

2025 Nature Day Camp Handbook



Seattle
Parks & Recreation



**ASSOCIATED
RECREATION
COUNCIL**



Welcome to Camp!

The Camper Part

(Please **read** with a parent or guardian)

Camper and parent agreements need to be signed and returned with registration.

What is Nature Summer Day Camp?

Nature Adventure Trek and Earthkeepers are summer day camps designed to inspire a deep connection with nature through exploration, learning, and outdoor play. Our activities are thoughtfully crafted to nurture friendships, encourage curiosity, and foster a meaningful bond with the natural world. The camp welcomes participants aged 6 to 12, providing an enriching experience tailored to this age group. Exceptions for younger participants may be considered with approval from the camp director.

Our goals are:

- **Connection with Nature:** Provide opportunities for participants to engage directly with the natural world, fostering a deep appreciation for wildlife, plants, and outdoor activities, and encouraging them to become stewards of the environment.
- **Environmental Awareness and Conservation:** Educate campers about the importance of taking care of natural habitats, understanding ecosystems, and promoting sustainable practices to protect the environment.
- **Physical and Mental Well-Being:** Promote physical health and mental well-being by encouraging outdoor activities like hiking and group games, which help reduce stress and build resilience.
- **Teamwork and Leadership Skills:** Develop teamwork and leadership abilities by organizing group challenges, nature-based projects, and collaborative tasks, helping participants build social skills and confidence in group settings.
- **Hands-On Learning:** Offer practical, hands-on learning experiences through activities like wildlife observation, nature crafts, and environmental science experiments, enabling campers to apply knowledge and enhance their problem-solving skills in a real-world context.

What will we be doing at camp?

Through nature walks, hands-on exploration, games, stories, songs, crafts, and imagination, we will have a positive, fun, and exciting experience in nature!

Who are the educators?

At Camp, our counselors are known as Educators. They bring expertise in natural sciences and environmental education, along with valuable experience working with school-age children.

Can I be with my friends/brother/sister?

Groups are created before camp even starts and campers are split up according to age. Each pair of Educators leads a group of about 15-17 campers. We will do our very best in considering the needs of each participant and all our campers. If campers would like to be grouped together, please fill out a buddy request form, available at the end of this handbook. Email this to the camp director, at least two weeks prior to camp. If an older camper would like to be paired with a younger camper, both will be placed in the age group of the younger camper.

What happens during a typical camp day?

Here is how it goes (times are approximate and schedule is subject to change):

9 a.m.	<p>Campers ARRIVE and gather in their groups or play in the field with an educator.</p> <p>Monday morning, we: Receive name tags Meet the educators Talk about camp expectations Gather in our groups for the week</p>
<p><u>Caregivers: Please make sure you sign your child in on the clipboard with the Educators.</u> *Snack and Lunches are to be NUT FREE*</p>	
9:30 a.m.	Split into groups and start our ACTIVITIES for the day.
10:30 a.m.	SNACK TIME! Please provide a morning snack from home
10:45 a.m.	Exploration and activities
11:45 a.m.	We eat LUNCH with our groups. Bring lunch from home. No heating or refrigeration available.
12:30 p.m.	We'll take a water break, reapply sunscreen as needed, check in to see how everyone's doing and prepare for our afternoon adventures.
1 p.m.	We go on an EXPLORATION in our groups or do an activity all together, like a group game, science experiment or an art project.
2:15 p.m.	SNACK TIME! Please provide an afternoon snack from home
2:30 p.m.	Group activity or further exploration.
3:50 p.m.	* PICK UP! We try and get everyone back to the pick-up area again by this time because we know parents are coming soon to pick you up.
<p>OFFICIAL PICK-UP TIME IS 4:00 P.M. Late Fees do apply</p> <p><u>Caregivers: Please make sure you sign your child out on the clipboard with the Educators.</u></p>	

What to bring to camp...

