

I. Welcome

Welcome to Children's Island Day Camp!

This manual is designed to answer many of your questions. Please take some time to read it over carefully. If you have any additional questions, please contact Adam Rodgers, Children's Island Director at 781-990-7013, Cell 978-360-1948, e-mail: rodgersa@northshoreymca.org

II. Goals and objectives of Children's Island Day Camp

Camp Goal:

Children's Island will provide every child with a safe, unique, and fun camp environment while helping them create memories that last a lifetime.

Children's Island Objectives:

- 1) To help each camper develop **self-confidence and a feeling of self-worth**.
- 2) To assist each camper in developing **new friendships** and a better understanding of interpersonal relationships.
- 3) To help each camper **discover and develop their potential**, while having fun learning and stretching skills in a variety of activities.
- 4) To teach each camper how to **work through problems of communication and/or cooperation** with fellow campers, thereby developing their abilities to deal with similar situations in a positive manner.
- 5) To provide each camper with **opportunities to become physically active** and to share in maintaining good safety standards for the welfare of all.
- 6) To foster in each camper **an awareness of fair play and sportsmanship**.
- 7) To instill in each camper an appreciation of the out-of-doors and the role that each person plays in maintaining the environment for today and in the future.

III. The Island Staff

The staff at Children's Island are dedicated and experienced counselors with a passion for working with youth. All staff are CPR/First Aid certified and put through an extensive camp training in order to ensure that campers receive the highest level of care and are given an exciting and memorable experience. Each camper will receive the attention they deserve for a safe and fun summer camp experience from our dedicated camp staff as outlined below:

Each summer our camp staff are listed on the Lynch van Otterloo website at www.northshoreymca.org

In accordance with Massachusetts State Law, and to ensure both the safety of the campers and the highest quality staff, Children's Island and the YMCA perform background checks on all staff each year.

IV. Getting to Camp

Children's Island is located about one mile outside of Marblehead harbor. Campers are picked up at the Landing Dock in Marblehead or Pickering Wharf in Salem. They will be transported via a contracted boat to the island. The vessel is chosen to ensure that the safety of all is top priority.

V. Facilities

Facilities on the Island include: the **Main Lodge** which contains separate areas for boys and girls to keep their belongings, bathrooms, and a large middle room where the entire camp can meet on rainy days, the **Ranger Lodge** (home base for the Ranger program), the **Arts and Crafts Building**, the **Sailors' Lodge**, the **Pool and Pool House**, the **Gazebo** (an open air building at mid-island), and the **Camp Director's Office/Medical Office**.

VI. Refunds and Credits

All deposits are non-refundable. All refunds must be submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to the start of each camp session. Refunds for emergencies and unforeseeable circumstances are at the discretion of each camp director.

VI. Financial Assistance

The YMCA summer camps are for everyone - regardless of income. The YMCA provides financial assistance for those who unable to pay a full camp fee. Subsidies are available thanks to the general support of "Y For All", Marblehead Rotary, and the Marblehead Public Schools. Pick up an application for our Access Program at the YMCA or download one from our website. www.northshoreymca.org

Processing financial aid applications can take up to two weeks and thus should be completed at least two weeks prior to registering for camp. A copy of your award letter must be attached to your camp registration packet in order to receive reduced rates.

VIII. Drop-off/Pick-Up

Drop-off and pick-up options are available from State Street Landing in Marblehead and Pickering Wharf in Salem. Families must select a boat option at the time of registration and abide by its schedule and route.

Directions To State Street Landing

Follow Rte. 114 into Marblehead (becomes Pleasant Street). Follow Pleasant Street to its end. Take a left on Washington Street then the first right onto State Street. The Landing is located at the end of State Street.

Directions To Pickering Wharf

Follow Rte 114 into Salem (Washington St) to Derby St and then take a right onto Congress St. Take your first left on Wharf st into the Pickering Wharf Marina.

Drop-Off:

Campers should be dropped off at least 15 minutes before their boat is scheduled to depart.

A counselor will contact you the weekend prior to each session to let you know your camper group for the week. At drop-off staff will help campers find their groups. Campers should check in with their counselor immediately upon arrival each morning.

In the event that a camper that is registered does not show up for camp Parents/Guardians will be contacted. Please call and leave a message at 781-631-1819 ext 2405 if your child will not be at camp.

In the event that a camper has not fully completed registration, payment, or does not have all the appropriate medical forms, the camper **WILL NOT** be allowed to attend camp according to our licensing requirements

Missing the Boat, Absent Campers:

Due to maximum capacity limits of our boats, Children's Island cannot guarantee late campers a spot on a later boat.

