



Friends of Rye Nature Center Parent Information Packet Summer Camp 2023



Welcome to Summer Camp with Friends of Rye Nature Center! We are excited to meet you and your child(ren) and ask that you read this information packet carefully to ensure that you understand the policies and procedures FRNC has established to make your camper's experience as safe, rewarding, and fun as possible. Please keep this information for your reference; for your convenience, this packet will be posted on our website.

Camp Policies and Procedures

- **Staff Group Assignments.** Groups will remain with their designated leaders and counselors for the duration of the camp day. Each group has one leader (aged 18 or older), one to two counselors (aged 16 or older), and/or one volunteer (aged 15 or older).
- **Camper Cleanliness.** Campers must wash hands with soap and water or sanitize hands after using the restroom, before and after eating, and after sneezing, coughing, or blowing their nose.
- **Campers Vaccinated for Covid-19.** Please submit your child's COVID vaccination status when you send their immunization records.
- **Staff/Camper Wellness.** Children and staff may not attend the program or utilize the facilities if they are exhibiting symptoms of an infectious disease. If campers/staff are determined to have an observable illness, such as constant coughing, or a temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, they will be sent home.
- **Facility Cleanliness.** At the end of each camp day, a professional cleaning company comes to clean the interior facility.
- **Limited Indoor Activities.** Activities will be held outdoors. In the event of thunder and lightning or extreme heat, groups will utilize their designated indoor spaces.
- **Parent Communication.** Parents will bring campers to/from the front desk in the event of an early pick up or drop off. **Please email us at admin@ryenaturecenter.org or use our direct camp phone line, 914-921-0615 with any questions or concerns throughout the day.** Parents and FRNC will partner to create a healthy, fun, and instructional summer for campers.

Friday Showcases

At the end of camp each Friday, children will present a special project they have been working on throughout the week to parents and caregivers. Past showcases include science fairs, art shows, and "show-and-tells." FRNC staff will assist with parking and families are asked to arrive by 2:30pm. Staff will meet parents under the tent near the garden. Showcase dates are:

June 30	July 28
July 7	August 4
July 14	August 11
July 21	August 18

About Our Staff

This camp season, our staff consists of our permanent FRNC education team and seasonal staff. All group leaders are college-aged or older (at least 18 years old) and camp counselors are at least 16 years old. Campers are divided into age groups and will have a group leader and one or two counselors assigned to them. In addition, volunteers (age 15 or older) may be assigned to groups.

Dierdre Dillon, Group Leader	Ben Fontecchio, Counselor	Karis Repetto, Counselor
Kelly Falcon, Group Leader	Constantine Katsoris, Counselor	Jackson Fowle, Counselor
Jack Margiloff, Group Leader	Jack Oehler, Counselor	Natalie Jackson, Counselor
Alex Heldman, Group Leader	Aidan Sullivan, Counselor	Milena Jovanovic, Counselor
Jack Lawler, Group Leader	Josie Rigert, Counselor	Zoe Lien, Counselor
Esme Girard, Group Leader	Finn Stoff, Counselor	Sebastian Bucalo, Counselor
Nick Rinaldi, Group Leader	Holbrook Langley, Counselor	Reid Thigpen, Volunteer
Eleanor Collins, Group Leader	Rory Baer, Counselor	Caroline Johansen, Volunteer
Nicolas Zarate, Group Leader	Julie Van Roijen, Counselor	William Johansen, Volunteer
		Madeline Marino, Volunteer

Camp Specialists

Each day, campers will visit FRNC's year-round naturalists and environmental educators to work on crafts, perform experiments, make herbal salves, and engage in nature-inspired activities.