(It is very helpful to label all **your items** with **your name!**)

1. **Closed Toe Shoes that attach to your foot! NO SANDALS, FLIP FLOPS, ETC.** Comfortable sneakers or boots that fit well for hiking, running, jumping and to protect your feet. We don't want your feet to get cut or have anything stuck in them. Not fun! **A change of socks and shoes for beach days is strongly recommended.**
2. We love to get dirty playing and making crafts at Nature Camp so please wear play clothes--like the fun memories we make, our stains may last forever. An extra set of clothes is recommended.
3. **A nutritious lunch and morning and afternoon snack! Please ensure all foods are peanut-free!** Tips: protein for endurance, fruit is preferred to candy or sugar for energy. We encourage the use of **reusable containers** in the spirit of environmental stewardship.
4. **A water bottle** with your name on it. Campers will be thirsty after all our fun adventures!
5. **A backpack** with your name on it or attached to the outside.
6. **A coat for wind and rain that can go in your backpack.** It is a few degrees colder in the park, especially in the morning. Brrr...
7. **Sunhats/sunglasses** are not required, but a good idea!
8. **Sunscreen—SPF 45 is advised.** Please come to Camp wearing your sunscreen in the morning and we will remind you to put more on after lunch.

Now, here's a list of **things to leave at home:**

- Toys, sports equipment, trading cards and/or valuables*, UNLESS you get permission from the Director and they are for a special purpose, please leave at home.
- Cell phones, portable game devices or other electronics.
- Toy guns, weapons (play or real), knives (even pocketknives) and fireworks (including Snap n' Pops) are **NOT ALLOWED AT CAMP!**

****Valuables**** means anything that is valuable to *you*. Losing a special accessory or toy in a BIG park can be very sad! There is more fun and less worry if you leave your special things at home.

Educators and Camp will not be held responsible for any items that are lost, stolen, or broken while at camp.

The Caregiver Part

Program Contact Information, Registration, and Financial Info

How do I contact Campers during the day?

For communications to campers and Educators, caregivers may call or text the Director at the number provided in pre-camp emails. Cell phone service can be unreliable in the park but we will return your call/text as soon as we are able. The Educator(s) will be contacted by radio as soon as possible.

Registration

Paperwork must be completed and returned/uploaded to ePACT no less than two weeks before your child's first day of camp or the Educator team will not be able to take care and custody of your child(ren).

- Participant Information and Authorization Form (Upload via ePACT preferred)
- Enrollment Agreement (at the end of this handbook)
- Immunization Information or placeholder, as CIS is not required for this camp (available at the end of this handbook).
- Medication Authorization Form (If we need to administer medication to your child or if your child needs accommodations, has a behavioral concern, allergies or intolerances, asthma, diabetes, seizures, or any other health concerns.) Please call (206) 386-4236 to ask which forms are needed and we will be happy to get them to you.

*Please note, if you check that your child has any medical concerns, including food related issues, additional paperwork will need to be filled out and submitted 2 weeks prior to the session starting.

- If your child is registered for more than one week, please be sure to submit payment on Monday two weeks prior to the week of care.

Caregivers are responsible for notifying our facility in writing if any changes occur in information (address, phone #, health status, adults authorized to pick up children, etc.). Please email Discovery.Park@seattle.gov or Carkeek.Park@seattle.gov

Accommodations Protocol

If your child has a less than severe disability, as indicated on enrollment paperwork, the Director will request a Parent/Guardian meeting to discuss accommodations before your child's start date. Parent/guardian meetings are attended by the caregiver, Director, and Program Accommodations Manager. The group will work as a team to understand the nature of the non-severe disability, and to identify positive strategies to support the participant while they are in program.

We are not equipped nor staffed to work with children who need significant assistance with personal care, have difficulty

managing their behavior in a group setting, or require one-on-one support. Families may inquire about steps needed if they would like to provide additional support.