We are not able to accommodate campers who miss both boats.

Pick-Up:

Counselors/Directors will be available to answer any questions regarding your camper's day or experiences. All campers **MUST** be signed out in order to leave the dock.

Campers cannot be released to anyone that has not been authorized by a camper's legal parent/guardian. Further, campers cannot walk home without a note stating that fact.

If the boat is going to be excessively late (more than 30 minutes) parents at the dock will be notified by YMCA staff.

Late Pick-up:

If you think you are going to be late, please call the Camp Phone as soon as possible (978-479-2133).

After one hour from the closing of the program if the staff has not been able to contact any individuals on the authorized release **AND** the parent has not notified camp of their tardiness, the YMCA is mandated to contact the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to report the situation. Consistent late pickup can lead to suspension from the program.

IX. Changing Boat Times

To make a change in your child's boat time:

Prior to your child's session: Call the YMCA at 781-631-1819 Ext 1424 and ask for the Children's Island Camp Director.

During your child's session: Any request for a boat change, even for one day, must be approved by the camp director and accompanied by a parent's note. Certain boats during some sessions are filled to capacity so be aware that boat switching is not always possible.

These policies are designed with camper safety in mind. Without a note, campers will be sent home on the boat they are confirmed for.

X. Important Phone Numbers

Before the camp season (prior to June 28)

Call the YMCA main number: 781-631-9622 ext.1413 for ALL questions

During the camp season (June 28 – September 3) – Camp Registrar on-call

Call the YMCA main number: 781-631-9622 and ask for the Children's Island Registrar

- Registration questions/updates/changes
- Confirmation of the Y's receipt of health forms, etc.
- Boat ticket purchase
- ALL billing matters

Call the Children's Island Camp Phone (978-360-1948) for

- Emergencies requiring immediate attention

Note: Camp phone is answered from 9 AM until 5:30 PM on camp days. On Overnights the phone will be answered until 8 PM and will be on again starting at 9 AM Friday morning. Please leave a message if not answered so we can return your call.

XI. Camp Programming

GENERAL CAMP programs include:

Sports: A combination of both traditional (soccer, softball, volleyball, etc.) and non-traditional activities (unique tag games, team building activities) will be run. The program's goal is to have something for everyone, regardless of how athletic they are during the school year.

Rangers: Using a progressive patch system, this program teaches respect for the environment, instills a love of the outdoors, and teaches new skills while building self-confidence (See **Patches and Awards** for the extended explanation). Ranger activities include: exploration walks around the Island, snorkeling, rowing, orienteering, campfire building, craft making, and more. This program is designed for the older youth for safety reasons.

Aquatics: In addition to several beaches, Children's Island has chlorinated, salt-water pool offering groups the chance to work on their swimming skills through organized activities, playing games, and having fun with their friends. Always staffed by trained lifeguards, the pool and beaches are great places to cool down on hot summer days!

Kayaking: Aquatics staff along with Group Counselors teach the basic skills of kayaking to the campers from two secluded beaches.

Arts and Crafts: From tie-dyeing, to gimp, and projects that make use of the unique Island environment such as sea glass collage, Arts and Crafts has a little bit of everything. The program gives every camper a great way to express themselves creatively and to bring something of their own home from camp.

Archery: Campers learn the basics of archery and how to safely shoot a bow and arrow.

Nature: Campers are given the opportunity to explore and learn about the rich and varied plant and animal life that make up the islands' ecosystem.

SPECIALTY CAMPS and PROGRAMS include:

Rangers Camp: We have taken this very successful staple of the Children's Island program and created a two week intensive camp. Focusing on outdoor skills, this camp utilizes the Island's unique surroundings to create a two week experience that builds teamwork, leadership, self confidence, and fun. Over the course of the program, participants work towards earning patches by engaging in different activities such as knot tying, rock climbing, boating, orienteering, archery, snorkeling, and teambuilding games.

Ocean Adventure Camp: Come and learn all about the island's natural environment. In this camp, participants will have a ton of fun with hands on activities designed to enhance their understanding of the island's rugged yet fragile ecosystem, and the importance of preserving it. Tide pooling, bird and plant identification games, setting lobster pots, and sea kayaking are just a few of the things campers will be doing. A variety of camp games with an ecology twist will be mixed in to ensure a fun and worthwhile experience.

