



EARTH EXPLORERS

Skokie Park District Summer Camps



Welcome

Welcome to the Skokie Park District and summer camps! We are pleased that you will be joining us for the 2013 summer season. For some of you, it is your first camp experience. For others, it marks the seasonal return to the joy and reward of spending the summer with friends and staff. For all of us, it is a time to grow, learn, laugh and succeed together. The attitude, creativity and energy of participants and staff are what make camp great. Come prepared to share, learn and experience a memorable summer with the Skokie Park District!

The Camp Policy and Procedure Manual has been designed to provide campers and parents/guardians with the reference you need to feel comfortable and familiar with the overall camp experience. In an effort to save paper, the Skokie Park District will be providing the manual in its entirety on the internet at www.skokieparks.org or at any Park District facility front desk. We encourage you to read this handbook thoroughly, and attend the Parent Orientation for Earth Adventures Camps sessions 1 & 2 at Emily Oaks Nature Center on Thursday, May 30, at 7:00 p.m.

Meet the Camp Staff

The Directors and Program Leaders at Skokie Park District camps help grow your child's social and leadership skills by emphasizing the importance of teamwork, fair play, and respect for others. Each staff member has the skill and know-how to make each campers experience a memorable one.

Staff Information

Erica Siler is looking forward to her first summer as the Earth Explorers Camp Director after enjoying a year of service with AmeriCorps at the Greenbrier Learning Center in Virginia. She graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a degree in Horticulture, and likes to spend time pursuing photography and long walks with her dog.

Jill Flaherty, the Earth Adventures Camp Supervisor is looking forward to another fantastic summer! During the year, she serves as the School-age Program Coordinator at Emily Oaks and enjoys spending time hiking and traveling. Jill graduated from Illinois Wesleyan University with a degree in biology and certification in secondary education.

All Earth Explorers Camp Program Leaders are energetic, responsible college-aged individuals who are enthusiastic about nature and enjoy working with children.

Camp Goals

- To provide every camper with a safe, fun, and memorable camp experience that helps develop a sense of self-respect, respect for others, cooperation, a sense of accomplishment, sportsmanship, and an appreciation of nature.
- To meet parents' expectations for the health, safety, welfare and education of their campers.
- To maintain the high quality of the camp program through excellent instruction in activities, a mixture of traditional and innovative programming, the teaching of fun games, an emphasis on appreciation of the environment and an emphasis on camper growth.
- To introduce the campers to the three natural areas at Emily Oaks Nature Center (field, pond, and woodland) and acquaint them with the different plants and animals that live there.
- To develop in the campers a sense of comfort outdoors, positive feelings for the natural world and excitement about outdoor discovery.
- To teach outdoor exploration skills, including how to prepare for being outdoors and how to use maps and other discovery tools.
- To provide opportunities to develop respect for other Earth Explorers and to take part in skills sharing experiences with the older campers.
- To encourage the campers to practice good-for-the-Earth lifestyle habits.



Preparing for Camp Day

Camp Attire

Campers are encouraged to wear loose and comfortable clothing that may get dirty during daily camp activities. We require that all campers wear closed-toed shoes to ensure their safety while at camp (gym shoes are recommended). Each camper will receive a Skokie Park District Camp T-shirt during the first week of camp. This T-shirt must be worn on all field trip days. If a camper comes to camp without their T-shirt, the camper's parent/guardian will be notified to bring it.

Personal Property

Please label all of your camper's items to prevent loss. No games, toys, sports equipment, expensive jewelry, animals/pets or other valuables should be brought to camp. Please check the lost and found on a weekly basis, as uncollected items will be donated to a charitable organization at the end of each camp session. For the safety of all campers and staff, the possession of illegal substances or weapons will not be tolerated.

Lunch & Water

Campers must provide their own lunch each day of camp (reusable containers preferred). Beverages will be provided every day; please send your camper with a reusable, unbreakable cup. Camp locations are not equipped with a refrigeration system for perishables. Since lunch at camp may not be until noon or 12:30 p.m., we strongly encourage campers to eat breakfast before arriving at camp.

On hot summer days, it is critical that campers stay hydrated. Not all camp sites and field trip locations will have water fountains. Therefore, campers are encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle to camp every day.

Food/Snack Restrictions

Food or snacks are occasionally provided at camp, by staff and/or parents. All food must be store bought and in its original packaging. Please be aware that campers with severe health allergies may be in attendance and that we count on your cooperation to make alternate food choices for the safety of all campers. We ask that peanut or peanut product snacks are never provided. If other severe allergies exist, you will be notified prior to the start of camp. Please advise your camp directors before bringing a snack to be shared so that allergies and dietary restrictions can be addressed.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

It is recommended that you apply sunscreen (at least SPF 30) to your camper before camp and send a labeled bottle with them to camp, as the majority of camp is spent outdoors. Insect repellent, in lotion, stick, or pump form only, is recommended as well. You may let us know, in writing, of additional times throughout the day that you would like your camper to apply more sunscreen. Park District staff will not apply sunscreen or insect repellent to your camper, but they will supervise the application by the campers.

