

SUMMER 2018

Summer Playgrounds & Xtreme Teen Centers Parent Handbook

Welcome and thank you for registering for a M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation Summer Playground/Summer Teen Center in Prince George's County. This handbook will ensure a successful experience for you and your child/teen. Should you still have questions after reviewing this information, contact the Customer Service Help Desk at 301-699-CALL(2255); TTY 301-699-2544 or email CustomerService@pgparks.com. Throughout the summer, we will contact parents and guardians about completing surveys. We would appreciate your assistance in helping us improve your child's summer experience. We look forward to your child's participation in our summer programs!

Program Administration

Summer Playgrounds & Xtreme Teen Centers Are:

- Drop-in programs.
- For Prince George's County residents only.
- Operated at school and park locations throughout the County.
- Staff supervision is only provided during program operating hours.
- Staff is NOT responsible for participants who:
 - Arrive prior to program start time.
 - Leave the program site during operating hours.
 - Remain past scheduled program closing time.

Hours Of Operation:

- All programs closed July 4.
- Summer Playgrounds operate Mondays-Fridays, 9 am-3 pm.
- Summer Xtreme Teen Centers operate Mondays-Fridays, 11 am-5 pm.
- Program locations are subject to change based on insufficient registration or school closures.
- M-NCPPC cares about the safety and health of your children. All activities and programs are subject to change and/or cancellation if weather conditions warrant, i.e. extreme heat or air quality concerns and weather.

Payment/Refund/Withdrawal/Attendance Information:

- Fee is \$50 per participant.
- **Fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.**
- No checks accepted after June 1. Checks returned for insufficient funds will be assessed a \$35 Refund Administration Fee in addition to your bank charges.
- Make a note for next year's taxes: Federal Tax ID 526-001-550. You can print your registration form from your online account.
- There will be NO financial credit made for absences, illness or suspensions.
- Optional field trips and special events may be offered for additional fees on a first-come, first-served basis.

Required Forms:

To comply with the State of Maryland's Youth Camp Safety Standards, The Department of Parks and Recreation has instituted a new, streamlined process for completing and collecting required forms. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to deliver all necessary, completed forms to each program location. Children may not attend without completed forms on site. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

During registration, families will be required to provide information for an emergency contact (name & phone number); physician's name & phone number; whether the child is has been immunized the child a swimmer, or non-swimmer and whether there are any health/behavior concerns. Depending upon the answers to these questions, specific forms will be required for participation in the program.

Once your registration and transaction are complete, the following items will print out for your convenience:

- A Summer Playground/Xtreme Teen Center Confirmation Receipt.
- A Participant/Parent's Agreement that must be signed and returned to program staff prior to participation in the program.
- Depending upon your answers to the prompts, the Health-Medication Form or Maryland DHMH Immunization Certificate.
- Forms can be downloaded (in English or Spanish) online. Go to pgparks.com and search for Summer Playgrounds. Forms can also be picked up at any M-NCPPC Community Center.
- **REMINDER-All forms must be completed and brought to the Playground/Xtreme Teen site on your child's 1st day of participation.**
- **Please keep staff informed of any changes to the information on the forms.**

Medication Policy:

- Emergency medical devices such as EpiPens®, inhalers and insulin pumps are the only medications allowed on playgrounds and Xtreme Teen center sites.
- Emergency medical devices must be on the participant at all times. Devices may NOT be left in lunch boxes, back packs, with staff, etc.
- The Health-Medication Form, with parent & physician's signatures, must be completed for a participant to carry an emergency medical device on their person during program hours.
- The emergency medical device will be self-administered by the participant, who must know what their medication is, be able to recognize it, know the dosage and when and how to take it.
- The emergency medical devices must be in their original pharmaceutical container with prescription label.
- The Health-Medication Form (with parent signature) must be completed if participant is currently taking medication at home. A separate form is required for each medication.
- At least one dose of any new medicine must be given to participant at home at least 24 hours prior to attending program.