Finances

Camp Cost

A **non-refundable deposit** of 10% per/child/week for each additional week of camp is required to reserve the space (meaning, if you decide not to attend, your deposit will not be refunded). Remaining balances are due 2 weeks prior to the Monday of the registered week.

Financial Aid

For information about financial aid resources, please visit: <https://www.seattle.gov/parks/scholarships-and-financial-aid>

Payment

To assist you, there is a payment schedule below. **Please mark your calendar as no further notification will be given.** Payment must be made online, by mail, or phone **two weeks** prior to the start of your child's camp. It allows the first Monday of each camp to be focused on your child. Please pay by **credit card OR check only, made out to: City of Seattle.**

Week	Dates	Payment Due Date
Week 1*	June 30 – July 3	June 16
Week 2	July 7 – 11	June 23
Week 3	July 14 – 18	June 30
Week 4	July 21 – 25	July 7
Week 5	July 28 – Aug 1	July 14
Week 6	August 4 – 8	July 21
Week 7	August 11 – 15	July 28
Week 8	August 18 – 22	August 4

**Short week due to 4th of July (No program on 7/4)*

***If we do not receive your payment on time, we reserve the right to give your child's spot away to the next family on the waiting list. The 10% deposit will not be refunded.**

Our mailing address:

Seattle Parks and Recreation
Attn: Discovery/Carkeek Park
8061 Densmore Ave N
Seattle, WA 98103

Returned Checks: A \$20 fee will be assessed on all returned checks.

Our Federal Tax ID #: #51-0170717

Discovery Park Visitor Center: 206-386-4236

Our emails: discovery.park@seattle.gov
carkeek.park@seattle.gov

Fax Line: 206-684-0195

Prorating

We do not pro-rate fees for illness, absence, behavioral suspension, or personal vacation. Children enrolled in Camp are reserving time, space, supplies and Educators whether or not the child actually attends.

Refunds

As noted above, we make no refunds on deposits. Refunds may be requested for the remainder of a week's fee, minus the deposit, if a written request is given **two weeks in advance of the first day of that week's camp.** Email discovery.park@seattle.gov or carkeek.park@seattle.gov or call 206-386-4236 and leave a voicemail. Please refer to the schedule above. Refunds will **not** be issued if requested less than two weeks in advance.

Policies and Procedures

Mandatory Check In/Check Out Procedure

Please have your campers arrive no later than 9 a.m. Arriving between 8:50am and 9:00am is ideal. We make no guarantee that campers will be able to find their field groups for the day if they arrive late. **We require the parent, guardian or authorized adult listed on the registration form to sign in each child each day and sign them out when departing in the presence of the educators. Please do not ask us to release a child for pick up to anyone who is not authorized in writing.** Sign in/out on the clipboard with Educators. At Discovery Park, pick-up and drop-off area will be outlined in pre-camp emails. At Carkeek Park, the pick-up and drop off area will be at Shelter 2.

After Hours Pick-up

Day Camp operates from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Children may not be dropped off before 8:50am or left past 4 p.m. Please do not arrive for pick-up earlier than 3:45. **After 4 p.m., a late charge of \$1 a minute will be applied. Your child/children must be picked up by 4 p.m. This fee will be charged to your account. If your child is left longer than 1 hour after close of Camp and the Educators are unable to reach caregivers or emergency contacts, then a Community Service Police Officer will be called, and the child will be placed under their care.** Please make sure emergency contacts listed for your child are people who would be available to pick up your child in the event of an emergency or unforeseen lateness.

Reporting Lateness/Absences

It is the responsibility of the caregiver to notify the Director when the child will not be in attendance for the day, or a part of the day. Please call, text, or email the camp director (number provided in pre-camp emails) to notify us. As a reminder, we do not refund or credit fees (without two weeks' notice) for illness, absences or vacations and the deposit portion is non-refundable. Because campers will be out in the park exploring, dropping off late or picking up early is not ideal and should be avoided when possible.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

Educators will check in with caregivers about their child's engagement, interest, and progress in the program through verbal or written communication. Educators will work to support each child in encouraging their abilities, unique interests, skills, and nature exploration.