Medications

Please fill out the Medication Waiver Form (2-sided) if your camper takes any kind of medication during camp hours. Please note, medications will not be dispensed without the completed and signed forms. All medications must be kept in the original containers and specific directions for their use described on the forms. All medication should be given to the Camp Director only. The Camp Director and Nature Center office staff will handle all medication and will supervise distribution during the camp day.

Communication

Contact Information

If you or your child has a question or concern regarding the camp program, please contact our staff in the following order:

Director: Erica Siler, (847) 677-7001

Supervisor: Jill Flaherty, (847) 929-7525

Asst Superintendent of Recreation, Jon Marquardt, CPRP,
(847) 929-8520

Superintendent of Recreation & Facilities, Michelle Tuft, CPRE,
(847) 933-4355

Reporting Absences—Camp Central Information

Please contact Emily Oaks Nature Center at (847) 677-7001 to:

- Report absences. Absences should be called in to Emily Oaks Nature Center between 8 and 9:30 a.m.
- Obtain field trip and swim schedule updates.
- Report lost and found items.

Written Notes

A written note with a parent or guardian's signature is required in advance, for the safety of your camper, any time your camper will be allowed to:

- Leave camp early with you, a relative, or a friend.
- Be picked up by anyone other than you (the parent/guardian) or anyone listed on the Camper Information Form.
- Sign him/herself in or out, if 8 years old or older.

Website Calendars and Camp Newsletters

Camp specific calendars will be available on the Skokie Park District website, www.skokieparks.org. Once logged onto the website select "Summer Camps," then locate your specific camp(s). Parents are encouraged to check these calendars regularly for field trip dates, swim dates, and special information.

Camp specific newsletters will be sent to parents via email on a weekly basis. For those families without an email address, paper newsletters will be available. Parents will be asked to provide an email address on the camper information form. A reminder notice will be distributed during parent orientation and the first week of camp as well.

Camp Location

Camper Drop-off & Pick-up

Campers should be dropped off at Emily Oaks Nature Center no earlier than 9:30 a.m. and picked up no later than 3:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Please park in the designated parking spaces, not the bus loading zone.

Rain/Excessive Heat Days

In the interest of safety for all of our summer campers, the Skokie Park District has implemented a plan of action regarding severe weather conditions. The plan states that in the event of heavy rain or excessive heat, campers will be brought inside, if located outdoors, and into the building at Emily Oaks Nature Center.

ACA Accreditation



The Skokie Park District is proud to be one of only a handful of park districts in the nation to be accredited by the American Camping Association (ACA). This nationally recognized program, developed exclusively for the camp industry, focuses on program quality, health and safety issues. It also requires us to review every facet of our day camp operations on an annual basis. We have voluntarily submitted to this independent audit by camp experts and are proud to have earned this mark of distinction.

Additional Camp Activities

Field Trips

Listed below are the field trips for the summer. Campers must wear their camp T-shirts on these dates for identification purposes. If a camper comes to camp without their T-shirt, the camper's parent/guardian will be notified to bring it. We also request that campers wear lightweight, long pants for camper protection and comfort in the woods. The Skokie Park District has strict guidelines regarding bus rules and can be found in the Policy and Procedures at www.skokieparks.com.

Session 1

June 14: Fullersburg Woods, Oakbrook

June 21: North Park Village Nature Center, Chicago

June 28: Tyrell Trailside Museum, River Forest

Session 2

July 12: Fullersburg Woods, Oakbrook

July 19: North Park Village Nature Center, Chicago

July 26: Tyrell Trailside Museum, River Forest

Swim Days

Listed below are the swim days for the summer. Campers should wear their swimsuits under their regular clothing and bring a towel on swim days. Campers will have the opportunity to change into their clothing after swimming is finished.

Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-Noon, Skokie Water Playground

Thursdays, 10 a.m.-Noon, Devonshire Aquatic Center

Family Night

In the last week of each session (Tuesday, July 2 and Wednesday, July 31), family members and friends are invited to attend Family Night, which will be held at Emily Oaks Nature Center from 6:30-8:30 p.m. This is a great opportunity to share in your camper's Earth Adventures experience! Further information will follow.

4th of July Parade

Your camper has the opportunity to participate in the Village of Skokie's 4th of July parade. A permission form for parade participation can be found at www.skokieparks.org/summer-camps. Please return the completed form to the Camp Director by Friday, June 14 if you would like your child to participate. Consult the permission form for further details.

Complete Policy and Procedures Manual

You can find the complete Policy and Procedure Manual at www.skokieparks.org or at any Skokie Park District facility front desk. Additional Earth Explorers Camp documents can be found on the camp webpage:

- Camper Supply List
- Camp Photo Information & Order Form
- Blank Parent Note
- Food Allergies Letter & Suggested Foods List
- Camper Information Form
- Medication Waiver
- Field Trip Details

