



New Country Day Camp 2017 Parent Handbook

Main Camp Line (Winter AND Summer): 646-395-4357
Main Camp Email: NewCountry@14StreetY.org



**Educational
Alliance**

UJA Federation
of New York
Good together.



JCC
Association

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Introduction to Camp: History and Guiding Principles.....3

Mission & Vision.....5

A Typical Day at Camp and the Breakdown of Age Divisions.....6

Who Are The Staff?.....7

Communication and Contact Info.....10

Transportation.....12

What If YOU Have an Emergency?/Picking Your Camper Up Early.....14

Packing List.....15

Lost and Found.....16

Rainy Day Protocol.....17

Lunch/Snack.....18

Swim.....20

Health and Safety.....21

Discipline/Camper Conduct.....22

Visiting Camp/Family Days.....23

Thanking the Staff.....24

INTRODUCTION

History

New Country Day Camp is a program of the 14th Street Y, which is a division of Educational Alliance. Educational Alliance has offered camping services for over 100 years and has provided "country" day camping at the Henry Kaufmann Campgrounds on Staten Island for over 40 years. Educational Alliance is a member agency of the United Jewish Appeal/ Federation of Jewish Philanthropies and a beneficiary of their fundraising campaign. New Country Day Camp (NCDC) has a Jewish cultural orientation, but is non-sectarian and provides a setting for all to participate in enjoyable activities.

New Country Day Camp is licensed by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene of New York City's Bureau of Day Camps. NCDC is also accredited by the American Camp Association. NCDC is inspected annually, and the inspection reports are filed at the Bureau of Food Safety and Community Sanitation.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Exploration

New Country Day Camp, a program of the 14th Street Y, is a fun-filled, completely outdoor adventure! Campers explore friendship, nature, aquatics, and new ideas. Campers are afforded the opportunity to explore in a safe, nurturing, and kid-charged environment!

Independence

At camp, city kids can experience independence in a supportive environment. Every week, our rising 2nd-6th grade campers choose a program unit in which to specialize & our younger campers have smaller choices to make for their afternoon programming time. After trying out the offerings, campers are supported in making educated decisions about where to focus their time. New Country Day Camp helps campers become confident, independent people.

Community

New Country Day Campers are part of a strong, open, fun, year-round community where kindness is emphasized and deeply valued. Because New Country Day Camp is a program of the 14th Street Y in the East Village, we have a rich facility to which we invite our camp community throughout the calendar year.

Jewish Content

LABA as a Lens:

New Country Day Camp is a Jewish summer program that explores Jewish sensibilities and values through programming that is often inspired and linked to Jewish text. We call this lens through which we approach Judaism, "LABA" which means "lava" in Hebrew and is also a play on the English word, "laboratory". LABA itself is a non-religious, experimental, artist-in-residence program at the 14th Street Y in which artists come together for the study of Jewish texts which then inspire great art. That art flows into our community like lava.

Open Tent Judaism:

At New Country Day Camp, we are particularly inspired by the Jewish textual story of Sarah and Abraham's tent, which was open on four sides to welcome all who approached, regardless of prior knowledge or background. The New Country Day Camp tent is open to and provides access to a diverse group of interesting

and talented young families from areas such as the East Village, the West Village, TriBeCa, Park Slope, Cobble Hill, Williamsburg, and Bed-Stuy. Our tent also houses a professional staff with years of childcare experience, college degrees, MFA's, MSW's, and more ruach (which is the Hebrew word for spirit) than any camp staff you'll ever meet! Our open tent most importantly houses our campers, from those who identify as traditional learners to those with high-functioning autism and other related developmental differences such as ADD/ADHD, learning disabilities, and language delays. Our world-class staff supports all campers as they learn and grow into pioneers, artists, athletes, scientists, and more!

Shabbat At Camp:

As a Jewish summer camp program, we enjoy Shabbat programming as a camp community every Friday. Shabbat is the Jewish Sabbath, and it actually begins at sundown every Friday, and ends on Saturday at sundown. At NCDC, we observe Shabbat by singing, dancing, celebrating, acknowledging and reflecting with one another on the hard work that brought us to the end of the week, and looking toward the next week together as we think about how we'll want to use the weekend to prepare for it. We also end an hour early on Fridays so that our campers and staff who observe Shabbat with their families can get home in time to prepare. Finally, we ask that all of our campers wear their camp t-shirts on Fridays so that we can show our camp ruach (spirit) and *togetherness*, which we believe is what Shabbat is all about. **All campers will receive their blue camp t-shirts on their first Thursday at camp. They will bring them home on the bus so that you as parents and guardians can make sure they are worn the next day, and every subsequent Friday.**

Camp is welcoming to children and staff of all backgrounds; you do not have to be Jewish to attend New Country Day Camp. All you need is a willingness to explore stories, nature, independence, and community in a fun and safe environment.

MISSION STATEMENTS

New Country Day Camp Mission:

New Country Day Camp exists to preserve what might otherwise be lost in contemporary NYC: The peace one can only find in nature, the feeling of belonging to a close-knit community, unbridled joy and celebration of youth, and Jewish identity in harmony with the diversity of NYC and the world around us. New Country Day Camp is a program of the 14th Street Y which is a division of Educational Alliance.