Joslyn Chen, Art Specialist

Ryleigh Scales, Game Specialist

Fran Fradianni, Garden Specialist

Henry Myers, STEM

FRIENDS OF RYE NATURE CENTER'S PERMANENT STAFF

Christine Siller, Executive Director

Allison Rogers, Education Director

Nicole Pennucci, Operations Director

Lisa LaBarbera, Administrator

Kassandra Souply, Administrator

Mary Gillick, Program Director

Jaxon Mack, Conservation Director

Henry Myers, Associate Director of Forest Education

Beth McCabe, Early Childhood Education Specialist

Denise Shah, Teaching Assistant

Ben Beresford, Environmental Educator

Joslyn Chen, Environmental Educator

Emily Embick, Environmental Educator

Francesca Fradianni, Environmental Educator

Katie Jamer, Environmental Educator

Zach Sandler, Environmental Educator

Ryleigh Scales, Environmental Educator

Steven Koester, Land Steward

Cameron Smith, Land Steward

Annette Hein, Horticulturist

What to Wear and Bring

- **Camp is entirely outdoors!** Please check the weather daily. Campers should wear comfortable, rugged clothing that can get dirty. Pack a raincoat if showers are predicted. Camp will occur rain or shine.
- Sturdy sneakers or lightweight hikers with socks are required. Open-toe shoes, sandals, crocs, and flip-flops are not allowed.
- Campers may not bring items from home including: toys, cell phones, text messaging devices, iPods, or wear headphones while at camp.
- If you need to get in touch with your child while at camp, please call our designated camp line (914) 921-0615.
- Water stations are set-up around camp. Campers should bring reusable water bottles.

Wear	Bring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sneakers/closed-toe shoes <u>with socks</u> - Sunscreen and bug spray - Comfortable clothes to play in - Sun hat/cap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy lunch and snack - Change of clothes (camp can be messy) - Reusable water bottle <p>PLEASE LABEL YOUR CHILD’S BELONGINGS!</p>

Daily Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- **EXPLORERS (going into pre-K or K):** Drop-off for Explorers is **8:45 AM—9:00 AM**. Pick-up is at **12:45 PM—1:00 PM**. Staff will help your child into and out of the car and sign your child in and out of camp.
Children should be sent with snack and lunch.
- **DISCOVERERS (K through 5th grade) & NATURALISTS-IN-TRAINING (6th and 7th grades):** Drop-off is at **8:45 AM—9:00 AM**. Pick-up is at **2:45 AM—3:00 PM**. Because of traffic, we ask that you do not exit your car to apply products to your child at drop-off. Staff will help your child into and out of the car and sign your child in and out. **On Thursdays, NITs stay at camp until 5:30 PM for a cookout.**
- **No supervision is available outside these times.**
- If you would like to park and walk your child to their group, please park in the Snowfield Lot just south of our main entrance/driveway on the Boston Post Road (opposite the RHS field) and walk up the Tree Trail to our main field. Staff will direct you from there.
- You must provide written permission if anyone other than a parent/guardian or previously authorized person will pick up your child (nanny, sitter, grandparent, carpool driver, etc.). **We will not release your child to anyone other than a parent/guardian without prior notification.** If your child is old enough to walk to and from camp, please send a note indicating that they have your permission to do so.
- Please e-mail admin@ryenaturecenter.org or call the Nature Center at (914) 921-0615 if you need to arrange an early dismissal.

Snack & Lunch – All Groups

- Please pack a healthy and hearty lunch with plenty of fluids. Campers should bring lunches in an insulated bag/cooler. Each camper should bring a snack for the morning.
 - ◊ We are a carry-in, carry-out facility. All trash and recyclables will be sent home with your child.
 - ◊ No personal effects can be stored in the building.
- We encourage the use of **reusable, refillable** containers! Be sure to label bottles, bags, and containers with your child's name.
- Due to allergies, we discourage lunches with peanut and nut products.

Prescription Drugs and Epi-Pens

- Our staff cannot dispense medications of any kind, but children may take prescribed drugs on their own. Your child's counselor will check the labels and remind them when to take the medication. **Our staff is able to administer Epi-Pens/similar products in the event of a medical emergency or severe allergic reaction.**
- Please turn in all medications to the Camp Director at drop-off to be safely stored until use. Send medications in **original containers** bearing prescription information, directions, and warning labels.
- We will need a form from your child's doctor regarding any medication. The form you use for school is sufficient.

