

# West Bloomfield Parks



I'M A HAPPY  

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**CAMPER**



at West Bloomfield Parks & Recreation's Nature Camp

# Nature Camps Parent Handbook

<http://www.wbparks.org/>

248-451-1900



# WELCOME TO CAMP!

We have a great summer planned this year, with fun themes, field trips and special events. Our philosophy is to provide a safe, fun, organized, challenging and well supervised program. Our staff is experienced, friendly, energetic and is looking forward to providing your child with a great camp experience. Campers will spend the majority of their time outdoors and will participate in a variety of hands-on activities. This will give them the opportunity to enjoy familiarity and try new ideas, experiences, skills and interests. Campers will foster new friendships that they might not experience outside the Nature Camp program.

*The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with the information you need regarding our programs and policies. Please read this over and discuss these policies with your child to be sure they understand what is expected of them at our camps. Please read through this handbook and if you have any questions, call our office at (248) 451-1900.*

## NATURE CAMPS LOCATION & HOURS

Nature Camp home base location is at:

Recreation Activities Center- In the Nature Room

4640 Walnut Lake Road  
West Bloomfield, MI 48323

Camp will be closed for all holidays recognized by West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation.

Depending on the nature camp your child is registered for, field trips/ off site adventures may take place. Transportation is provided to these locations and included in camp costs.

See weekly parent newsletter and Facebook group for more details. Nature Camps Facebook Group can be found at: [www.facebook.com/groups/wbnature18](http://www.facebook.com/groups/wbnature18)

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All of the information provided is important to assure a fun and safe summer. We ask you to go over this information with your child.

However, in summary, please pay close attention to the following:

- Campers must be signed in and out each day. Do not just drop them off. A photo ID is required for your camper to be released to you or the authorized person listed on the Camp Waiver/Release Form Accident Waiver, Release of Liability, Indemnity/Hold Harmless Agreement.
- Campers need to bring a lunch, beverage, 2 snacks (**Wee-Wilderness Explorers only need 1 snack and water**). For adventure camps, bring a swim suit, towel and water shoes each day. **Be sure their names are on each item.**
- Do not bring any other items to camp; Camper cannot use them and may lose them. West Bloomfield Parks cannot be responsible for lost items.
- For safety reasons, campers **MUST** wear socks and gym shoes that tie each day. No Crocs, sandals, flip flops or Heelys. Camper will be excluded from activities until he/she has appropriate footwear.
- Campers need to wear their current year camp t-shirt on all field trips.
- Campers must follow the camp rules listed in the Parent Handbook.

Any questions can be directed to the Camp Manager or Camp Administrator/Park Naturalist.

## NATURE CAMP REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Enrollment is open to children who reside within the Township of West Bloomfield and surrounding areas. Price is based on Township residency. The program is non-sectarian and non-discriminatory. Enrollment will be accepted on a first come first serve basis within specific registration dates set per year. West Bloomfield Parks invites people with disabilities to participate in all programs and activities it offers. Reasonable accommodations will be made. Camp registration forms must be dropped off (4640 Walnut Lake Rd.) emailed (camps@wbparks.org) or faxed (248.738.2529). Once your child is initially registered, you may also register online for additional camp weeks. Please call 248-451-1900 for details or go online at <http://www.wbparks.org/camps>.

Every child must have all required camp forms completed and submitted before they can be registered for camp with payment:

1. Camp Waiver/Release Form Accident Waiver, Release of Liability, Indemnity/Hold Harmless Agreement
2. Concussion Form
3. Permission to Administer Medication and Release of Claims (if needed)

Please note that we may take field trips. Your permission slip for these trips is included in the Camp Waiver/Release Form Accident Waiver, Release of Liability, Indemnity/Hold Harmless Agreement

All forms **MUST** be **completed at time of registration** and filed at West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation (Recreation Activities Center) 4640 Walnut Lake Road, West Bloomfield, MI 48323. **The registration process is NOT complete until we have all necessary forms.** Part of the Permission to Administer Medication and Release of Claims form must be filled out by a physician, so please plan accordingly.

We accept Visa and MasterCard credit cards, as well as personal checks and cash for camp registration. All fees must be paid in full prior to a child attending camp. Registration fees for camp include a camp T-shirt and the cost of possible field trips. **Refunds cannot be issued for daily absences.** We only process refunds due to a medical condition, with a doctor's note, if submitted by the end of that week of camp.