14th Street Y Mission:

With a health and wellness center, education and enrichment programs, and innovative arts and cultural programming, the 14th Street Y is committed to the development of the whole person and bettering people's lives by strengthening family connections and building inclusive and sustainable communities.

Educational Alliance Mission:

Educational Alliance, a 126-year-old New York institution, is a vibrant, dynamic organization serving New Yorkers from all walks of life. From our beginnings as a place for Jewish immigrants to learn how to acclimate to the U.S., we serve everyone regardless of the language they speak, where they come from, or their socioeconomic status. To date, we have helped 4 million New Yorkers.

Driven by Jewish values and the belief that learning is a lifelong process, we strive to create programs and services that embrace innovation and build community. We have re-defined how to serve a community, offering a wide variety of engaging and educational opportunities for everyone in each stage of life.

We're a living laboratory, piloting and investigating ways to solve problems, create a better society, and advocate for the vulnerable. We believe that arts & culture, education, health & wellness, and social services can build bright futures.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS: A VISION FOR SUMMER 2017

Dear Families,

Shalom, Ahava & Simcha - Peace, Love & Joy

As always, NCDC is deeply committed to *inclusivity, diversity, and social service*. We will always strive to include everyone who wants to be a part of our camp family, lend a hand to those who need our help, and stand up for those who need us to. We also have a commitment to protecting our environment, and we will continue care for our campgrounds, our city, and our earth as we work together to repair the world. We hope you all feel empowered to join us in these efforts.

Our promise to you every summer, and especially this one, is that we will stand to protect and support one another, our wonderful staff, our amazing campers and their families, and the earth our campgrounds sits upon. May we all feel the Shalom, Ahava & Simcha this summer together.

Warmly,

-Jenni, Lili, Josh, and Katie

A TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP

8:00-8:30 Bus pick-ups in Brooklyn and Manhattan

9:00- 9:30 Arrival and morning check-in

Campers are led to their age division where they meet up with their group and counselors.

9:30- 10:15 First activity period (alternates daily)

10:30- 11:00 Instructional Swim

11:15- 12:00 Second activity period (alternates daily)

12:00- 12:30 LUNCH

12:30- 2:15 Unit (Choice) Time

2:30- 3:00 Free Swim

3:00- 3:30 Unit (Choice) Time

3:30- 4:00 Snack and Daily Goodbye's

4:00 Departure

4:30-5:00 Dismissal from buses*

*Note: On Fridays we end an hour early, and arrive at bus stops between 3:30-4:00pm.

DIVISIONS

Kirbys: Rising Kindergartners and rising 1st graders born after September 1

Cucumbers: Rising 1st graders born before September 1

Grapes: Rising 2nd graders

Raisins: Rising 3rd graders

Pickles: Rising 4th, 5th, and 6th graders

Leaders in Training (LIT's): Rising 7th and 8th graders, and young (13 y/o) rising 9th graders

Campers in grades 2-6 leave their division and groups and get mixed in with all campers within those age groups during the afternoon unit time periods. Campers in grades K- 1 stay with each other and make smaller choices. LIT's have a different schedule entirely, and if your camper is in the LIT program you can expect information closer to camp regarding the daily schedule.

STAFF

Full-Time, Year-Round:

The full-time, year-round camp staff members spend their winters at the 14th Street Y, planning for camp throughout the cold weather. They are professionals with over 50 years of camp experience between them. They are your main contacts during the off-season for camp, and will be at camp throughout the summer as they run the show. They are available to speak with parents or guardians when necessary, but other staff may be more appropriate points of contact during summer months.

Katie Walker- Parent Coordinator

Katie grew up in Phoenix, Arizona and moved to Brooklyn in 2013 with her family. She graduated with a BS in Family and Child Science from New Mexico State University. Katie spent her first summer at New Country Day Camp in 2016 after attending various day camps and overnight camps as a child, as well as working as a counselor at a sleepaway camp in Iowa. At NCDC, she will be overseeing the parent communications, camper care and the inclusion program. Katie loves to spend time with her husband and 2 boys, usually going to soccer games. She loves learning about the secrets of our city's history, and trying all of the best food New York City has to offer!

Josh Sarkozi- Co-Associate Director

Josh has spent many years in the summer camp environment with experience at both day and resident camp programs. After being a camper, Josh held several positions at Surprise Lake Camp from photography specialist to administrator. Josh grew up near NYC in Westchester where he remains an active member of the local Jewish community by organizing country-wide community service programs for teens. Josh's interests range from cooking for his friends to racing cars. Josh holds a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology from Hartwick College.

Lili Weiss-Voskidis- Co-Associate Director

Lili grew up in Brooklyn and attended NCDC as a camper, then worked straight through each summer as she grew from a counselor to Co-Associate Director. Summer 2017 will mark her 5th summer as a member of the formidable full-time leadership team, working alongside Jenni and Josh- and now Katie! Lili graduated from the Drama department of Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School for Music & Art and Performing Arts before going on to double major in Political Science and Journalism at in the honors program at Hunter College. Her educational background and tenure at NCDC has deeply informed her work in the realm of program development, hiring, communications and building community culture. She loves NPR, yoga, happy hour and traveling to warm and wonderful places around the world.