ARC uses two forms of written documentation to communicate with caregivers:

1. **Occurrence Form.** Used to communicate any injuries or illnesses.
2. **Behavior Notification.** Used to indicate serious/inappropriate behaviors.

A positive behavior reinforcement system will be utilized to promote appropriate behavior. When necessary, this may also come in the form of a Behavior Support Plan.

Behavior Management and Guidance

We strive to meet the needs of all children by providing a safe space with appropriate guidelines and boundaries designed to support the safety of all our participants. The Educators use indirect ways to guide children:

- We provide clear rules and expectations.
- We give choices.
- We maintain a regular routine when possible.
- We provide a fun, busy activity schedule.

GUIDANCE AND REDIRECTION

As a partner in your child's success, we encourage you to share information with us that may affect your child's behavior. We are committed to working with you in the best interest of your child and the rest of the participants in our care. We do not use or endorse any form of corporal punishment by anyone (including family members). We also do not condone any

means of inflicting physical pain such as biting, jerking, shaking, spanking, slapping, hitting, kicking, pulling/dragging, or any other measures.

To accomplish this, children, parents/guardians, and Educators will all be aware of the program rules and behavior expected. We are confident these practices will minimize the need for disciplinary actions.

- Educators will communicate with the child in an effort to identify the problem and possible solutions.
- The child may be redirected to a new activity for a cool down period.
- If the situation persists the caregiver may be called for immediate pick up.

Should disruptions occur, educators will act as the facilitator and use the following procedures:

- We may remove a child from an activity if they are struggling with keeping themselves or others safe. Educators will work with the child in addressing and identifying feelings and emotions they are having.
- Educators will help to de-escalate the situation, and work with the child to find more appropriate and acceptable ways to communicate their feelings and needs.

If the situation persists:

1. The parent/guardian may be called for immediate pick up. This may also result in suspension of service.
2. In the case of a suspension, or if the situation becomes severe, a parent meeting will be conducted with the parent/guardian, the Director, and a Special Populations Program Manager.
3. Depending on the severity of the situation, a Behavior Support Plan may be implemented.
4. Upon continued occurrences, a follow-up parent meeting will be held to review results of Behavior Support Plan.
5. If services are suspended for 1-5 days, there will be no refund for that day and/or week.
6. We reserve the right to grant exceptions to #1-4 of the above discipline steps in cases involving severe, extenuating and/or exceptional circumstances; examples include behavior that:
 - Hurts another child or Educator, either physically or verbally.
 - Hurts himself/herself/themselves.
 - Destroys (non-disposable) property.
 - Creates a one-on-one extended situation with Educators, which takes them out of their 1:15 ratio.

NO TOLERANCE POLICY

The following will not be tolerated in any of our programs and are grounds for immediate removal from program.

- Abusive, harassing, and/or obscene language or gestures.
- Threats of any kind that would intend harm, physical aggression, violent acts, or bullying.
- Weapons of any kind (including toy guns, firearms, sharp objects, rocks/sticks used as weapons, and fireworks).
- Offensive or lude conduct.
- Improper exposure.
- Intentionally leaving the supervised area without permission.
- Intentionally damaging or defacing community center or school property.

Medical Information

Meals

What your child consumes contributes to their energy and camp experience. Please make sure that your child has a filling breakfast each day before coming to Camp since our days are very active. Morning Snack is around 10:30 a.m. Lunch is eaten around noon. Afternoon snack is around 2:30 p.m. **It is the caregivers' responsibility to provide a morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack. Please ensure all items are peanut free!** If your child has special dietary restrictions, these must be listed on their Medical History and Authorization Form and other forms as noted in the Registration section.

Hydration

In addition, it is important for your child to stay hydrated. **Please supply your child with a water bottle with their name clearly marked on it.** It is also recommended that they drink water in the evening at home.

