



COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE

# SUMMER CAMP 2023

## Parent Handbook

### **Welcome to Community Lifestyle**

Community Lifestyle is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, community service organization of caring staff and volunteers who are dedicated to providing quality services to people of all ages, races, faiths or incomes.

#### **Mission**

A dynamic and fun environment where youth & teens develop and lead in programs and activities, become engaged in their interests and community, and seek involvement in self-determining their own life path.

#### **Philosophy**

To empower, strengthen and promote self-sufficiency among the Hoboken housing authority residents. The ultimate benefit of these services is improved outcomes related to social, family and community functioning, as well as physical wellness.

#### **Program Objective**

Community Lifestyle's Summer Program focuses on two main goals:

1. To provide comprehensive, supervised childcare that will have an in-depth impact on children and families by allowing for:
  - ✓ Parent's Employment
  - ✓ The Economic Stability of the Family
  - ✓ A Positive Experience for Children in terms of Care,
  - ✓ Self Development and Education

2. To create an environment that fosters opportunities for the development of the child in the areas of:

- ✓ Character
- ✓ Physical Education
- ✓ Cognitive Growth
- ✓ Social/Emotional Growth

### **Program Goals**

- ✓ To provide a pleasant transition as the child moves between grades.
- ✓ To encourage and assist parents/guardians in being partners in their child's education.
- ✓ To create a safe environment, where children feel secure and successful.
- ✓ To foster readiness skills through language, literacy, mathematics, science, music & movement, and art.
- ✓ To help children appreciate and respect individual differences.
- ✓ To promote play as a vital source for developing the whole child.
- ✓ To instill a love of learning.
- ✓ To inspire each child to reach for their individual potential.

### **Curriculum**

All camp activities are designed to enhance each child's strengths and meet his/her needs. Community Lifestyle provides a comfortable and educationally enriched environment that encourages a child's growth and development. For the Summer Camp of 2023, campers will participate in our swimming, literacy, and S.T.E.M. programs.

### **General Information**

Children who have not been separated from their family may be a bit nervous the first few days. We will do all that we can to make the child feel comfortable and loved while they are with us. It is a good idea to try to prepare your child a few days in advance by talking positively about what he/she will be doing in camp.

### **What to Bring:**

- ✓ A complete change of clothing in a bag
- ✓ Swimsuit for pool days
- ✓ Bottle of water
- ✓ Lunch (if your child doesn't want our lunch program)
- ✓ All items must be labeled with a permanent marker

### **Required Files**

There are documents we are required to have on file for each child prior to their beginning the program. **Note: A child cannot start the program if required documents are missing.** These documents include: Registration Form, Persons Authorized to Pick-up Child, Emergency Information, Permission for Field Trips and/or Walking Trips, Current Medical Report Completed by a Doctor and Record of Immunizations. Due to state regulations, the required documents must be submitted yearly including the medical form completed by a physician.

## **Drop- Off and Pick-Up of Children**

When dropping off a child, never leave him/her unattended. The State of New Jersey requires parents to bring a child into the camp area and sign the parent "Sign-in Book." Children cannot be released to siblings unless the sibling is at least 16 years of age. Children are not allowed to walk home, and Community Lifestyle Staff/Volunteer may not transport children in their cars.

Written notice must be given if a child is to leave with someone other than the parents or those listed on the authorization section of the Registration Form. In the event of an emergency, parents may email signed permission for someone else other than themselves or an authorized adult to pick up a child. Please tell the person picking up your child that they must provide photo identification to the staff/volunteer before the child will be released.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parents, parent volunteers, and/or observations are always welcomed at our Camp. We also encourage parents to share their ideas and concerns with us at any time. Our doors are always open to you.

## **Lost & Found/Personal Items**

We ask that any personal belongings be labeled with permanent marker. We also ask that toys such as guns, swords, action figures, or any electronic games be left at home. We do not wish to have toys that promote violence in our program. Toys such as dolls, puzzles, books or games would be appropriate, however, bringing toys from home is discouraged as they can get lost, broken, or in some cases cause conflicts with the children.

Our Camp will have a lost & found area. Please check with the staff/volunteer if your child is missing something. The contents of the lost and found will be discarded or donated to charity at the end of each week.