Insect Repellent and Sunscreen

- Camp staff is only allowed to apply repellents or sunscreens to your children with written permission. If you did not sign the optional section of the waiver, you may authorize via email or note. If you do not send your child with sunscreen or bug repellent, the Nature Center's supply includes SunX and Ranger Ready.
- See the attached fact sheets about Lyme Disease, West Nile Virus, and Rabies.

Behavior Agreement

The following policies affecting camper health, safety and well-being are in force during camp. Violation of any of these will result in immediate dismissal:

- No drugs, including prescription medication, can be taken without a doctor's note. Campers may not take over-the-counter medication outside of the camp health center. Illegal drugs are prohibited.
- No alcohol.
- No smoking or tobacco products, including chewing tobacco, electronic cigarettes, vaping, etc.
- Campers are discouraged from using group chats and/or posting information about camp or other campers while enrolled in our program.

Guidelines for Searching the Belongings of Participants

If there is reasonable suspicion that a violation of the program's prohibited items policy has occurred or other rules have been broken, a search may be conducted.

The following steps will be taken:

- Searches will be conducted by at least two trusted individuals, in the presence of the participant whose belongings are being searched, and preferably in a private setting, unless there is imminent danger or circumstances that require immediate action.
- Searches may include a participant's bags, backpacks, and knapsack.
- When timing and circumstances allow, the participant's parent or guardian will be notified prior to conducting the search. In situations when this is not possible, either due to timing, lack of communications coverage, or lack of response, notification will be made as soon as possible.
- If an illegal item is discovered (e.g., alcohol), it will be confiscated and retained in a secure place, and the appropriate authorities will be contacted for further action.
- If a prohibited item is discovered, it will be confiscated and retained in a secure place. Prohibited items may be returned to the parent/guardian when they arrive to pick-up their participant.

Electronic Equipment

Electronic equipment is not allowed at camp. Examples include, but are not limited to, mobile phones, cameras, and computers. Campers will be reminded to store these devices in their bags for the duration of the camp day.

Please contact us via e-mail or by calling (914) 921-0615 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Friends of Rye Nature Center Staff

Animal Borne Disease Fact Sheet

Any outdoor activity carries an inherent risk of contact with animals that can transmit diseases. Our camp staff is trained to keep your children as safe as possible. However, parents also have a responsibility to understand the risks, take appropriate preventative measures and seek prompt professional medical attention if signs and symptoms of disease appear. According to the Westchester County Health Department, three diseases are of particular concern in our area at this time: Lyme disease, West Nile virus (a form of Encephalitis) and rabies.

Lyme Disease



Lyme disease is a bacterial infection which can be transmitted to people by deer ticks. Deer ticks are found on mice, birds, and deer. They may be as small as the period on a printed page and grow up to 3 millimeters in size.

The tick embeds itself in the skin and engorges on blood. If not removed within 24 hours, bacteria may be transmitted.

A rash may develop around the tick bite in 3 to 30 days. Other symptoms of Lyme disease include fever, chills, headaches, stiff neck, fatigue, muscle aches and joint pain. If untreated, it can cause neurological, heart and joint damage.

Lyme disease can be detected with medical tests and treated with antibiotics.

For a more detailed fact sheet, see the Centers for Disease Control website at cdc.gov/lyme.

West-Nile Virus

West Nile encephalitis is caused by a mosquito borne virus. Not all mosquitoes are infected with the virus and not all mosquito bites transmit the disease.

Most infected people exhibit no symptoms. Up to 20 percent of the people who become infected have mild, flu-like symptoms. About one in 150 people will develop severe symptoms including high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness, and paralysis. These may be life-threatening.

Since West-Nile encephalitis is caused by a virus, there is no specific treatment for low grade symptoms. If you or your child develops symptoms of severe illness, such as unusually severe headaches or confusion, seek medical attention immediately.