If West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation cancels a camp, a full refund will be issued. Any transfer/refund requests will include a \$10 administrative fee. **No transfers or refunds after Tuesday at 7pm the week prior to the start of camp.**

## NATURE CAMP SCHEDULE

Our program offers a variety of age appropriate activities. When it comes to planning activities; we keep their capabilities, interests and safety in mind. We also want to make their experience to be memorable. Activities may include:

- Outdoor and indoor large motor activities including sports and games
- Arts and crafts
- Nature and educational activities
- Sing-alongs, dance and movement
- Snack time
- Group activities with themes based on holidays or special events
- Field trips
- Guided hikes
- Free explore time in Outdoor Natural Play Area and Sensory Garden

*\*Schedule is subject to change due to weather or unforeseen circumstances*

## NATURE CAMP CHECK IN AND CHECK OUT PROCEDURE

Parents/guardians **MUST** walk their child into Nature Camp each morning.

Drop off for camp is at **9:00 am** (no earlier). Pick up from camp is at **4:00 pm**.

Nature Camps drop off and pickup is at the Recreation Activities Center Nature Room.

Children **MUST** be signed out by a parent/guardian at pick up time. A photo ID will be required at pick up and **only those listed on the Camp Waiver/Release Form** will be allowed to pick the child up from camp. If you pick up your child early, he/she must be signed out in the same manner. Early pick-up must be pre-arranged with the Camp Manager and it is not allowed on field trip days.

Any camper not picked up by 4:15pm will be charged late fees. Late fees are as follows: \$5 for the first ten minutes and \$2 for each additional five minutes.

All late fees must be paid by Mastercard, Visa, check or cash at the Recreation Activities Center located at 4640 Walnut Lake Road in person or over the phone before the child will be allowed to return to camp. The Recreation Activities Center is open Monday-Thursday 8:00am-7:00pm and Friday 8:00am-4:30pm.

If camper is not picked up by 4:45 pm, and no authorized person can be reached, 911 will be called and a plan will be formulated with the West Bloomfield Police Department.

## WHAT TO BRING & WHAT NOT TO BRING TO CAMP

Campers should bring a backpack that includes: a lunch, 2 snacks, and water are required for all camps. You may be asked to bring a swim suit, towel and water shoes each day. (This is camp dependent, please see parent newsletter).

***Please be sure the backpack and all belongings are clearly marked in permanent marker with your child's name.***

Campers should NOT bring: money, toys, video games, cell phones, personal stereos, DVD players, ipods, etc.

***They are not allowed to use them at Camp and we cannot be responsible for these items.***

There may also be times in which we request special clothing for camp. We may request a white t-shirt be brought in for tie-dye, etc. This information will be listed on the weekly parent newsletter.

***Additionally, for the camper's safety,  
YOUR CHILD MUST WEAR SOCKS AND GYM SHOES THAT TIE EACH DAY.***

***No Crocs, No Sandals, No Flip-Flops, No Heelys!***

If a camper comes to camp in footwear that is not appropriate for camp activities, we will call home for gym shoes. Camper will be excluded from activities until he/she has appropriate footwear.

REMEMBER- this is for the safety of your child!

### NATURE CAMP LUNCH & SNACKS

Campers must bring a lunch and drink each day. Please be sure the lunch and drink are labeled with the camper's name. We do not have an area to refrigerate the lunches, so please do not send perishable foods (a frozen drink box helps keep the lunch cool and melts in time for lunch). **Send disposable lunch bags on field trip days.** Plastic lunchboxes are too hard to carry and may not be returned if left at the field trip site.

Campers must bring a snack and drink for the morning and afternoon. Again be sure to label all snack items with your child's name.

Any food allergy or dietary concerns should be brought to the attention of the Nature Camp Staff in writing before the child attends camp. You may also discuss these concerns with the Camp Manager or Camp Administer/Park Naturalist.

**This is a peanut free camp.**

### NATURE CAMP FIELD TRIPS

This is one of the highlights of the nature camps for both campers and staff. The field trips will change from week to week to provide a variety of experiences for the campers. For their safety, campers **MUST** wear the camp shirt provided with initial registration. Campers attending multiple sessions will receive only 1 shirt for the summer. If a camper forgets his/her shirt, please see the Camp Manger. Campers will be given a shirt to borrow for the day. Additional shirts are available for purchase for \$5.