Jenni ZefTEL- Director of Summer Programs at the 14th Street Y

Many of you knew her as Jenni Sussell, she got married this spring! Jenni grew up in downtown Manhattan, not far from the 14th Street Y, and attended public schools in her lower west side neighborhood before enrolling at LaGuardia High School for Music and Art. She then went on to pursue undergraduate studies at SUNY Geneseo in Elementary and Special Education. She earned her graduate degree in Early Childhood Education from Hunter College before delving into the field of meaningful summer programming for city kids and teens. Jenni now oversees multiple camp and summer programs of the 14th Street Y. She enjoys cozy restaurants, frigid weather, and pumpkins.

Summer Head Staff:

Along with the full-time year-round staff, our summer head staff members help to keep camp running smoothly as they partner with parents to ensure a wonderful summer for all.

Office Staff: The office will be open M-F from 7:30am-5:30pm and is located on-site at camp during the summer. During those hours, you are encouraged to call the main camp line (646-395-4357) or email newcountry@14StreetY.org and most likely, one of the Office Managers will be able to help you with your question or concern, or redirect you to the appropriate member of our staff.

Division Heads: Our Division Heads are childcare professionals, with classroom, social work, or similar experience. They supervise entire divisions of campers (about 100 kids at a time!) and all of the counselors within a camp division. Division Heads will be available to speak with parents after June 15th and all throughout the summer. Think of them as classroom teachers (after all, that's what some of them are 10 months out of the year)! If your child is having an issue at camp, or if you have any concerns that our office staff cannot help you with, your child's Division Head will be your main contact. For a list of each Division Head and expanded bios, please visit our camp blog during the month of June as we roll out profiles of all members of the NCDC Head Staff! Blog credentials have been included in an email you should have received (if you can't find them, please contact us at 646-395-4357 or newcountry@14StreetY.org). Additionally, after June 15th cell phone numbers for Division Heads will be published on our website, which you are encouraged to use in the evenings or on Sundays during the summer months. Emails are also listed in this handbook in the Communication section. During camp operating hours, it's best to call the camp office number (646-395-4357). The office staff can connect you to your Division Head if need be.

Unit Heads: Our Unit Heads are the creators of our programs at NCDC. They are incredibly skilled curriculum writers and teachers with specialization in the units in which they manage. Unit Heads are not given camp contact information, but if you have a question or concern about camp programming, please contact your child's Division Head and when necessary, you will be connected with a Unit Head or with Lili. For a list of each Unit Head and expanded bios, please visit our camp blog, the credentials for which have been included in an email you should have received (if you can't find them, please contact us at 646-395-4357 or newcountry@14StreetY.org).

Counselors:

NCDC loves its counselors! Each camper belongs to a group made up of 10-14 kids, with two main counselors, while some groups have an additional third counselor if extra support is required. Your child's counselors will be his or her grown-up away from home, taking him or her from activity to activity, providing encouragement and support, and generally being a fun and energetic role model. Counselors range in age from 16 to mid-twenties, and they are hand-picked through a rigorous application and interview process. Many of them were campers at NCDC once upon a time!

Bus Staff:

You caught us! Bus staff members are really no different than the groups listed above. Counselors, Division Heads, Office Staff, Unit Heads, you name it- they all ride the bus to camp, with a few exceptions. Each bus will have two Bus Supervisors who will be responsible for keeping records of attendance, ensuring safety, and creating a feeling of community on the bus. Each bus will also bring numerous counselors along for the ride, and while they probably won't be your child's individual co-counselors, they'll still be there to support and supervise every day on the way to and from camp.

Hearing From Counselors:

You will have an opportunity to hear directly from your child's counselors via camper weekly updates that they will send home to you on the bus (no report will be sent home on the Friday of the first week of camp, June 30th). You can also meet counselors at the Family Picnic on June 28th, or at Family Day which will take place once each session. You will receive email updates with information about these days as they approach.

Family Picnic:

Campers and families will have the opportunity to tour the grounds, meet counselors, Division Heads, Bus Supervisors, and more members of our staff, as well as enjoy a hot dog picnic out at camp! You will receive emails outlining the details of the day, please watch for those in early June 2017.

Please note that the Family Picnic is your only pre-camp opportunity to learn which campers will be in your child's group and who his or her counselors will be. Otherwise, you may contact your assigned Division Head to learn this information, but it will not be sent out to you before camp begins. **Please also note that if you have a camper who is registered to begin camp after the first session, you are welcome and encouraged to attend the Family Picnic, but your child's specific co-counselors and group-mates will not have been assigned yet.** You can meet the whole Division's staff, as well as your camper's Bus Supervisors who will have been assigned by that point in time.