For more information, see the Center for Disease Control fact sheet at cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.html.

Prevention of Lyme Disease and West Nile Encephalitis:

Lyme disease and West Nile encephalitis are best prevented by avoiding the animal vectors of these diseases. To protect your child during our day camp programs:

1. Our ponds are inspected by the Westchester County Health Department annually to insure that West-Nile virus carrying mosquito species are not living in our ponds.
2. **Our staff conducts a "Tick Check," inspecting unprotected (unclothed) skin on all children at lunchtime and at the end of each camp day.**
3. You must check your child more thoroughly at home, especially areas covered by clothing that we do not check. Remove ticks by pulling gently on the head (not the body) with fine tweezers. Use a disinfectant on the bitten area.
4. Change and launder clothes immediately when you get home to remove any ticks clinging to the fabric.
5. Insect repellent applied to your child's socks and clothing can act as a deterrent to deer ticks and mosquitoes. Staff is NOT permitted to apply insect repellent to campers. If you would like to protect your child in this way, please apply repellent prior to or upon arrival at the Nature Center.

Rabies

Rabies is a viral disease carried by mammals that can only be transmitted through bites and direct contact with bodily fluids. Since rabies affects the brain, rabid animals may show unusual behavior such as aggression, fearlessness, abnormal posture, seizures, weakness or paralysis.

People can contract rabies from wildlife such as bats, foxes, raccoons, and skunks or through pets which have come into contact with infected wildlife. Small rodents, such as chipmunks, hamsters, mice, rabbits, and squirrels, do not typically carry rabies.

Rabies is a fatal disease that cannot be treated once the symptoms have appeared. Rabies can be confirmed only in a laboratory. Therefore, it is critically important to capture and test the animal that exhibits signs of rabies. You should see your doctor or the emergency room immediately.

For more information, see the Center For Disease Control website at cdc.gov/rabiesandkids/.

Prevention of Rabies

The mammals in our exhibits have been vaccinated. Our staff will keep your children out of contact with any potentially infected wild animals. The following measures may prevent infection at home year round:

1. Be sure all pets are vaccinated.
2. Do NOT take in or feed stray animals, either wild or domestic.
3. Do not handle dead animals without proper precautions.

Children's Camps in New York State

- the camp is required to be inspected twice yearly; and
- the inspection reports and required plans are filed (address of state, county or city health department) and available for their review.

Responsibilities of Local Health Departments

- To review and approve the required written camp plans for compliance.
- To inspect camps to assure that: (1) all physical facilities are properly operated and maintained; and (2) adequate supervision exists to provide a healthy and safe environment in accordance with the New York State Sanitary Code.
- To issue a permit to operate when the required plans and inspection results are satisfactory.
- To investigate reports of serious incidents of injury, illness and all allegations of abuse or maltreatment.
- When requested, to provide parents or guardians of prospective campers an opportunity to review inspection reports and required plans.

The time and effort spent in selecting the camp your youngster will attend is important. Keep in touch, especially if it is your child's first camp experience. If possible, visit the camp before and during the camping season.



Information

For further information about New York State health laws relating to summer camps, call the State Health Department's Bureau of Community Environmental Health and Food Protection in Troy at 1-(800) 458-1158, ext. 27600.

State of New York
Department of Health

In New York State, summer camps must have a state, city or county health department permit to operate legally. These permits are issued only if the camp is in compliance with the state's health regulations. The permit to operate must be displayed in a conspicuous place on the premises.

The camp must be inspected twice yearly by a health department representative. At least one inspection must be made during the time the camp is in operation. Each camp is checked to make sure that the physical facilities are safe and that supervision is adequate.

When choosing a summer camp for your child, consider the following:

Staff Credentials/Supervision

What are the qualifications of the camp director?

The New York State Health Code requires that the director of an overnight camp be at least 25-years-old or hold a bachelor's degree; a day camp director must be at least 21-years-old.