## **NATURE CAMP COMMUNICATION**

A parent newsletter will be emailed before the start of each week of camp with highlights of activities, as well as information regarding weekly special events and field trips. On the first day of each camp week, parents will be made aware of any field trips or special instructions for the week. Please be sure you are aware of the departure time of each trip as we try to follow this schedule as closely as possible, as we have reservations at each location and we don't want to leave without your child. If your child misses a field trip, there is no refund given.

If you have a question regarding the camp schedule or field trips, please contact the Camp's Manager. They will be on-site at least 30 minutes prior to camp starting and approximately 30 minutes after camp ends each day.

Join the Nature Camp Facebook Group for real-time photos and updates:  
[www.facebook.com/groups/wbnaturecamp18](http://www.facebook.com/groups/wbnaturecamp18)

## **NATURE CAMP BEHAVIOR / DISCIPLINE RULES**

Our goal is for all campers and staff to have a safe and fun summer. In an effort to reach this goal, the below rules have been put in place:

- Campers and staff must keep their hands to themselves.
- Have respect for other's property. Stealing will not be tolerated.
- Campers are not allowed to go into the equipment and storage boxes.
- Campers will be assigned a "buddy" on all field trips and they must stay together.
- No threatening other campers or staff.
- Physical or verbal fighting will not be tolerated.
- Abusive language will not be tolerated.
- No smoking, alcohol, drugs, or weapons of any kind are allowed.

If campers violate the above Behavior/Discipline rules we will use the following steps:

1st Violation: We will talk to the camper and based on the severity of the offense, may issue a timeout from that activity.

2nd Violation: We will issue a time out AND contact the child's parent/guardian.

3rd Violation: The camper will be suspended from the program.

**EXTREME CASES:** Upon the occurrence of an extreme or severe disciplinary problem, as determined by West Bloomfield Parks staff members, the child will be suspended or terminated from the program. In such cases, the parent will be notified to pick the child up immediately. A discipline problem is defined as any child who is hampering the smooth flow of the program by either requiring constant one-on-one attention; is inflicting physical or emotional harm on other children; is physically and/or verbally abusing staff; or is otherwise unable to conform to the expectations outlined in this handbook.

**CAMPERS WILL NEVER BE DEPRIVED OF FOOD, NEVER PLACED ALONE WITHOUT SUPERVISION, INTERACTION, OR OBSERVATION; CAMPERS WILL NOT BE SUBJECTED TO RIDICULE, THREAT, CORPORAL PUNISHMENT, EXCESSIVE PHYSICAL EXERCISE, OR EXCESSIVE RESTRAINT.**

## **SUNSCREEN PROCESS**

Camp staff will remind campers to apply their sunscreen when we are going outside for an extended period of time for an activity. Sunscreen application is performed as a group and campers apply their sunscreen independently. The staff will observe to confirm campers are applying their sunscreen properly and assist as needed. Staff will be diligent about reminders, but it is the camper responsibility to follow through. If there are any special instructions for your child's sunscreen application, including if they will need assistance applying it, please note on their Camp Agreement form and re-iterate to staff at drop-off.

## **NATURE CAMP STAFF**

We are aware that great counselors are the key to a great Nature Camp experience. Therefore we look for the very best when we hire. Returning staff is invited back only if their end of the summer evaluation meets or exceeds our expectations. New applicants have an oral and written evaluation as part of the hiring process. Characteristics that we look for are: leadership, good role models, outgoing personalities and patience. Staff is also chosen for their creativity, energy and experience working with children. We check references and previous experience closely. All staff must also pass a "criminal background check" and a state of Michigan central registry clearance check before being hired.

Our staff will participate in an extensive orientation training program in which we work on appropriate activities, proper discipline of campers, proper daily procedures, field trip safety, leadership skills, building children's self-esteem, etc. West Bloomfield Parks believes strongly in preparing these young men and women to work with your children.

We provide at least one counselor to every 10 children. All Camp Counselors are at least 18 years old. Camp Managers and Camp Administrator/Park Naturalist are 21 years or older.

## **NATURE CAMP FIRST AID & SAFETY**

All staff members undergo First Aid, CPR, HEADS UP Concussion and Water Observation training and will be certified before Nature Camps begins for the summer. Staff will also carry basic first aid supplies (band aids, ice packs, sanitizers). In case of emergency all emergency responders will be called.

A concussion waiver is required by state law for children participating in any form of physical activity. Once you have filled one out for West Bloomfield Parks, it will remain on file for life and there is no need to fill another out.