Disability Accommodations (Inclusion Services):

All disability accommodation requests for playgrounds/Xtreme Teen Centers must be noted on PARKS DIRECT accounts and requested at least two weeks prior to the start date of the program.

Available accommodations include:

- Adapted equipment (e.g. lift bus/van, water wheelchair)
- Limited health services
- Signing support staff
- Accessible trip transportation
- Trained support staff

For Inclusion Services contact the Park & Planning Help Desk at 301-699-CALL (2255) or CustomerService@pgparks.com or contact the following offices:

Northern Area: 301-445-4500

Central Area: 301-249-7200

Southern Area: 301-203-6000

Program Information

Sign-In Policy:

- Participants must sign in each day.
- If participants leave the program site during the day and then return, they must sign in again.

Lunch And Snacks:

- Participants must bring their own non-perishable lunch and snack, with the exception of Food Service locations.
- Lunches should be clearly marked with participant's name.
- Please send a water bottle each day labeled with participant's name.
- Microwaves and refrigerators are not available.

Participants' Attire:

- Dress your child/teen according to the day's activities & weather.
- Closed-toe shoes are required; sandals are not permitted.

Safety:

- Each program site has staff certified in CPR & First Aid.
- You will be notified should your child/teen become injured or sick. If you are unavailable, we will notify the individual listed as emergency contact on the Participant Profile Form.
- A note of Injury/Illness/Incident Form will be sent home to you each time First Aid is given to your child/teen.

Weather:

- M-NCPPC cares about the safety and health of your children. We reserve the right to cancel or modify programs and activities if weather conditions warrant, i.e. extreme heat or air quality concerns. Please visit pgparks.com and sign-up for PGAlerts.

Sunscreen:

Appropriate sunscreen use is important to prevent skin damage and skin cancer.

- If your child is going to apply sunscreen at camp, please complete the Sunscreen Policy section of the Summer Programs Waiver of Liability and Permission Form.
- Sunscreen must be labeled with the camper's name, be in its original container and kept with the participant and his/her belongings.
- Please provide **SPRAY** sunscreen if you would like camp staff to assist with sunscreen application.
- Staff will not be responsible for furnishing or holding sunscreen.

Transportation:

- M-NCPPC does not provide transportation to or from program sites.
- Staff is not permitted to transport participants in their personal vehicles.

Trips:

- Registration is accepted on first-come, first-served basis.
- All field trips will be age appropriate with staff supervision.
- Amusement Park trips will be offered that require purchase of ticket and transportation.
- Refunds will not be granted for field trips unless cancelled.
- **Be on time.** Buses will not wait for late participants.
- Participants who take M-NCPPC provided transportation to a field trip destination must also return from the trip on M-NCPPC provided transportation. If special arrangements are needed, please contact your program director.
- Request for accessible trip transportation must be made at the time of registration and at least 2 weeks prior to the start date of the program.
- Only registered participants are allowed to ride buses.

Swimming Pool Rules:

- Participants must wear bathing suits - no shorts or cut-offs.
- Participants must bring their own towel and must shower before entering the pool.
- Running, pushing, dunking and/or horseplay are not permitted.
- No street shoes permitted on the pool deck.
- No diving allowed off the side of the pool. Some pools may have designated areas for diving (i.e. diving board).
- No flotation devices, masks or snorkels are allowed in the pool. Exceptions are made for medical purposes.
- Please don't bring valuable items to the pool. Pool facilities are not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- Program staff will designate an area at the pool for participants to consolidate their belongings, to gather at rest breaks and in the event of an emergency.
- A buddy system will be established for pool safety.

How To Designate Your Child/Teen's Swim Skill Level

NON-SWIMMER:

- Non-swimmers have limited or no previous experience with swimming pools or other aquatic environments. They are unable to independently swim distances of 20 yards or more and/or cannot swim or play comfortably in water that is above their heads.