All directors must have experience in camping administration or supervision. Camp directors' backgrounds are screened by the Office of Children and Family Services Central Register Database for reported incidents of child abuse and maltreatment. Their backgrounds are also screened by the Health Department for criminal convictions. Only individuals who are considered to pose no risk to campers are accepted by the Health Department as camp directors.

What are the qualifications of the camp counselors and how are campers supervised?

Counselors must have experience in camping and supervision of children or have completed an acceptable training course. Stringent counselor-to-camper ratios and staff qualifications are mandated for supervision of swimming, archery, riflery and camp trip activities.

At overnight camps, 80 percent of the camps' counselors must be at least 18-years-old; up to 20 percent may be 17-years-old. There must be at least one counselor for every 10 children aged eight years or older, and one

counselor for every eight children younger than eight years old.

At day camps, counselors must be 16 years of age or older. There must be a minimum of one counselor for every 12 children.

Camps that must provide at least 10 counselors may choose to use counselors-in-training (CITs) to meet 10 percent of the required number of counselors. These CITs must be at least 16 years of age at an overnight camp and 15 years of age at a day camp. They must work with senior staff, have had previous experience as a camper and complete a training program. Ask the camp operator if any of their counselors are CITs and how they are used to supervise campers.

Ask about the camp's staff and supervision procedures, including discipline policies. Do they meet your expectations?

Health

Ask about medical coverage and when you will be notified if your child becomes ill or injured. Is a doctor or nurse in residence or on call for campers at all times?

Physicians or nursing services must be available. All summer camps in New York State are required to have a health director and a written medical plan approved by the Health Department. The written

plan must include, among other things, provisions for medical, nursing and first aid services. Injuries and illnesses must be reported to the Health Department and are thoroughly reviewed.

Does the camp require medical records for campers?

Camps must keep current medical history reports on file for all campers. Be sure to detail your child's history of immunization, illness, disability or allergy. Specify special diets and activity restrictions. Provide instruction for any medication your child must take.



Camp Safety

Are the camp facilities and activities safe?

The camp operator must develop a written plan to include maintenance of facilities, provisions for training staff members and orientation of campers, supervision of campers, campsite hazards, emergency procedures and drills, safety procedures and equipment for program activities.



Swimming

Are waterfront personnel qualified?

Are campers always supervised while in the water?

All waterfront activities at camps in New York State must be supervised by an experienced certified lifeguard or water safety instructor. On site, one qualified lifeguard is required for every 25 bathers. All aquatic staff are required to be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Camps that use off-site pools or beaches operated by others must make special arrangements to provide a safe activity. Even off site, the camp remains responsible for supervising campers.

Some children's camps use sites for swimming that are not inspected by local health departments. Parental permission is required in these instances, and the camp must follow established guidelines to protect campers.

While campers are involved in aquatic activities on site, there must be one counselor for every 10 campers eight years or older; there must be one counselor for every eight children aged six and seven; and one counselor for every six children younger than six years old. When swimming off-site, there must be one counselor for every eight campers six years or older and one counselor for every six campers younger than six years.



Fire Safety

Are there periodic fire drills for both campers and staff? Does each floor of every building have fire exits in two different locations? Are flammable materials (gasoline, pool chemicals, etc.) stored away from activity centers and kept under lock and key? Are functioning smoke detectors located in every sleeping room?

All of the above are mandatory in New York State.



Location and Facilities

Are barriers erected against such natural hazards as cliffs and swamps? Are foot trails located away from such dangerous areas and from heavily traveled roads and highways? Do the camp facilities (bunks, bathrooms, mess hall, recreation facilities) meet your aesthetic tastes and those of your child? Is the camp located in an area that will not aggravate your child's allergies? Will your child be required to perform chores, such as cleaning or cooking?

For information on the camp's location and facilities, visit the camp or interview the camp operator by telephone, prior to making a decision to enroll your child at the camp.