The medical forms you fill out at registration are kept onsite throughout the camp day and taken on field trips.

On our field trips, transportation will be primarily provided by First Student. We may also utilize a West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation bus, an Oakland County Parks and Recreation bus or passenger van, or another contracted company.



## **NATURE CAMP HEALTH AND SAFETY; ONSITE INJURIES & ALLERGIES**

Each child's health and safety is a matter of importance. With numerous children in our program we request that children be kept home from camp if he/she has:

- A fever within the last 24 hours
- An infectious runny nose
- A severe cough
- Has been vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Has been on antibiotics less than 24 hours
- Has a contagious or unidentified rash
- Has pink eye
- Has lice

If any of these symptoms occur after camp, we request you immediately notify the Nature Camps Manager or Camp Administrator. In the case of a communicable disease, the Nature Camps will adhere to the Oakland County Health Department guidelines concerning re-admittance.

If a child appears to have symptoms during the day, the parent/guardian will be notified. It is important that parents/guardians pick up ill children immediately, as there is no staff available to isolate an ill child for an extended period of time. If your schedule prohibits this, please make arrangements for a backup person to be available for such an emergency. This person's name should be written on the Nature Camps General Information & Release Form so that child may be released into their care.

In case of injury, the Nature Camp staff will make an immediate attempt to contact the parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the staff will attempt to contact the next person designated. If necessary, 911 may also be called. Until the arrival of the parents, the on-site staff with highest seniority will be in charge and make all decisions concerning the care of the child. It is to the child's benefit that you keep your paperwork up to date on phone numbers, emergency numbers and other pertinent information. If your child has a medical condition or allergy that might be important in an emergency situation, please indicate this on the Camp Information Form.

## **NATURE CAMP MEDICATION**

If your child requires medication during camp hours, Permission to Administer Medication and Release of Claims form **MUST** be completed and signed by the parent/guardian before the medication can be dispensed to the camper. Any medication sent to Nature Camps must be in the original container and properly labeled with the child's name, physician's name, instructions and name and strength of the medication. If needed, please request a duplicate bottle from your pharmacy. Permission to Administer Medication and Release of Claims forms are available online. For more information, please read our Administration of Medications Policy, also available online.

## **NATURE CAMP WATER ACTIVITIES**

Some Nature Camps involve water activities (i.e. Adventure Camp). We request that campers have a **swim suit and towel (with name on each)** for swim time. There are no formal swim lessons offered during camp.

We request campers bring a **swim suit and towel** every day, whether swim is scheduled or not, as children may participate in other types of water play during the camp day.

## **WEST BLOOMFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION FIRE SAFETY**

All children enrolled in the Nature Camps program will be instructed on the proper exit procedure from the Recreation Activities Center in case of fire. Nature Camps will use the same policy and procedures used by the West Bloomfield Parks Department. Nature Camps Fire drills will be performed and logged in accordance with the State of Michigan licensing requirements.

## **WEST BLOOMFIELD PARKS & RECREATION THUNDERSTORM & LIGHTNING SAFETY**

In the event that a thunderstorm watch or warning is declared for the immediate area campers will continue the regular schedule. However, if thunder or lightening is heard or seen all campers will stop outdoor activities and return to the facility and wait 30 minutes from the last sound of thunder or sight of lightning. Indoor activities will continue.

## **WEST BLOOMFIELD PARKS & RECREATION TORNADO SAFETY**

The Nature Camps staff will follow the Tornado Safety Policy of the West Bloomfield Parks Department. In the event that a Tornado Watch is declared during the hours that Nature Camps is in session, the program will be conducted as usual. Campers will be dismissed at the end of the day and Latchkey will be conducted as usual. In the event of a Tornado Warning, the children will be held in the facility until the "all clear" is given by the proper authorities. Staff members will stay on duty to care for the children until the "all clear" is given and campers are dismissed.

**Thank you for trusting us with your child!**

The West Bloomfield Parks Commission, established by voter mandate in 1970, is committed to the residents of West Bloomfield. Our mission is to meet the community's recreation, leisure and social needs by acquiring and enhancing public parkland and supporting year-round facilities and programs for youth, teens, adults, families, and seniors. Our goal is to enhance the quality of life in our community by providing facilities, programs and natural settings for the enjoyment of residents. <http://www.wbparks.org/>, 248-451-1900