REDUCE, REUSE, AND RECYCLE!

Please assist in your child's environmental awareness by using reusable food containers and minimizing packaging, as you are able.

Wheelchair Access and Disability Accommodations

This camp is not wheelchair accessible, and we can offer only limited accommodation for campers who have disabilities. Please speak with the camp director as soon as possible if this is a concern for your child.

Prescription Medication

Written parental consent is required to administer any medication. Please ask for a Medication Authorization Form. Medications will be securely kept onsite, with the Educators. All medication must be in its original container and properly labeled with:

- the child's name
- date the prescription was filled or the medication's expiration date
- legible instructions for administration such as manufacturer's instructions or a prescription label.

Non-prescription medication

The following medication can be given with written parental consent, only at the dose recommended and only for the duration and method of administration recommended on the manufacturer's label:

- Antihistamine
- Non-aspirin fever reducer/pain reliever
- Anti-itching ointment or lotion (specifically for itch relief only)
- Decongestant
- Sunscreen/Sunblock

A physician's written authorization is required for non-prescription medication not listed, medication that is to be used in a way other than specified on the manufacturer's label, or that lacks a label. Caregivers must fill out a Medical Treatment Authorization Form and sign it for each medication that is to be dispensed. All medication will be kept on-site, with the Educator team. All unused medication will be returned to parents or disposed of.

The Seattle-King County Department of Public Health recommends purchasing a 45 SPF sunblock and applying it to your child before they arrive at Camp. Please include the sunscreen, clearly labeled with the child's name, in their backpack. Each child should have their own. We will remind them to apply it during their day with us. **If you want us (Educators) to apply sunblock to your child, please check the appropriate box on the Participant Information and Authorization Form. Your child will need to apply sunscreen on their own.**

Illness

These guidelines are consistent with the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health's Child Day Care Health Handbook. We ask that you adhere to them*.

Please keep at home a child with any of the following symptoms:

- Diarrhea, more than one loose stool per day
- Vomiting, twice or more in the past 24 hours
- Rash, any not associated with heat or allergic reaction to medicine
- Drainage from the eye, redness of eyelid lining, swelling and discharge of pus

- Appearance/behavior: Unusually tired, pale, lack of appetite, difficult to wake, confused, irritable
- Sore throat, especially with fever and/or swollen glands
- Head lice, nits or scabies

*Caregivers must have access to a childcare alternative. Children not well enough to participate in **ALL** activities must not come to Camp.

Illness at Camp

If a child displays any of the symptoms of illness included in, but not limited to, those listed above, the child will be isolated and kept comfortable while a Caregiver is notified. If removal from Camp is necessary, the caregiver will be asked to come for the child promptly. If the caregivers cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called. If no party can be reached, and symptoms persist, the child's physician will be notified and their directions followed.

Contagious Disease

Caregivers are to inform the Camp Director immediately when their child contracts a contagious disease including, but not limited to: chicken pox, conjunctivitis, mumps, measles, viral infections, COVID-19, lice—or if they are believed to have been exposed to one. The Director will then alert other caregivers in writing. Children being treated with antibiotics for a contagious disease may not return to Camp until they have been using the medication for a 48- hour period and/or until the danger of infection of others has passed. Incidents of contagious disease will be reported to the King County Health Department at: 206-587-2774.

Emergency Procedures

In case of a serious illness or injury the following procedures will be used:

- Administer immediate first aid/CPR
- Contact 911
- Contact parent/emergency contact
- Transport to nearest hospital if necessary
- File Accident Report with the Camp Director who files it with the City Staff

CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR POOR AIR QUALITY

Poor air quality from wildfires has been a health issue during the summer months in recent years. The ARC team closely monitors the air quality when it becomes an increasing health concern. There is a consistent Air Quality Index used and the categories of the Air Quality Index range from Good, Moderate, Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups, Unhealthy, Very Unhealthy, and Hazardous.