***Community Lifestyle is not responsible for lost or stolen items.***

## **Dress Code and Grooming**

- The dress code at Summer Camp is comfortable clothing and closed-in, soft-sole shoes. Our curriculum calls for hands-on learning where children are exploring, creating and involved in real life experiences. It is expected that your child's clothes may become soiled throughout these experiences. Please dress your child ready for play!
- Ensure that your child is dressed in clothing that is appropriate to the current weather conditions
- Staff/Volunteer members are required to care for the sanitary and hygienic condition of all children at camp when they are in Community Lifestyle programs. If a child needs grooming beyond the normal care (i.e. washing hair, bathing the child, cutting of nails), parents will be notified of this need before any action is taken

## **Sanitation**

It is normal practice to wash employees/Volunteers' and childrens' hands repeatedly throughout the day; between activities, after coughing and sneezing and toileting. Gloves are to be used at all times during food handling, tending to runny noses, administering first aid and administering temperature readings. All surfaces are cleaned with a soap and water solution and sanitized with a bleach and water solution. All camp area surfaces are cleared from food debris or clutter and sanitized before the end of every day. Garbage is removed from the program two to three times a day.

## **Attendance**

Our Summer camp is open for 38 summer days, with the exception of some National Holidays. Consistent attendance is vitally important to the development of your child's program. The camp must be notified in writing of vacations prior to leaving.

If your child will be absent for a period of time, please notify the camp director as to the reason for the absences. You may be required to submit proper documentation, *i.e. Physicians return to camp slip*, before returning.

If your child is absent more than 3 day or a total of 7 days of camp without submitting documentation, your child will forfeit their camp spot.

## **Health Guidelines**

The camp is licensed and equipped to care for children in good health. Parents and staff/volunteers, working together, promote the child's total well-being.

## Health Requirements

1. Each child must have a complete health form on file signed by a physician, and all immunizations must be recorded and up to date prior to admission. Immunization records will need to be updated each time a child receives additional immunizations.
2. Children are not to be sent to camp if they have any of the following symptoms: fever or headache, rashes or inflamed skin, nausea or vomiting, abdominal pains, diarrhea, sore throat, earache, inflammation of the eyes, enlarged glands, or persistent coughing.
3. If a child develops any of the above symptoms while in camp, the parent will be notified to have the child picked up immediately. Doctor's permission may be required for the child to return to the program in some cases.
4. As a precaution and in compliance with State Law, prescription medication only will be administered. The medication must be stored in the original container, labeled with the child's name, the name of the medicine, date of prescription, and directions. Parents are required to complete a Medication Permission Form. *Over the counter* medications will not be administered.
5. Included on the registration form is a section titled, "Permission for Emergency Medical Care." It is imperative that this area be signed so that in the event of an emergency situation we can obtain medical treatment for your child.

*We care deeply about the health of all children in our camp. Please help us prevent the spread of infection to other children and staff/volunteers by keeping ill children at home until symptoms are gone.*

## GUIDELINES ON THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, the child should not attend the camp. If such symptoms occur at camp, the child will be removed from the group, and parents will be called to take the child home.

Severe pain or discomfort  
Acute diarrhea  
Episodes of acute vomiting  
Elevated oral temperature of 101.5  
Degrees Lethargy  
Severe coughing  
Yellow eyes or jaundice skin  
Red eyes with discharge

Infected, untreated skin patches  
Difficult or rapid breathing  
Skin rashes in conjunction with fever  
or behavior changes  
Skin lesions that are weeping or  
bleeding  
Mouth sores with drooling  
Stiff neck

Once the child is symptom-free, or has a health care provider's note stating that the child no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, the child may return to the Camp.

## **Emergency Medical Care**

If emergency medical care is necessary, any of the following steps might be taken:

- Attempt to contact parent or guardian.
- Attempt to contact the person on the emergency form.
- An ambulance or paramedic may be summoned.

A trained staff/volunteer in CPR and First Aid is available at all times. Parents are always contacted by phone.