COMMUNICATION

Reaching Us:

Please reach out to us often, especially if there is anything that concerns you, even in the smallest way. Feedback is your gift to us, and the nature of camp is such that we cannot be privy to everything without your help. In a classroom, you might expect that the head teacher would call you soon after you've heard from your child that they had a hard day, or struggled in a task. While we love, trust, and train our counselors, they are not professional head classroom teachers, and although we do have head-staff classroom teachers on-site, their ratio to campers makes it much harder to observe the same things they do in their school-year jobs. So be sure to check in with your camper after camp, and call us or email often. We want you to be our partner in creating the best summer possible for your child.

How?

In the winter and summer months, you may reach the camp office by dialing **646-395-4357**. In the winter months, a member of the full-time camp staff (Katie, Josh, Lili, or Jenni) will likely answer your call. During camp, a member of our summer office staff will answer and connect you with the appropriate person if need be. In many cases, the person you will be connected to will be your child's Division Head. During transportation hours, you will likely be given the contact information or be directly transferred to your child's Bus Supervisor. You may also be given the direct cell phone number for a particular member of camp staff.

If you prefer to email, your best bet is to email the office at newcountry@14StreetY.org, however you may email any other member of camp staff and whomever it is will get back to you as soon as they can. Keep in mind that Division Heads and full-time staff wear many hats at camp and may not be able to return your call or email as soon as you might like. Please allow a 24-hour turn-around for non-emergencies, and 48 hours on the weekends. Generally, we do not return calls or emails on Shabbat.

EMAIL LIST *(Please note that Division Heads, Swim Coordinator, and the LIT Director will not have access to these email accounts until June 15th!)*

Office: newcountry@14StreetY.org

Swim Coordinator, Michelle LaPorte: ncdcswimming@14streety.org

Kirbys Division Head, Meshi Zilberstein: NCDCKirby@14StreetY.org

Cucumbers Division Head, Mallory Stehl: NCDCCucumber@14StreetY.org

Grapes Division Head, Nashira Pearl: NCDCGrape@14StreetY.org

Raisins Division Head, Luis Ceja: NCDCRaisin@14StreetY.org

Pickles Division Head, Lilly Kaplan: NCDCPickle@14StreetY.org

LIT Director, Nick Tosh: NCDCLIT@14StreetY.org

Co-Associate Director, Josh Sarkozi: JSarkozi@14StreetY.org

Co-Associate Director, Lili Weiss-Voskidis: LVoskidis@14StreetY.org

Parent Coordinator (also for Support inquiries), Katie Walker: KWalker@14StreetY.org

***A Note About Division Parents:** *When appropriate, we will connect you with the Division Parent from your child's division. Division Parents are returning parents with special insight into camp staff and operations. They are available to speak with you when need be. If you are interested in being a Division Parent, please contact Katie Walker at KWalker@14StreetY.org.*

Reaching You:

Different members of camp staff may reach out to you for various reasons throughout the summer. Sometimes we will call or email with great news (your kid kicked a home-run in kick-ball!), or less good news (your child isn't feeling well), and sometimes with logistical news, (don't forget that you don't have to pack lunch tomorrow, it's hot dog day!). As much as possible, we will anticipate the information you need and will bring it to you in different forms, from a range of camp staff. Examples of our communication methods are listed below:

How?

Phone calls from Division Heads, office staff, Bus Supervisors, or full-time staff: Depending on the nature of the call, the aforementioned camp staff may contact you during camp hours, in the evenings, or on Sundays. Generally, we will not contact families on Shabbat unless it is an emergency.

Individualized emails from the aforementioned groups: Sometimes, camp staff may choose to email a parent or guardian as a follow-up, or stand-in for a phone call.

Mass Emails: Newsletters to all camp families will be sent out every Sunday with important information. Please read it carefully, and follow the links! Other mass emails will be sent to the whole camp community as information arises, and sometimes smaller group emails or texts will be sent to parents at a particular bus stop, or within a particular division.

Blog: In mass emails from the camp team including the Sunday evening newsletters, you will be given a link and credentials to an ongoing camp blog that will outline programmatic highlights at camp and showcase photos and videos of our program.

Weekly Updates: Every Friday (**except for the first Friday of camp this summer, June 30th**) your child's counselors will send home a weekly progress report with details on your child's individual experience at camp that week. The Division Head will also sign off on the report, and include any other valuable information. If you have questions, concerns or comments to share with us, please contact your camper's division head!

The Website: When all else fails, please check www.newcountrydaycamp.org to find the information you need. We try to keep it as up-to-date as possible. A particularly useful feature is the camp calendar that we encourage you to print and use as reference to help you remember important dates like which days we provide lunch, and when you can visit camp.

**A Note About Parents Reaching Parents: Some years, we publish a camper roster. Other years, many of our families request that we do not publish their information, and we might make the decision to forego the roster. Either way, if you call a member of our staff to ask for the contact information for another family in order to arrange a play-date, we can help you!*

TRANSPORTATION POLICY & PROCEDURES

It is our policy to use only fully licensed and insured companies. We have used Vallo Transportation for many years now, and many of our drivers have returned to us summer after summer. Buses must meet our standards:

1. Padded seats front and rear
2. Working two-way radios
3. Clean and in good repair
4. Working seat belts
5. Working air-conditioning *****Please note that working air-conditioning on school buses (which is what we provide) is not comparable to working air-conditioning on charter buses or in single family cars, apartments, stores, etc. Sometimes, a working air-conditioner on a school bus may only alleviate temperatures by about 10-15 degrees.*****

Each bus has two assigned supervisors to check campers and staff onto the bus and release them at the end of the day to the person(s) you designated on your camper's registration form. They also ensure the use of seat belts and maintain safety. In addition to the Bus Supervisors, there are also 3-10 counselors assigned to each bus to provide extra support. Like campers, most staff members must ride the bus to camp. Our buses remain on the campgrounds throughout the day.