Sailing Camp: Aboard our fleet of 14 foot American Daysailers, campers will learn to sail under the guidance and expertise of our sailing staff. Campers will develop skills in tying knots, rigging sails, navigating the waters, capsizing, and swimming. Sailing trips to locations such as Misery Island and Brown's Island will sharpen sailing abilities and learn basic racing techniques. The camp will have two tracks to accommodate the beginner as well as train the intermediate in expert sailing skills. Campers will participate in the Island overnight with the day campers but inhabit the Sailor's end of the island with home base in the Sailor's lodge. Time for exploration of island environments, driftwood creations and group projects complete this camp experience. Sailing campers must be able to swim 100 yard crawl and tread and float for 3 minutes to ensure safety. Swim tests available anytime at the Y by contacting Susan Guertin, 781-990-7009 or quertins@northshoreymca.org.

Counselor-In-Training Program: The CIT program is for those teens that want to develop leadership skills and learn how to effectively work with campers. This program is designed to prepare teens for future employment as counselors. CIT will be mentored by island staff, train and work with groups on conflict resolution and program planning, as well as have time to enjoy the island and its offerings of activities. Teens entering the ninth and tenth grade who wish to participate in the CIT program must apply for a limited number of positions. Applications are available at the YMCA or online at www.northshoreymca.org.

Islanders Program: This teen program is designed for the older campers that want more time to experience the island adventures. Teens will be able to kayak around the island, row to the islands, swim and dive in the open waters, fish off the rocks and maintain the lobster traps, as well as learn to cook and survive in the island setting. Activity choices and time for socialization are two key components of this camp which also presents challenges to be solved by group activities and projects. Special teen overnight supervised and guided by teen specialists complete this teen

adventure.

XII. Patches and Awards

Every year the one question we hear from parents more than any other is some form of "How does my child earn a ranger patch?" All program areas at camp (Rangers, Arts and Crafts, Sports, Sailing, Archery, Kayaking, and Aquatics) have opportunities for campers to earn patches. Rangers, Sailing, and Kayaking have programs for advancement, with several patches in a specific order of difficulty. Patches (with some exceptions) are distributed at Final Flagpole (camp meeting) at the end of each session.

Aquatics – There are several opportunities to earn patches in Aquatics: 1) A number of "most enthusiastic" or "most improved" swimmer patches and awards are given out at the end of the session. 2) Children in the younger age groups can earn their float swim patch by swimming to the Rangers float located off Back Beach without a lifejacket. 3) Children in the older age groups, Teen Leaders, and CITs can earn their Triangle Swim patch by swimming without a lifejacket from the dock to Meatloaf rock, over to Hot Dog rock and back to the dock

Arts and Crafts – Arts and Crafts usually gives out only two patches per session for most enthusiastic boy and most enthusiastic girl at Arts and Crafts.

Archery – An Archery patch is awarded to anyone who hits and sticks a bulls-eye at archery. A Yellow Bead is awarded for anyone who hits and sticks an arrow anywhere in a target at archery.

Kayaking – Three patches are available, **Paddler (beginner)**, **Ocean Explorer (intermediate)** and **Sea Navigator (advanced)**. Any time a group has Kayaking on their schedule campers can ask the lifeguards to test them on their skills, and certain days are set aside for such tests.

Rangers – Rangers has the most popular and most involved patch system. The main program at Rangers consists of six color-coded patches. In the order of increasing difficulty the patches are **Blue (candidate)**, **Green (novice)**, **Brown (intermediate)**, **Orange (experienced)**, **Yellow (advanced)**, **Red (staff)**. At the beginning of each session new campers are given a booklet at Rangers that explains the requirements of each patch. Many of the upper level patch requirements can only be earned by participating in the Ranger overnight (on Thursdays of even sessions). To stay on the Ranger Overnight a camper must be ten years old and have completed eight of the ten requirements for the blue patch. If you would ever like a copy of the Ranger Patch booklet, ask either the Ranger director or the Camp Director during Family Night and we'll be glad to get you one. In addition to the color patches at Rangers campers can earn patches for: rowing skills, skin diving skills, and orienteering.

Sailing – Sailing has a program of six patches (**Day Tripper, Islander, Seaman, Mate, Skipper, and Master**). All campers start with Day Tripper and work through in order. Requirements are worked on when groups come to Sailing during their day. Participants in Sailing Elective get additional chances to work on patch requirements, especially the upper level patches. A Sailing Patch book is available to parents.

Sports – At the end of each session a patch is presented to the most involved camper in each group.

