



## Summer Camp Policies and Procedures



# Summer Camp Program Policies & Procedures

The Schuylkill Center's Summer Camps provides children with engaging and enriching summer experiences through continued access to nature with both structured and unstructured activities.

### Summer Camp Programs:

#### Nature Ramblers

Based on 340 acres of diverse habitat, our Nature Ramblers Summer Camp provides children aged 4 to 9 intimate and ongoing access to forests, fields, streams, ponds and even an organic farm garden. Nature Rambler campers explore the natural world through hands-on discoveries, hiking excursions, art, play, field trips and more.

#### Teen Adventure Treks

The Schuylkill Center's Adventure Treks challenge pre-teens and teens to improve their outdoor knowledge and skills in a comfortable and supportive setting. Participants learn more about themselves, strengthen their self-confidence, and gain teamwork skills while exploring the outdoors in unique and fun ways. They're continually challenged in very safe and incredibly fun environments under the guidance of experienced instructors and outdoor guides.

**Enrolling in Summer Camp** – Parents and guardians enrolling their child in Summer Camp must submit registration online using our website. Summer camp registration for members opens January 14, 2013 and for non-members on January 21, 2013. Space is limited for each age group. In the event that the program is filled to capacity a waitlist will be formed on a first come, first serve basis. Parents will receive confirmation of registration via email at time of registration.

**Program Hours** – Camp begins each day at 9:00 am and ends at 3:30 pm. The Schuylkill Center offers extended hours from 8 am to 9 am and in the afternoon from 3:30 pm to 6:00pm for an extra fee. Parents and guardians needing to pick their child up between 9:00 am and 3:30 pm need to communicate the time they will be picking up to staff prior to that day. Pick-up takes place at the Schuylkill Center's Main Building, unless otherwise specified.

**Ages of Children** – Participants must be between the ages of 4 – 9 and must be of age by June 15, 2013 in order to participate. Youth participating in the Schuylkill Center's Teen Adventure

Trek program must be between the ages of 10-15 and must be of age by June 15, 2013 in order to participate. Approval from the Summer Camp Director must be made in advance for children participating in programs outside of the given age ranges.

**Summer Camp Fees** – The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education is a non-profit organization funded by program fees, membership, donations and grants. The Schuylkill Center does provide financial assistance and scholarships to families in need. Please contact the Director of Education at (215) 482-7300 ext. 129 for more information about our need based assistance.

**Payment** – Until May 15, 2013 a deposit is required to reserve your child's space in camp.

- For campers aged 4 to 9, a deposit of \$50 per program week is required.
- For campers aged 10 to 12, a deposit of \$100 per program week is required.
- For campers aged 13 to 15, a deposit of \$300 per program week is required.

Balance payments will be due on May 15, 2013. Your credit card or bank draft will be charged automatically through our online registration system on that date, unless you choose to pay by another method on or before that date. We can accept Visa or MasterCard payment by phone, check payment by mail, or cash, check, or credit card payment in person during normal business hours. Normal business hours are Monday – Friday, 9:00am to 5:00 pm. Space will not be reserved until payment is received. If full payment is not received by May 15, 2013, your child's reservation will no longer be held and your deposit will not be refunded. After this date, we cannot guarantee that space will be available when your payment is received.

**Cancellations** – If a cancellation is made before May 15, 2013, a 50% refund will be issued. If a cancellation is made after May 15, 2013 no refunds will be issued.

**Return Drafts or Checks for Non-Sufficient Funds** – Any drafts or checks returned for Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) will be subjected to an additional \$25.00 service charge.

**Receipts for Taxes** – It is the responsibility of the participating family to maintain documentation for end-of-year tax records. The Schuylkill Center does not provide yearly itemized accounts of payments received.

**The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education**  
**Federal Tax ID # 23-1654975**



### The Schuylkill Center's Summer Camp Program Purpose and Philosophy

**Purpose** – The Schuylkill Center Summer Camp programs aim to improve children's quality of life through increased access to nature, extending and enriching out-of-school-time learning activities, unstructured free play in the out of doors and increased physical activity.

**Philosophy** – We believe that activities involving continued access to nature, in both a structured and unstructured environment, can be as important to children's growth and development as time spent in the classroom. This environment allows children to step out of their comfort zone in a safe atmosphere to explore new fields of interest, invites children to interact with friends, allows participants and educators to become mentors for each other and allows children to use their imagination.

**Guiding Principles** – The Schuylkill Center uses the following guiding principles to establish and ensure high quality, safe programming.

- Schuylkill Center Summer Camp staff builds and maintains positive human relationships with children, families, and other Schuylkill Center staff.
- Program space is welcoming and engaging, while allowing children to feel emotionally and physically supported.
- Indoor space is appropriate for the range of activities the program offers and is properly maintained. Ample space is provided such that active indoor play does not impact quiet activities.
- Outdoor space is maintained appropriately for the range of activities the program offers (i.e. lessons, hiking, free play at various locations on the property, sports activities).
- Activities promote personal growth and development in a physically and emotionally supportive environment.
- Program activities are diverse and supportive of all youth regardless of their background, race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.
- A healthy snack and physical activity is included in program activities each day.
- Summer Camp educators are highly qualified and offered continuous support and learning opportunities throughout the summer.
- Constant, interactive supervision of children is crucial and staff to participant ratio is maintained at 1:8 or lower.

**Schuylkill Center Educators** – During the summer months, the Schuylkill Center employs highly educated, motivated adults to lead all aspects of summer camp. Our staff completes a rigorous application, interview and training process, as well as provides all necessary Pennsylvania Child Abuse clearances and criminal background checks. All of our programs maintain a 1:8 staff to participant ratio or lower. The Schuylkill Center does engage qualified teens in leadership training as a part of the summer camp program. These teens are trained and mentored by Schuylkill Center staff throughout the summer and do not factor into our 1:8 staff to participant ratio.