PICK-UP/DROP-OFFS

Campers and staff ride the bus to get to the campgrounds and are picked up at designated bus stops. You will be assigned to the bus stop that you requested upon registering your camper. Routes and times for pick-ups/drop-offs will be emailed to you in June. Until then, you must hold between 8am and 8:30am, and between 4:30 and 5pm as possible pick-up/drop-off times, keeping in mind that we end an hour early on Fridays for Shabbat, so you should hold between 3:30 and 4pm on Fridays unless you are registered for after-care at the 14th Street Y which is provided until 6pm, M-F. If you can't remember what bus stop you registered for, please call 646-395-4357 to inquire.

We require each camper's parent or guardian to indicate on their camp registration form the person(s) to whom we may release the child at the end of the day. Note that any authorized person who is picking up a camper must be at least 16 years old. In the event that no authorized adult is at the drop-off stop and we are unable to contact the family at the phone numbers given, the bus supervisor will contact a member of the full-time camp staff or an executive member of the 14th Street Y who will in turn give instructions for proceeding. Most often, the instruction given will be that the bus should keep moving throughout the route and that the pick-up adult be contacted from each stop and left messages if there is no answer, indicating that the bus will only wait two minutes. After the final stop, if the pick-up adult has yet to be reached, the bus supervisor will likely be instructed to escort the camper to the 14th Street Y unless there is other known information regarding the location of the child's parent or guardians.

There are occurrences that can cause delays, such as highway repairs, traffic jams, or car accidents. We cannot completely control the return or pick-up times. Bus Supervisors are instructed **to wait no more than two minutes past any scheduled time for a child in the morning, or for the person receiving the child in the afternoon, especially if the stop with the late guardian is in the beginning or middle of the route, disrupting the pick-up or dismissal process for other campers.** Our pick-ups will start at 8.00 A.M. You will be given the

exact pick-up time for your bus stop in June. Our goal is to have all aboard by 8.30 A.M. In case of extreme lateness on our part, the Bus Supervisor or Office Manager will contact families who are waiting. You may also call the Bus Supervisor or Office Manager directly with a question or concern. These communications will be through our mass texting service. To manage who gets these texts, please call our office at 646-395-4357.

Please do not leave your child unattended at the bus stop in the mornings. Wait with them until the camp bus arrives.

Please allow some additional time during the first week of camp as we adjust to the schedule and drivers get to know their routes. As in everything else we do at camp, we ask you as parents to be our partners and to work with us to make the summer a success!

Pick-up and drop-off times may be changed as a result of changed conditions e.g. street repair, construction, etc. We will try to notify you in advance. **Please notify us if you learn of a sudden or announced change in street conditions that may necessitate a change in bus stop location.**

Finally, please be aware that only campers and staff are authorized to step foot onto our buses. No parent or guardian may do so ever, under any circumstance. Please respect this rule that stems from a concern for the safety of our campers.

Change of bus stop, change of bus, new pick-up people:

We require this type of request in writing. Discharge of your child(ren) at a different stop on their regular bus can be arranged by emailing the Office Manager or Josh. If you need to change buses for one day or more, you must make the request in writing at least 24 hours in advance, and if there is space available we will honor the request.

At any point during camp, you may add additional people to pick up your child from his/her bus stop. This change can only be made by the person who registered the child for camp (parent or guardian). The change must be made by writing the new name on the Bus Supervisor's list and initialing it, or by emailing our Office Manager. No stranger (relative or friend) appearing at a stop will be given custody of a child without your permission. That permission **must** be in writing even if your child can recognize or tell us that the person is okay. Every rule we have at camp stems from concern for safety and security. This rule is no different.

FAMILY EMERGENCIES

Please note that we strongly discourage families from picking up or dropping off their children at camp by car because it disrupts our program. In the event that nobody is able to meet your child at the designated bus stop at the end of the day, or if an early campground pick-up is necessary, please follow this procedure:

- 1) Call the office at 646-395-4357.
- 2) When we speak, please advise us of the situation and we will make arrangements with you to best meet your needs.
- 3) Note that camp is on a 75-acre site. We can arrange to have your child meet you at the camp office in the parking lot, but **please note that no parent is permitted in any camp area other than the parking lot, and we strongly discourage on-site pick-ups as they minimize our counselor coverage on the grounds. Under no circumstances whatsoever may parents pick up their child by car during arrival or dismissal when our parking lot has many moving buses and requires high supervision and attention for safety reasons.**

BEFORE LEAVING HOME EACH MORNING

Each morning, please make sure your child:

- is wearing his/her bathing suit
- is wearing socks and sneakers (not sandals, Keens or Crocs)
- has sunscreen on
- has gone to the bathroom just before he/she leaves home
- is well enough to attend camp for the day (they should be fever free for 24 hours, just like school)

ITEMS TO BRING TO CAMP

All campers must bring the following labeled items to camp every day:

All items sent to camp must be labeled with the child's name and "NCDC"

- A backpack with the following items:
- An extra pair of underwear and shorts labeled with camper's name
- Towel (1 is sufficient) labeled with camper's name
- Sun block
- Hat labeled with camper's name
- Lunch with an ice pack in an insulated container
- Plastic bag or plastic lined wet bag for wet items
- Snack (**please keep separate from lunch box as lunches will be refrigerated but snacks should be accessible**)
- Water bottle (**please keep separate from lunch box as lunches will be refrigerated but water should be accessible**)
- After their swim evaluation, all campers will be given color-coded swim caps. Campers in grades 2-8 are responsible for bringing their swim caps to and from camp each day. The counselors of the K/1's will hold onto their campers' caps.

Optional Items

1. Durable sunglasses
2. Swimming goggles
3. Insect repellent in stick or lotion form
4. Pool shoes (flip flops)
Note: Sneakers may not be worn on the pool deck, so if your child has sensitive feet, flip flops are strongly recommended
4. A poncho or rain jacket if rain is forecasted

Do NOT Bring

1. **Electronics, including cell phones: Camp is an unplugged environment! Exceptions can be made for campers with special needs who require supportive devices, especially on long bus rides.**
2. Glass containers or bottles
3. Valuable or irreplaceable items (e.g. portable video game, beloved stuffed animal, etc.)
4. Expensive jewelry
5. Pocket knives or weapons of any kind
6. Toys

We cannot be responsible for lost items, so please do not send anything of value to camp.

LOST AND FOUND

At the end of each camp day, the few staff members who do not ride buses do a full sweep of our campgrounds. Any items left out will be delivered to the Lost and Found bin, located on the camp road by our lower lake. All groups pass by the Lost and Found at least once a day, so your camper can ask his or her counselor to allow the group to stop for a quick check if he or she is missing something. You can also call or email the office or your child's Division Head to request that the counselors allow for a quick Lost and Found stop on their way to or from an activity.

On Fridays, our utility staff will remove all items from the Lost and Found bin that are labeled with a camper's first and last name and they will deliver the items to the appropriate Bus Supervisor who will hand the items back on the bus. If a lost item hasn't reached home by Friday, it does not mean that it never will. It may show up the following week during another sweep of camp. Sometimes however, even when items are clearly labeled, they may get lost forever: If we don't find an item on a sweep of camp, we cannot return it, even if it is labeled.

We do our very best to return lost items, but we strongly discourage you from sending anything of sentimental or monetary value to camp. Most campers AND staff members will lose anywhere between 1 to 10 items per summer. Including Jenni. She loses about 6 water bottles per summer. She is the most organized person you will ever meet. And she loses 6 water bottles per summer. Just saying.

RAINY DAYS!

There are two rain situations we can have during the summer:

- 1) We arrive at camp in the middle of a thunderstorm or heavy rain with high winds
- 2) We arrive at camp in light rain, or it starts to rain mid-day, or a thunderstorm starts mid-day

We will never walk campers through open wooded areas (like camp) in a thunderstorm or strong winds. So, in the first instance, all buses will be re-routed directly to our off-site rain shelters about 20 minutes from our campgrounds. Unfortunately, even if the weather breaks, we will most likely have to stay off-site because moving 500+ campers back to the grounds is time consuming, and would cut greatly into program time. We will have indoor programming instead.

In the second situation, we will stay on-site. Campers will be escorted to their division shelters, plastic rain flaps will be pulled down, and rainy day programming as well as a movie projected onto a screen will commence. In this situation, when it stops raining we will resume regular camp programming, including swim. Sometimes, if it is light enough and there is no sign of thunder, outdoor programming may continue in the rain (including swimming), ***so be mindful about choosing to pack a poncho, and always pack a bathing suit even if it's forecasted for rain!***

LUNCH POLICY & PROCEDURES

You are responsible for providing your child with lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We will refrigerate home-packed lunches. The only rule we have about lunches that you pack for your camper is that it must be nut-free: **Due to the prevalence of severe nut allergies, NCDC is a nut-aware program and we prohibit nuts on-site.** Please make sure that your child's lunch (and snack) does not include items that have any type of nuts. Food items with labels that say "may contain nuts" will be treated as if they do indeed contain nuts, and any camper with such a food item will have to eat with a non-allergic friend and counselor away from his or her group and a note will be sent home reminding you of our no-nut policies.

While we refrigerate all lunches, it is also suggested that you avoid sending milk or mayonnaise enriched foods as they spoil quickly on a hot day, sometimes before they ever make it near the refrigerator! Please include an ice pack and/or frozen drink in your child's lunch to help prevent spoilage.

Please put your child's name and "NCDC" on their lunch box.

