasional bathroom “accident.” Counselors handle this situation with sensitivity and care. To help eliminate stress for your child, provide a change of clothes labeled with child’s name to have on hand in case of such an emergency.

All children must be toilet trained. Pull-ups are not permitted. Berwyn Park District is not equipped with either the facilities or the staff to be able to address potty-training at camp. It is expected that the child who is toilet-trained will demonstrate independence in all aspects of using the bathroom.

A child who is fully potty trained can do the following.

1. Be able to TELL the adult they have to go potty BEFORE they have to go. They must be able to say the words or sign the words “I Have to go potty” BEFORE they must go. (This is key to successful potty training. Children who are potty trained have the ability to perceive the event that is going to happen before it happens.
2. Be able to pull down their underwear and pants and get them back up with minimal assistance.
3. Be able to properly wipe themselves after using the toilet.
4. Be able to get on and off the potty by themselves.
5. Be able to wash and dry hands independently.
6. Be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or wait if they are outside on the playground until they can get to the bathroom.

Children who are coming to summer camp for the first time may experience a few accidents. Anything beyond three accidents per one summer camp session (three weeks) or four accidents overall through consecutive summer camp sessions indicates a lack of toilet training.

Staff

The Berwyn Park District prides itself on hiring quality staff that embody our mission and have a passion for being a positive role model for children. Many of our counselors are high school and college students. Staff members are selected through a comprehensive application and interview process, and often have previous experience working with children.



Each staff member completes a minimum of 30 hours of staff training that emphasizes the importance of safety, First aid and CPR, child development and fun. The Berwyn Park District strives to maintain a 1:10 ratio for youth camp programs.

We want you, as a parent or guardian, to know about staff behaviors that we consider appropriate, such as side hugs, high fives, praise, and program-related discussions. Examples of inappropriate behavior include lap sitting, full front hugs, rough play, profanity, harassment, overly personal discussions and receiving personal gifts from counselors.

Outside Contact Policies

During staff time off or when no longer employed with the Berwyn Park District these persons are private citizens and are not subject to our employment rules and procedures. Knowing this, we instruct our staff that any contact with campers outside of our programs, whether in person, by phone or online, can only happen with the express approval and involvement of the camper's parent or guardian.

Babysitting Policy

It is our policy not to endorse or recommend staff as babysitters. Any babysitting arrangements with present or former Berwyn Park District staff shall be based on the judgment of the parent or guardian.

Behavior/Discipline Policy

Code of Conduct

The Camp staff is trained in how to implement positive guidance techniques with the children. Our goals are to have all children enjoy their time in our programs, feel safe and secure while they are here. Campers will learn social skills, problem-solving and conflict resolution. The goal of our camp is to provide an atmosphere for children to develop a variety of satisfying skills and relationships, while enjoying healthy activities. Please read the following and discuss the behaviors with your child, let's follow our CAMPER's.

Caring It is important to treat equipment, toys, and games with care so that other campers can enjoy them. We will treat the property of the Berwyn Park District and of the other campers and staff with care.

Appropriate Language Children must refrain from using obscene language or gestures for any reason.

Mindful of actions When asked to do or not to do something, a camper needs to follow the directions given the first time. This is for the safety of all campers. Please speak to staff and other campers with respect.

Play Campers are asked not to engage in any horseplay with each other or with a counselor. No one will be allowed to hit, push, or use any type of aggressive behavior. We will use words to settle our differences. We keep our hands and feet to ourselves.

Encouraging Conversation Campers are not allowed to discuss inappropriate topics or contribute to demeaning conversations about other campers or staff. We want to encourage each other to be our best.

Responsibility All campers need to remain with their group and within the eyesight of their counselor. This applies here at the Berwyn Park District, and on all off-site field trips. We want campers to be always safe.

Prevention of inappropriate behaviors is emphasized by:

- Giving children freedom to explore and grow
- Having realistic expectations for behavior
- Communicating to children both the expectation for behavior and the reasons for these standards
- Establishing, when possible, the consequences of inappropriate behavior

Our general expectations/rules for children's safety:

- Children must walk while indoors
- Children must refrain from climbing on furniture
- Children must use inside (quiet) voices while inside
- Children must listen and follow when a leader gives verbal directions
- Children must stop an activity when a leader gives verbal direction to do so
- Children must use equipment carefully
- Children must keep their bodies to themselves

There will be site-specific rules that all children will be expected to follow (e.g., playground boundaries, to follow line leader, etc.). Camp staff will go over these rules repeatedly to reinforce expectations. If an incident occurs where a camper conducts himself/herself in a manner that jeopardizes their safety, the safety of others, or is not in accordance with the camp rules the following steps will be taken for playground campers (Happy campers will be addressed individually).

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

First Violation

A staff member will address and document the issue directly with the child and discuss it with the parent when they arrive that day. Parents must sign the behavior contract at the time of pick-up.

Second Violation

A staff member will address and document the issue directly with the child. The child may be removed from an activity for the day such as swimming or play time. Parents will be contacted

during the day or at the end of the camp depending on the time and severity of the incident. Parents must sign the behavior contract at the time of pick up.

Third Violation

A staff member will address and document the issue directly with the child. The Parent or Guardian will receive a phone call and be asked to pick up their child within the hour. The child will be suspended from the weekly field trip. Parents must sign the behavior contract at the time of pick up. No refund will be given.

Fourth Violation

A staff member will address and document the issue directly with the child. Parents will be contacted immediately to pick up their child from the camp. The child will then be suspended from camp for a week with NO refund. Parents must sign the behavior contract at the time of pick up.

Fifth Violation

Child will be dismissed from camp for the remainder of the summer with no refund. Any child causing severe harm to another child or staff member or participating in extreme behavior will be dismissed from the camp immediately. Children with documented disabilities or specific behavior plans may be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

FAQ's

When we have a warmer camp day, how do you provide relief for your campers?

We understand that the weather is always changing. We are fortunate to have many extremely shaded areas to provide relief from those warmer days as well as air conditioning in our buildings. We make sure to have our campers drink plenty of liquids, have a variety of water activities planned as well as rotate our groups inside. Adventure and Teen camp will also be swimming every Tuesday at the Berwyn Recreation Center each week.

Can my child bring any personal belongings to camp?

Our summer camps have a no electronic policy, and personal belongings need to stay at home. These include but are not limited to toys, stuffed animals, video games, cell phones, iPods, and money.

How will lunch bags be handled?

Lunch bags will stay in the camper's backpack. We do not have refrigerators. We recommend that parents use small reusable ice packs if their child's lunch needs to be kept cold.

What if I must pick up my child early?

If your camper is onsite, you may pick them up at any time throughout the day. We will require

a phone call and email to alert our Directors and Counselors so that we may have your camper ready at the specific time. There will be no prorating for these days.

What does my child need for camp each day?

Please make sure your child brings their backpack, a lunch, a refillable water bottle, towel, sunscreen, bug spray, close-toed shoes, and socks. Please make sure all belongings are labeled with your child's first and last name!

If my child is not going to be at camp, do I need to report their absence?

Please email the Camp Director Beth Kell at bkell@berwynparks.org and 708-956-7870. Please indicate your child's name, camp, and a general reason (ex: spending time with family or not feeling well). Our priority is always keep our campers and staff healthy.