**Activities** – The Schuylkill Center is committed to offering a safe, engaging and active summer camp program. Nature Ramblers and Teen Adventure Treks use both indoor and outdoor space for its program and invites youth to explore the natural surroundings in both structured and unstructured activities. Daily outdoor activities may include; engaging educational activities, hiking, exploring streams and ponds, canoeing and exploring the forest. All safety equipment for specialized activities (canoeing or field trips) is provided and these activities will be communicated to the parents before the day of the program.

**Personal Belongings** – Items brought to camp by participants should be clearly labeled with the child's name. Each child will have a space to hang and store their personal belongings for the day. Items left in public areas will be placed in lost and found, located at the front desk in the Schuylkill Center's Main Building. Items not collected within a 2 week period will be discarded. Electronics, cell phones and toys are not permitted at camp. The Schuylkill Center is not responsible for personal items that are misplaced, stolen or broken at camp.

**Meals & Snacks** – Participants are required to bring a lunch each day to camp, unless otherwise specified. The Schuylkill Center encourages families to pack a low or no waste lunch, using reusable lunch bags, Tupperware and water bottles. These reusable items should be labeled with the participant's name. A morning snack is provided for each child every day. For children participating in an extended day program an afternoon snack will be provided.

**Appropriate Footwear** – Participants are expected to wear footwear that is appropriate for the activity or weather. All summer camp programs spend time outdoors on uneven trails and surfaces. Participants should wear comfortable sneakers or boots to camp each day. Closed toed shoes are required at all times.

**Individual Needs** – Nature Ramblers and Teen Adventure Trek staff will accommodate children with special individual needs during all activities, within reason, provided that these needs are communicated to our staff as soon as they are known. Families are encouraged to provide staff with any information that they feel will help the Schuylkill Center support their child. All information will be considered when planning indoor and outdoor activities.

**Discipline** – Nature Ramblers and Teen Adventure Trek staff will treat each child with respect and set clear expectations and boundaries each day. Children are expected to show respect to their peers and staff, as well as treat the facilities and equipment with care. Clear expectations will be set each week and staff will help participants establish positive roles within the camp

group. For children who experience difficulty with this structure, staff will work with the child and their parents to create an individualized plan that meets the need of the child while ensuring the safety and trust of other campers. Frequent disrespect towards peers, staff or property may result in child's dismissal from the Schuylkill Center's Summer Camp program.

**Medication/Illness** – To help avoid the spread of illness, children with a fever, diarrhea or nausea should not attend summer camp that day. Upon notification of a sick child during camp, a parent or guardian must pick up their child immediately. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called to pick up the child. Sick children will be provided a comfortable place to rest until they go home. The "release for administration of medication" section of the registration form must be filled out by each parent or guardian who wishes Schuylkill Center staff to administer medication at any time, for any reason. All individual medications must be received in the original prescription container with original date and instructions. Medications will be kept in staff medical kits if appropriate (epi-pens, inhalers, etc.) or in a locked medicine cabinet.

**Inclement or Excessively Hot Weather** – In case of inclement or excessively hot weather, camp pick-up and drop-off will take place inside the Schuylkill Center's main building. The Schuylkill Center's main building is air conditioned at all times during the summer and groups will be required to remain indoors when temperature and humidity require such action. Physical activity will be limited during this time.

**Field Trips** – By signing and agreeing to the Schuylkill Center's policies and procedures and waiver form included in the registration process, parents and guardians grant permission for their child to participate in field trip days, unless a written non-consent is provided prior to the field trip day. Parents will be notified of field trip days via email a week in advance. Transportation on field trip days may include school bus or 12-passenger van. All participants traveling in a 12-passenger van must be over the age of 8 and wear a seatbelt at all times. Under no circumstances will participants be transported in staff's personal vehicles. A staff to participant ratio of 1:8 or lower will be maintained at all times on field trip days and each child will be required to wear identification containing the following information:

**The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education**  
**215.482.7300 ext. 110**

Schuylkill Center staff is required to carry all emergency contact information, a first aid kit and all personal medication needed for participants.

**Children Arriving Late to Camp** – Parents and guardians should make every effort to arrive at camp before 9:00am each day. If a child arrives after 9:15 am they should visit the front desk at the Schuylkill Center's main building. Staff at the front desk will contact the appropriate group and the child will join the group within a reasonable timeframe. If a child arrives late on a field trip day and the group has left the Schuylkill Center, the child will not be able to attend camp that day.

**Release of Child From Camp** – All participants must be signed out of camp each day. Children will be released to parents or persons designated on the emergency form only. If a parent or guardian would like to add or remove names from this list they may do so by contacting the Schuylkill Center Registrar at 215.482.7300 ext. 110.

**Late Fees** – Summer Camp educators are scheduled until 3:00 pm and aftercare staff until 6:00 pm. Late pick-ups require staff and employees to stay past their scheduled hours. Please respect their time and arrange to have your child picked up no later than 3:30 pm for regular camp pick-up and 6:00pm for aftercare. If a child has not been picked up by 3:40 pm, summer camp staff will sign the child into aftercare. Parents will be responsible for paying aftercare fees on this day. The following late fees apply to families picking up after 6:00pm.

- 6:00 pm to 6:15 pm \$1 per minute
- 6:16 pm to 6:30 pm \$3 per minute
- 6:31 pm to 7:00 pm \$5 per minute

If a child is not picked up by 7:00 pm and no contact has been made with parents/guardians or emergency contact persons, Schuylkill Center staff will contact the proper authorities.