In addition to the patches and awards described above there are patches to reward campers who show caring and respect for the Island environment and each other, for being involved in Flagpole with creative skits or original songs, and for being leaders in their group.

XIII. Family Nights/Overnights

Family Night

Family nights are an exciting opportunity for campers to show the camp to their family and friends and for parents to meet and talk to the staff. Family nights take place the second Thursday of each two week session. Boat tickets go on sale the first day of the session. Tickets are available at the YMCA all day and at the dock Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings.

Families of campers are welcome to bring dinner to camp or to purchase hamburgers and hotdogs on the Island. There will be camp activities led by camp staff to participate in as a family each session.

Overnights

Camp overnights also happen the second Thursday of each two week session. All campers have the opportunity to stay for the Camp Overnight. After Family night wraps up and all family and friends leave, campers will take part in campfire, night time games led by staff, and then go to sleep in tents under the stars. Camp provides breakfast and lunch on Friday. An overnight permission slip with a suggested packing list will be sent home during the session and will also be available on the website.

XIV. What to Bring to Camp

LUNCH: Each camper should bring his or her own lunch labeled with their name. We recommend an extra thermos or bottle of water.

CLOTHING: Campers should wear appropriate outdoor attire. Keep in mind that the Island is typically 10° cooler than the mainland. Please send a sweatshirt or jacket daily. As the topography on the island tends to be uneven and rocky in places, and your child will be participating in some sports activities through out the day, closed toed shoes are highly recommended for all campers. There are many styles of closed toe sandals and water shoes on the market .Flip –Flops are not appropriate for most activities on the island.

SWIMMING GEAR: All campers will swim daily. Please pack a bathing suit and towel every day. We have some goggles on hand but if campers have their own, feel free to send them as well.

SUNSCREEN and BUG SPRAY: Please send your child to camp with his/her own sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher). There is time built into the schedule to re-apply sunscreen and counselors have the children re-apply sunscreen after extended water activities. If you believe that your child is getting too much sun please speak to his or her counselor so we can address the problem. If you choose to send insect repellent (the Island has few mosquitoes) please instruct your child in its application.

Please send everything in a **labeled backpack** with your child. Please make sure to label all belongings. This will significantly reduce the number of lost items and ensure a safe return.

Please **do not send** your child to camp with toy guns or knives, jewelry, POKEMON-style cards, dolls, radios, gum, bags of candy, walk-men, disc-men, cameras, game boys, CELL PHONES, other electronic devices. The YMCA is not responsible for items that are lost, broken, or stolen.

XV. Lifejackets

ALL campers, Teens , and CITs are REQUIRED to have a United States Coast Guard approved lifejacket to come to camp. This lifejacket is worn on the boat ride to and from the Island as well as on sailboats, rowboats, kayaks, and for some swimmers, on all beaches. The Island DOES NOT have extra lifejackets for campers without them. Please label your lifejackets!

XVI. Lost and Found

LOST AND FOUND: Island Staff will make every attempt to return all lost items each day. To increase the chances of getting back an item of clothing we recommend that you LABEL ALL ITEMS WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME. At the end of each session all unclaimed clothing will be brought to the YMCA for two weeks after which time we will donate all items to charity.

If an item is missing please look through Lost and Found box located in the Main Lodge room during Family Night.

XVII. Rainy Days

We travel to the Island EVERY DAY unless it is unsafe to travel to or dock at the Island. (Alternate location would be found on our website or by calling the Island hotline at 781-631-1819 ext2405) It is possible that weather might prevent certain activities, e.g. sailing, kayaking, but the staff have rain day plans in place to keep the camp day fun!

It is very important to make sure that campers are prepared for inclement weather. Appropriate rain gear (LABELED WITH THEIR NAMES) should be provided in addition to a dry change of clothes for later in the day.

If there is a lightning storm camp moves into buildings until it is safe. The camp administration monitors weather radios and suspends any water programs at the first sign of dangerous weather. If a weather system interferes with the loading of the afternoon boat runs, the trips are delayed until it is safe to travel.

XVIII. Swimming

Since camp is on an island, camp places high importance on strong swimming skills. On each camper's first trip to the pool he/she will take a short swim test across the shallow end to determine his/her swimming ability. This test is mandated by State law and is a good way for the aquatics staff to know the swimming levels of the campers.

XVIII. Group Placement

All groups are formed by age with an eye towards keeping each group a similar size. Many requests are satisfied through the natural group formation process. If you have a request that is not met with the grouping system please speak to the camp administration. In the interest of maintaining balanced groups we cannot guarantee that requests will be granted.