- We will cautiously conduct camp when the air quality moves into the Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
- We may modify our activities and adjust our programming when the air quality rises above the Moderate level,
- We may cancel camp any day air quality reaches or is forecasted to reach the Unhealthy range.

If camp were to be cancelled due to poor air quality, we will do our best to notify families as soon as possible.

Location Specific Information

Carkeek Park

ADDRESS:

Carkeek Park Environmental Learning Center
950 NW Carkeek Park Road, Seattle, WA 98177
206-386-4236

PICK UP/DROP OFF LOCATION:

Picnic tables below Shelter 2, located uphill from the playground. Please park in the beach parking lot for drop off and pickup.

Discovery Park

ADDRESS:

Discovery Park Visitor Center
3801 Discovery Park Blvd, Seattle, WA 98199
206-386-4236

PICK UP/DROP OFF LOCATION:

Field next to Discovery Park Visitor Center. Please park in Visitor Center parking lot.



Thank you for choosing Summer Nature Day Camp!



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Nature Day Camp 2025 Enrollment Agreement

1) I agree to be safe at all times by taking the safety direction of my Educators.

For instance, I will:

- Stay with my Environmental Educator and my group at all times
- Follow my Educator's directions
 - Stay out of the water
 - Stay in groups of three or more, including trips to the bathroom.
 - Wear my sunscreen
 - Eat lunch and drink water

Don't worry, we will remind you of these things, and we want you to agree that you will do them! We may ask you to do other things too, like put on your coat. It is important for you to follow our advice, directions, and rules!

2) I agree to practice respect by being respectful of others, myself and the Environment.

We will talk about respect at Morning Circle, and we ask that you respect any rules you are given and do your best to be considerate of everyone, including yourself, and the Park.

3) I'm ready for camp!

I am not older than 12 and not younger than 6 years old on the first day of camp. That is the range of ages this camp is designed for so you will enjoy camp the most. Willingness is really the only other thing you need to bring to camp! You will have the most fun if you are curious and think positively!

Print Camper Name

Sign your name here

My Camper and I have read and discussed the camper and caregiver parts of this Handbook and believe they are ready! I understand what my Camper needs and will provide the items mentioned.

- I understand that I am enrolling my child into Summer Nature Day Camp.
- I understand that the fee is due 2 weeks prior to camp starting and agree to pay by the due dates on the accompanying payment schedule. I understand my obligation to make full payments *on time* according to the payment schedule.
- I understand deposits are non-refundable. I understand that to receive a refund, less the deposit, notice is required **two** full weeks in advance.
- I agree to adhere to the stated policies and procedures of the Summer Nature Day Camp program **as stated in the Handbook.**

Print Parent/Guardian Name

Sign your name here

Relationship to Child: _____ Date: _____

Nature Day Camp Buddy Request

Discovery and Carkeek Parks

To make a buddy request, please submit this form along with your other required registration forms. Forms are due TWO weeks PRIOR to the start of camp. (Requests received after the due date may not be accommodated.)

Please upload this form to your ePACT account under "Other".

Child's Name: _____

Which Camp?: Nature Play Day Camp Nature Adventure Trek Earthkeepers

Child's Camp Week #: _____

Child's Camp Week Date: _____

My Child would like to be placed in the same small group as:

*We do our best to accommodate reasonable requests by guardians regarding the placement of their children in the same small group with **ONE** friend or sibling (if more than one name is listed, we cannot guarantee that we can honor the multiple requests).*

Groups are usually arranged by age- if you make a request for two children varying in age to be together, the older child will be placed in the younger child's age group.

Buddy Request: _____

Immunization Form Placeholder for Activity Camps

My child _____ will only be participating in activity camps this summer. If my child will be attending a Seattle Parks and Recreation childcare program in the future, I understand that I will be required to upload a current immunization form to ePACT.

If needed, please upload this form to ePACT in order to meet the requirement of having a document in the Immunization Forms field.