Camp-Provided Lunches:

Mondays: Macaroni and Cheese

Wednesdays: Hot Dogs

Fridays: Pizza

The costs of camp-provided lunches have been included in your camp fee. Everything that we serve will be Kosher-certified if it is meat, or vegetarian, but any food you pack from home does not need to be Kosher or vegetarian. **All camp-provided meals will also include a side of fruit and/or additional snacks and beverages.**

Gluten free/dairy free/vegetarian/don't-like-it alternatives:

It's our long-term goal to be able to provide lunches for all of our campers, regardless of tastes, allergies, or food sensitivities. This summer, the following alternatives will be available:

On Mac n' Cheese Mondays we will have plain and gluten-free pasta with red sauce on the side available for campers who cannot or will not eat dairy or gluten. If your camper cannot or will not eat any of the Monday options, please pack a lunch. We will refrigerate.

On Hot Dog Wednesdays, vegetarian hot dogs will be available. Gluten-free options will *not* be available on these days. If your camper cannot or will not eat any of the Wednesday options, please pack lunch. We will refrigerate.

On Pizza Fridays, the only option is regular pizza with cheese. No gluten-free or dairy-free alternatives will be available. If your camper cannot or will not eat regular pizza slices, please pack lunch. We will refrigerate.

SNACK

Camp makes everyone very hungry, so we provide a daily snack afternoo snack in addition to the non-perishable one that you will pack for your child outside of his or her lunch box. We get our snack from a local farm that delivers fresh berries in bulk, weekly. On occasion, we may instead serve cookies, chips, or pretzels and juice. All snacks are vegetarian and nut-free.

SWIM PROGRAM

Each day, including the first day of camp, and on rainy days, send your child dressed in a bathing suit and put a towel, labeled with your child's name and "NCDC", in his/her backpack. We can still go swimming in light rain or if the rain stops.

NCDC provides 2 daily swim sessions. The first swim period is instructional, and the second period is recreational. The team of teachers at the pool is made up of Red Cross Certified Water Safety Instructors and Lifeguards. Our own staff of counselors assists the instructors and Michelle, our Swim Coordinator, acts as the liaison between the HKC provided aquatics staff and the NCDC team. We have three pools: The Lower Pool is for beginners (only 2.5 –3.5 feet deep.), The Lap Pool is approximately 3-4 feet deep, and The Deep Pool ranges from 3-10 feet deep.

The instructional swim program used at camp is Olympic Gold Medalist Lenny Krayzelburg's Swim Academy. This program consists of 6 levels, categorized by name and color. Each level involves a series of swimming skills that each child must achieve before moving up to the next level. The Water Safety Instructors and Lifeguards will teach the various skills, and campers will practice these skills daily. Once a camper has successfully completed all of the skills in their level, they will be promoted to the next level, receive a new cap, and take home their completed swim level card. There are two survival tests given in this program. Please note that these tests are **only** given in levels 2 and 3 – There is **not** a test given at each level in order to be promoted. Additional information about the skill sets at each level can be found on the New Country Day Camp website, by clicking on the link for the Swimming Program. Swim groups are typically about 10-12 campers per section.

We will strongly encourage every camper to swim daily. We will not force a child to go into the pool. If a camper decides not to swim on a particular occasion, we will discuss with the camper his/her reasons for not wanting to swim, and depending on the nature of the reasoning we may send an email home to keep you informed. If a camper does not participate in instructional swim two days in a row, Michelle will call or email you to discuss the matter. If your child has had a negative water experience in the past, please inform Michelle. She will work with your child and the staff to make sure he/she is comfortable at the pool. If you have other concerns about your child at the pool, please let Michelle know. Campers who choose not to swim will remain near the swimming pools under supervision. They are not permitted to be in the locker room during swim time under any circumstance.

In an ongoing effort to ensure water safety, we (in partnership with **The NYC Department of Health** have instituted the following requirement: All campers will be required to wear a clearly visible **COLORED BATHING CAP** which will correspond to the deepest water area they are allowed to swim in. We will provide the bathing caps on or around your child's first day of camp. As a camper moves up, he/she will receive the next area's colored cap. No camper will be allowed on the upper pool deck without wearing his/her colored cap. We will be using one size fits all Lycra Swim Caps. Campers will be able to swim in a lower water area than their color allows (for instance, with a friend who has not qualified for the deeper water). Please advise your child to bring their cap daily if they are in 2nd grade or older. K/1's will have their caps stored by their counselors. If your child does not have their colored cap during swim, they will be **required** to swim in the lower pool during recreational swim time, regardless of their level/cap color. We will collect the caps as campers' progress and are given their new ones.

Information about the objectives of each swim level can also be found on the Lenny K website, www.lennykswim.com

Michelle, the Swim Coordinator, can be contacted after June 15th at NCDCSWIMMING@14streeety.org.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Health and safety are camp's main priority. Every plan, every decision, and every piece of communication stems from a place of deep concern for your child's health and safety.