A good motto for Children's Island is "Make new friends". This is encouraged through our choice based model for each program period. Children's Island Day Camp is a great place for campers to meet children who are not from their neighborhoods or schools, some campers come from other states and even foreign countries! Learning to meet and interact in a new setting is both a useful and healthy skill and our goal on the Island is to make this process easy and fun.

XX. Camper Adjustment

While rare, sometimes campers, especially younger campers, are challenged by the transition from school to day camp. The staff welcomes each camper to the program and makes every accommodation to help them feel comfortable and at home. If after the first day your camper is apprehensive about camp please speak with the Camp Director.

XXI. Behavior Management Policy

The Children's Island Day Camp Behavior Management policy is formed around the core idea of "safety and respect for ALL". Discipline and guidance will be consistent and based on the understanding of the individual needs and development of the camper. Rules are constantly explained and reinforced with the campers. Campers are encouraged to work out minor disputes by themselves according to their abilities. Counselors will intervene as needed.

Repeated infringement of the rules or disruptions of the group by a camper will be addressed through conversations with a counselor about better ways to handle difficult situations. If the behavior continues then the camper will be given a time-out from the activity followed by another conversation with a counselor. If the child continues to create a problem for the group the camper will be escorted to the Camp Director.

Progressive methods of discipline for Children's Island are as follows:

Step 1: Talk through the problem with the camper. The camper is encouraged to suggest alternative solutions and assist in implementation. A warning may be given to the camper explaining consequences for continuance of their behavior.

Step 2: A time out or removal from an activity. The YMCA staff will ask the camper to sit down and help the camper regain control of him/herself. Campers will be provided an opportunity to resolve the situation by talking with staff and peers. If an agreeable solution is reached, the child may return to the activity.

Step 3: If the disruptive behavior continues the Camper will be brought to the Camp Director. Depending on the severity of the behavior the director will either send the child back to the group with the clear message that further disruptive behavior will mean that the child's parents will be called or the parent may be called immediately and asked to pick up their child.

The Camp Director will **IMMEDIATELY** contact the parent and have the child sent home when these situations arise:

1. Physically fighting with another child
2. Habitual use of swearing/foul language
3. Hitting and/or kicking a staff member/another child
4. Inappropriately touching of staff member/another child
5. Stealing

XXII. Camp Rules

Camp rules are designed to maintain a safe, fun, and respectful environment.

Camp Rules:

1. ALWAYS treat others the way you want to be treated!
2. Shoes must be worn at all times.
3. Campers should always be with their group and in sight or sound of their counselors.
4. Respect the Island environment: Put trash in its place.
5. Lifejackets are on and fastened on all boats and on the dock.
6. Only appropriate language will be used at camp.
7. Keep your hands and body to yourself at all times.
8. Girls and boys will stay on their side of the Main Lodge.
9. Instructions from Counselors keep people safe. Always follow them!
10. Alcohol and Drug use is prohibited.
11. Animals and items that could in any way be considered dangerous to others will not be allowed.

XXIII. Health Policy

Children's Island Day Camp has a health care consultant on call in addition to key staff people trained in emergency care and first aid. **Each child must have a completed and signed medical form and immunization record at camp prior to admittance.** Participation privileges will not be extended to campers whose forms are not on file. Parents should not send sick or infectious children to camp.

Parents whose children need medication during the camp day should provide the medication in the original container with the original prescription attached. A medication consent form must be completed prior to any medications being dispensed. Non-prescription medication must be accompanied by a parent's note as well as a physician's note. All medications should be given to either the Camp Director or Assistant Camp Director and will be locked up throughout the day. Medications will be dispensed by authorized YMCA personnel.

If the Camp Director and/or Health Supervisor deem a child ill, parents will be contacted to arrange for pick-up.

XXIV. Emergency Procedures

The trained staff will handle minor injuries or illnesses. In the event of a minor accident or illness, the camp staff will contact the parent/guardian or an emergency contact person. In the case of serious illness or accident, the YMCA camp staff will utilize appropriate harbor patrol, police, fire department or ambulance transportation. If this action is taken, the camper will be taken to North Shore Children's hospital. Parents will be notified in all cases.

We hope that this parent handbook has answered your questions and given you valuable information about your child's upcoming experience on Children's Island.
If you have any further questions please contact me on my cell phone 978-360-1948.

Sincerely,

Adam Rodgers
Children's Island Camp Director