SWIMMER:

- Swimmer must have previous experience in swimming pools or other aquatic environments.
- The Swim Test consists of the following skills, which are based on the American Red Cross Water Competency Guidelines:
 1. Enter the water, going completely under.
 2. Recover then float or tread for 1 minute with head remaining above the water.
 3. Turn completely around and swim on their front for a minimum of 25 yards without stopping or touching the bottom.
 4. Exit the water by pulling self-up and over the side of the pool.
- Upon successful completion of the required Swim Test, children designated as "Swimmers" will have full access to all water depths and slides/features in which they meet the proper height requirement and wear a green wristband. Designated "Swimmers" who do not pass the swim test will be re-designated as "Non-Swimmers" and are restricted to chest deep water.

- If your child's swimming abilities change between the time you register for a program and the start of the program please contact staff as you will need to sign off on a new profile form.

Swim Trips to Non-M-NCPPC Pools, Open Bodies of Water, Amusement Park Trips and Beaches:

- **NON-SWIMMERS** will wear a red wristband, be restricted to chest-deep water and will not be allowed in wave pools.
- **SWIMMERS** who have passed the swim skills test at an M-NCPPC pool will have access to all water depths as the venue rules allow.

Swimmers who have not taken the swim skills test (prior to trip to amusement or water park):

- Will wear a red wristband and will be designated as a NON-SWIMMER.
- Will be restricted to chest-deep water.
- Will not be allowed in wave pools at amusement or water parks.

Program Policies and Regulations

Conduct And Discipline

The Department of Parks and Recreation is committed to providing a safe, positive and respectful environment for all our patrons. Participants & parents are expected to follow the **CODE OF CONDUCT & RULES TO PLAY BY**, as well as all applicable M-NCPPC Rules and Regulations, to ensure a positive experience for all. We take a constructive approach to discipline and our staff regularly reviews the rules with participants. Please, immediately report to staff any uncomfortable or threatening situations you or your child/teen may experience while participating in our programs. The Department makes every effort to promptly resolve any inappropriate behavior.

Code of Conduct

Participants, parents, staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Be respectful, courteous, and considerate of others at all times.
- Communicate in an appropriate manner. Refrain from using abusive or foul language/gestures, harsh words, yelling or harassing others.
- Be responsible for their actions and understand that irresponsible behavior will result in disciplinary action.
- Refrain from deliberately causing harm to oneself or others.
- Never jeopardize the health and safety of others.
- Be respectful of the property of others & the property of site/center.

As a participant, I will:

- Follow the program's **CODE OF CONDUCT & RULES FOR PLAY**.
- Follow directions and cooperate with staff.
- Be nice and not bully, tease, pick on, kick, bite, hit or fight with others. I will show respect to all others.
- Use program equipment, supplies and facilities in a safe and respectful manner.

As a parent, I will:

- Serve as a good role model and example for my child/teen.
- Teach my child/teen the **CODE OF CONDUCT & RULES FOR PLAY**.
- Provide staff with all requested information in a timely manner.
- Assure my child arrives and departs the program site on time.
- Show respect for staff and participants and not interfere with staff or volunteer duties.

Disciplinary Actions for participants may include (depending on the severity of the incident):

- Time out with notification to parent through the Injury/Illness/Incident Report Form
- Phone call to parent
- Parent conference
- Suspension and/or dismissal from program (without a refund)

Disciplinary Actions for parents for inappropriate behavior may include:

- Warning-either oral or written
- Suspension and/or dismissal of your child/teen from program (without a refund)

Early Drop-Off/Late Pick-Ups:

The safety and security of our participants-your child/teen-is our top priority. We ask for your assistance and request that you and your family comply with our rules, regulations and policies to ensure that your child/teen is safe and secure.

Staff members are not responsible for participants who leave the program site, arrive prior to the scheduled opening time and/or remain onsite after the program's scheduled closing time.

Participants remaining on program site after closing may be transported by M-NCPPC staff to the closest M-NCPPC facility where staff is available to monitor them. In such situations, M-NCPPC Park Police will be notified and a referral to Prince George's County, Child Protective Services may be made.

If you have an emergency, please contact staff to let them know the circumstances.