Nutrition

Are good health practices observed in the camp kitchens, dining areas and food services? Does the camp serve food your child likes?

At camps in New York State, food must be prepared from inspected sources. Food preparation and handling activities are reviewed to assure safe and sanitary practices. Kitchen employees must be healthy and follow hygienic practices. Potentially hazardous food must be maintained below 45°F or above 140°F.



Rights and Responsibilities

The regulatory program of the New York State Department of Health places specific responsibilities on camp operators, and on local health departments that enforce department regulations. Following is a summary of rights and responsibilities:

Rights of Parents and Guardians

- To be informed by the camp director, or his or her designee, of any incident involving your child, including serious injury, illness or abuse.
- To review inspection and investigation reports for a camp, which are maintained by the local health department issuing the camp a permit to operate (present and past reports are available).
- To review the required written camp plans. These are on file at both the camp and the health department issuing the permit to operate.

Responsibilities of the Camp Operator

- To inform you and the local health department if your child is involved in any serious injury, illness or abuse incident.
- To screen the background and qualifications of all staff.
- To train staff about their duties.
- To provide supervision for all campers 24 hours a day at overnight camps, and during hours of operation for day camps.
- To maintain all camp physical facilities in a safe and sanitary condition.
- To provide safe and wholesome meals.
- To have and follow required written plans for camp safety, health and fire safety.
- To notify the parent or guardian, with the enrollment application or enrollment contract, that the camp must have a permit to operate from the New York State Department of Health or the designated permit-issuing official.



PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM POLIO

Polio is a crippling and potentially fatal infectious disease. There is no cure, but there are safe and effective vaccines.

In July 2022, a case of paralytic polio was detected in an unvaccinated young, previously healthy adult in Rockland County and since then, the virus has been found in sewage in Rockland, Orange, Sullivan, and Nassau counties, and New York City.

Polio is highly contagious. One case can spread to hundreds of people. Most people who are infected do not know that they have polio and can unwittingly spread the virus to others.

Help prevent another polio outbreak and protect your family and community by following these tips:

- **Make sure you and your family are up to date on the polio vaccine.** Immunization is the single best protection against polio. The first polio immunization should be given at 2 months of age and children are considered fully protected once they have received 4 doses of a polio-containing vaccine by age 6. It's important to start immunizations during infancy and follow the recommended schedule to ensure that babies and young children are protected.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and clean running water for 20 seconds and then dry them with a clean towel.** Alcohol-based hand sanitizers do not work against the virus that causes polio.
- **Find out if pools, spas, or spray pads are adequately disinfected and if not, do not use them.** Chlorine and bromine kill the virus that causes polio.
- **Avoid pools, spas, and spray pads if you have an upset stomach or diarrhea.** Polio can be in poop. Shower before you get in the water and don't swallow the water.
- **Protect others by staying home or keeping your family home from camp or other activities when sick.** Polio lives in the throat and intestines of a person. Polio can be spread from one person to another through coughing, sneezing, or unknowingly touching something that has been contaminated by droplets from a sneeze, cough, or poop.
- **Practice good health habits that can reduce the spread of polio and other illnesses too:**
 - **When you cough or sneeze, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue.** Put used tissues in the garbage and wash your hands right away. If a tissue isn't handy, cough or sneeze into your upper arm, not your hands.
 - **Clean frequently touched surfaces often.** This includes items such as toys, doorknobs, desks, tables, and counters. Disinfect surfaces with a solution of 0.5% bleach by mixing 1 part regular unscented household bleach with 10 parts water. Only use a bleach product that contains 5-9% sodium hypochlorite when making this solution and do not use scented or splashless bleach.
 - **Do not share eating utensils, cups, or plates without washing them between uses.** Viruses are spread when utensils, cups, and plates are shared before being properly washed.
 - **Do not put your fingers in your mouth, rub your eyes, or touch your face, especially after touching an object that may be contaminated.**

Please contact your healthcare provider or local health department if you have any questions.