Prior to the first day your child attends camp, we must receive a documented well-child exam dated within one year of his or her first day of camp and signed by a pediatrician. If emergency numbers change, please notify camp immediately. ***The staff should also be alerted by parents if there are special conditions or needs that we should be aware of, e.g. allergies, asthma. We have very specific plans in place for campers with prescription epi-pens or inhalers, so if you indicated that on your registration form for your child, you will receive a call from a head staff member at least one week before your child starts camp to go over our strict policies and procedures.***

If a child is sick in the morning, please do not send him/her to camp. Should a child suffer an injury at home or in camp that prevents him/her from walking our country terrain, the camper should be kept at home. The campgrounds consist of hills, valleys and fields. We reserve the right to refuse to take an ill or injured child to camp. Parents will be notified if their child is exposed to a contagious disease or condition while at camp. Likewise, parents should notify camp if their child has been exposed to a contagious condition such as pink-eye, head lice, chicken pox, etc. If we notice that a child is not feeling well, we will take the necessary steps to help the child. We have two small infirmaries staffed by EMT's who will make arrangements for further care if needed. In the event that a camper is injured during an activity, he/she will be assisted by our staff trained in first aid. Many camp staff members are also certified in Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Advanced First Aid. All staff members are trained and certified in epi-pen administration.

The New York City Department of Health does not allow us to administer either prescription or "over the counter" medication such as Tylenol or Benadryl. Emergency medication such as epi-pens and inhalers during a severe asthma attack are an exception to this rule, but children carrying asthma medication inhalers or epi-pens must be trained in their use and carry them on their bodies at all times. We can remind children to take their non-emergency medication and observe. In locker rooms, before and after each swim period (a total of four times a day for each camper) we will remind children to put on their sun block and coach them through application. Staff will be alerted to campers who have special medical or social/behavioral needs.

Camp will call parents if there has been an injury to the head or face, if a camper has a fever, if further care is necessary, or if a child is in a severe condition. Camp will not call parents for minor injuries such as scrapes and bruises, low level dehydration, or insect bites or stings (unless the reaction requires further care). Campers with clear or suspected life threatening emergency conditions will be brought to the nearest hospital on Staten Island. A member of camp's supervisory staff will accompany them to the hospital. We sincerely hope that we will have a healthy and happy summer.

Ticks & Other Campground Pests

Please be aware that our campgrounds are part of a protected forest and do have wild animals like deer and squirrels. With that comes the pests that are usually in the forest. We recommend packing insect repellent and doing a check for ticks at the end of each day. Ticks tend to find a place on the skin that is not visible, so look in areas like behind the ears, in the armpits, behind the knees, in the groin, at the nape of the neck, in the naval, etc. Checking for ticks each night helps prevent diseases that are associated with ticks, including Lyme Disease.

DISCIPLINE/CONDUCT

It is camp policy to prohibit physical and verbal abuse of campers by staff or fellow campers. Likewise, campers may not verbally or physically abuse staff. Counselors receive training in behavior management and conflict resolution and will use other educational strategies to aid children when necessary. Our staff are trained never to yell or use any physical force whatsoever when managing camper behavior.

If a camper consistently demonstrates inappropriate behavior the parent or guardian will be called in the evening. The staff member calling will seek your support in reinforcing acceptable behavior. For cases in which such behavior continues, we may request and/or require that you keep your child out of camp for a day or longer. Should the unacceptable conduct occur again we will require the child be withdrawn from camp for the rest of the summer. Camp tuition is non-refundable.

VISITING CAMP

There are three different opportunities for families to spend the day at camp with their campers! Depending on the registration of your camper(s), we will assign you to a specific date, and we will remind you through email in the summer. Read those emails carefully because you **MUST** RSVP through an online portal in order to attend. Those emails will also contain information about timing and program for the days. The date assignments are as follows:

Tuesday, July 11th: **For families with campers registered for session 1, or sessions 1 & 2 together.**

Tuesday, July 25th: **For families with campers registered for session 2, sessions 2 & 3 together or the full summer.**

Tuesday, August 8th: **For families with campers registered for session 3, sessions 1 & 3 together, or the full summer.**

****Please note that families with campers who are registered for the full summer may choose between the 2nd and 3rd dates available.*****

When visiting camp for any reason, including visiting day and picking up your camper who isn't feeling well, please understand that we have zero tolerance for alcohol, drugs, or weapons of any kind. We ask that you leave your pets at home, and that you park on the street outside of the campgrounds unless otherwise informed.

THANKING OUR STAFF

Families are often so impressed with the quality of our staff that they want to thank them personally. Tipping is considered voluntary at New Country Day Camp. If you want to tip, please be advised that all of our staff work incredibly hard to provide magical summer experiences, even those members who you may not know personally, or whose names your camper has trouble pronouncing, etc. For this reason, we encourage you to make a donation to camp in honor of our staff if you'd like to show your appreciation in that way. You can do so here: <http://www.14streety.org/supportNCDC>. There, you can even shout-out individual staff members by name. Donations help fund programmatic operations and improvements, camper scholarships and team-building activities like staff training and ***staff appreciation events that the whole staff can enjoy.***

If you feel strongly that you'd like to tip individual and specific staff members, you may send your camper to camp with a sealed envelope and the staff member's name on it and instruct your camper to deliver the note(s) appropriately. Counselors often appreciate a handwritten thank you, but the content of those notes is entirely up to you.

**We hope your child will have a safe, healthy, happy summer at
The 14th Street Y NEW COUNTRY DAY CAMP!**