When Participants Arrive Early or Remain After Closing Policy

- 1st occurrence–notification of parent/guardian
- 2nd occurrence–1 week suspension from program (without a refund)
- 3rd occurrence–expulsion from program (without a refund)

Bullying Policy

The Department of Parks and Recreation recognizes the prevalence of bullying in our society and has developed a **Zero-Tolerance Bullying Policy**. We take bullying very seriously in our programs and have trained our staff to recognize the signs and the need for early intervention. Staff will immediately address bullying behavior and disciplinary actions will be taken, if warranted. Everyone has the right to expect a great experience, and by working as a team, we can identify and manage bullying and ensure everyone has a safe and healthy experience.

The Department is dedicated to bully-free programs and wants to partner with parents on prevention. Please talk to your child/teen about our philosophy on bullying and let them know it will not be tolerated and there will be consequences for bullying behavior. We encourage you to let us know if your child/teen has been involved in bullying either during or after program hours and to let your child/teen know that they can talk to staff in confidence if they need help in managing a situation.

Definition of Bullying:

Bullying is deliberate, repetitive and extremely hurtful behavior, where the victim finds it difficult to defend themselves. It can also include individual incidents. Bullying can be:

PHYSICAL–Physical violence such as hitting, poking, shoving or pushing, jabbing, touching, blocking, pinching and tripping, interfering with another’s property by stealing, hiding or damaging it.

VERBAL–Teasing or spreading rumors about others or their family, name calling, belittling others by making fun of their achievements, mocking, humiliating and/or putting them down.

EMOTIONAL–Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another, excluding one from a group or an activity, ridiculing another’s appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms.

CYBER–Using any form of technology to abuse, embarrass, humiliate or threaten another. Examples include sending harassing text messages, making malicious/abusive phone calls, writing threatening

e-mails or instant messages and/or inappropriate postings in chat rooms, social media, etc.

Policy Intentions:

- To maintain a safe environment that is conducive to recreating, socializing and learning.
- To ensure that staff takes measures to prevent all forms of bullying, harassment and intimidation in our programs including off-site activities.
- To support staff in their actions to identify and protect the targets of bullies.
- To promote an environment where participants feel comfortable reporting bullying behavior in a confidential way.
- To promote positive attitudes in our participants.

Recognizing the Signs of Bullying:

A participant who is being bullied may show changes in behavior such as:

- becoming shy, nervous, anxious, angry or depressed
- feigning illness or having a change in eating habits
- not wanting to attend or participate in activities
- clinging to adults and avoiding other participants
- isolating themselves and avoiding certain places

Bullying rarely stops until there is an intervention.

- Staff needs to act immediately when they witness bullying behavior or when it is reported to them.
- Staff is required to create an environment where participants feel comfortable reporting incidents.
- Staff needs to keep their confidentiality to avoid the accusations of “tattling” and retaliation.
- Bullying hurts and can be as distressing and harmful to children as child abuse. It is unacceptable behavior and needs to be reported and dealt with as a high priority.

Expectations of our Participants:

We ask that participants support themselves, their peers and our programs by:

- **Showing** respect for each other and each other’s property.
- **Refraining** from bullying others. It is wrong and will not be tolerated.
- **Supporting** each other by reporting any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying to staff.
- If you know someone who is being bullied, report it to staff right away.

IF YOU ARE BULLIED, YOU SHOULD:

- **Immediately tell** staff if you are being threatened or bullied. Many who are bullied make the mistake of keeping it to themselves because of fear or embarrassment.
- **Keep calm**, ignore the bully and do not let them see that you are hurt by their behavior.
- **Stay confident** and behave in a friendly way towards the bully so that they have no reason to be aggressive.
- **Walk away** before the bully has the chance to treat you badly.

IF YOU ARE BULLIED, YOU SHOULD NOT:

- **Suffer** in silence—there is nothing wrong with asking for help. Have the courage to speak to a staff person.
- **Retaliate** and hit the bully—because now you could be accused of bullying.
- **Exaggerate** - always be truthful. If anything you say is untrue, people may doubt your whole story.
- **Believe** the lies a bully tells about you. You know they are untrue and are only being said to hurt you.

Expectations of Parents:

We ask parents to support their children and our Department by:

- **Watching** for signs of distress or unusual behavior in their child/teen, which might be evidence of bullying.
- **Advising** their child/teen to report bullying to staff and not retaliate. Explain the impact of allowing the bully to continue their behavior—for the target and for other participants.
- **Being** sympathetic and supportive of their child/teen.
- **Informing** staff of any suspected bullying, even if their child/teen is not involved.
- **Working** in partnership with the Department in the best interest of all participants.

Expectations of M-NCPPC Staff:

Staff will protect all participants and ensure a safe program environment by:

- **Expecting** high standards of personal and social behavior for participants and themselves.
- **Acting** as a role model to participants and to never participate in or advocate bullying behavior.
- **Discussing** the importance of telling staff about bullying when it happens and to promote an open environment where participants feel comfortable reporting bullying behavior.
- **Listening** to a participant who has been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- **Dealing** with bullying promptly and effectively.
- **Following** up on all complaints about bullying.

Rules to Play By

- Be a good listener
- Leave valuables at home (M-NCPPC is not responsible for lost or stolen items)
- Be a good sport
- Be attentive
- Be friendly and respectful
- Make new friends
- Be on time
- Respect the property of others
- Use a quiet voice

GET THE LATEST INFORMATION AND UPDATES ABOUT CLASSES, PROGRAMS AND EVENTS!

- Update your email address in your PARKS DIRECT account. Stop by your nearest community center or call the Customer Service Help Desk at 301-699-2255; TTY 301-699-2544, or email CustomerService@pgparks.com
- Sign-up for PG Parks Alerts powered by NIXLE by visiting.pgparks.com



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Summer Playgrounds & Xtreme Teen Centers

Parent/Participant Agreement

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County is glad that you have chosen to register your child to attend our Summer Playground/Xtreme Teen Center program. It is our goal to provide a fun, safe and healthy program environment and we need your help! Please read our policies and procedures in the Parent Handbook, discuss them with your child/teen and help us make sure that all the rules are followed.

Please complete the following checklist, sign the agreement and give the completed form, along with all other required forms, to your onsite Program Director by the first day of the program.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation!

I have read the Playground/Xtreme Teen Center Parent Handbook and understand the following:

- ✓ Program Dates and Times
- ✓ Payment and Registration Information
- ✓ Required Forms and Due Dates
- ✓ Inclusion Service - Requests for Accommodations
- ✓ Lunch, Dress, Weather and Safety Information
- ✓ Sunscreen, Transportation and Trip information
- ✓ Swimming Pool Rules and Swimmer/Non-Swimmer Designation
- ✓ Our Code of Conduct, Rules to Play By and Disciplinary Actions
- ✓ Our Bullying Policy and the Expectations of the Participant, the Parent and the Staff
- ✓ Late Drop-off/Early Pick-up Information and Consequences

Reminders:

- Please remember Xtreme Teen Centers and Playgrounds are drop-in programs; Participants may leave and return to the program site any time during program hours
- Please communicate your attendance expectations and intentions to your child
- Staff are responsible for participants when onsite only
- All participants must leave the school/park grounds at the end of the program hours

Acknowledgement

Participant's Name _____ Program Name _____

As indicated by my signature below, I agree to accept, endorse and abide by the policies and procedures set forth in the Playground/Xtreme Teen Parent Handbook. I acknowledge and understand that the Summer Playgrounds and Xtreme Teen Centers operated by the M-NCPPC are drop-in programs and participants may leave the program site at any time during program hours. I will express my expectations to my child on pick-up procedures and the drop-in status of the program. M-NCPPC staff is only responsible for participants' onsite during scheduled program hours. Participants must leave the school/park grounds at the end of the program hours each day. Participants may not stay on school/park grounds after program hours. I understand the consequences if my child is left onsite prior to opening or after scheduled closing time.

Parent's Signature

Date



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