## **Behavior Guidelines**

Disagreements and conflicts occur in every camp at one time or another. Your child's instructor uses these opportunities to help children learn how to get along with others. When camp rules are broken, for example if a child hits another child or misuses camp property, the instructor utilizes problem-solving techniques. This includes talking with the children and helping them to decide how to solve the problem. If problems continue, the instructor may request the involvement of the parent/guardian and other staff/volunteer members.

Instructors strive to develop an atmosphere of mutual respect in the classroom. Positive reinforcement, encouragement and recognition of positive behavior are strategies used to accomplish this goal.

If a child is consistently a physical or verbal danger to other children, themselves or staff (biting, hitting, pinching, throwing objects, etc.), the following will occur:

- ✓ The instructor will notify the parents/guardians that a problem exists and ask for their help. This help may include being asked to come in and pick up their child.
- ✓ If the behavior continues, the Director or her/his designee will observe the child's behavior in the camp; the staff/volunteer will be instructed to shadow the child; and a conference will be scheduled between parents/guardians, instructor and Director or her/his designee. The Director may suggest that the child be evaluated and a Behavioral Intervention Plan be developed and implemented before the child can return to the camp.
- ✓ If the parents/guardians refuse to cooperate or work together as a team the child's behavior continues to be a danger to other children, themselves, or staff, the child may be permanently removed from our program.
- ✓ If a child's behavior results in causing purposeful physical harm to others, the camp reserves the right to immediately terminate the child's enrollment.

The rules for the children are:

- ✓ I will respect each other's feelings and property by not fighting, hitting, biting or touching another person or their belongings.
- ✓ I will listen when someone is talking.
- ✓ I show care about my instructors and campers.
- ✓ I will use "words" to tell another person how you feel.
- ✓ I will get the help of the instructor if someone is bothering or upsetting me.
- ✓ I will try my best to be kind, considerate and helpful.
- ✓ I will respect the camp by helping to clean-up and by handling the supplies and equipment properly and carefully.

## **Positive Guidance**

A positive approach is used to guide the children; each situation and child is handled individually. Under no circumstances will corporal punishment be used for behavioral management. Methods used include:

- ✓ Redirection: Guiding a child into acceptable options when engaged in an unacceptable activity.
- ✓ Logical and Natural Consequences: Use discovered opportunities to make children aware of consequences.
- ✓ Limit Setting: Boundaries are developed by the instructor for the children as a group and for individual children according to each situation.
- ✓ Be Clear: Make sure children know what behavior is and is not acceptable.
- ✓ Modeling Behavior: Caregivers will demonstrate appropriate ways of interacting with others.
- ✓ Providing Choices: Appropriate choices are outlined and children are encouraged to make their own decisions.
- ✓ Be Ready: Plan and prepare the environment to limit negative behavior.
- ✓ Positive Reinforcement: Use of encouragement and support when addressing behaviors.

*In the event that a situation develops where a family is considered difficult to deal with, Community Lifestyle reserves the right to require the family to withdraw their child (ren) immediately without notice. Examples of "difficult to deal with" include, but are not limited to:*

- ✓ Arriving at camp impaired and attempting to remove their children from the program.
- ✓ Being abusive to staff/volunteer members and/or other program participants.
- ✓ Failing to adhere to Community Lifestyle policies listed in this parent handbook

## **Transitions**

All Camps are grouped by age and appropriate developmental skills based on the Universal Matrix of Stage Development. As your child grows in our camp, the curriculum allows us to assess the skill and growth process. Based on our observation and assessment, we will transition them from one age group to the next. This transition is determined by the Instructors and the Camp Director. Parents are informed in advance before any transitions are to be made.

## **Payment Information**

There are no refunds on T-shirts or credits for absences.

## **Late Pick-up Fees**

If your child is present after closing hours, the family will be billed a \$10 late fee every 15-minute interval.

## **Getting Prepared To Start**

Once all required documents have been submitted there is a one week waiting period before the child may begin the program. This allows us to communicate properly with our staff/volunteers and ensure that all documents are properly processed.

## **Office of Childcare Licensing Requirements**

Our staff is led by a Camp Director, who has supervisory experience as well as experience working with children. Each camp group is also given leadership by a Group Instructor and Instructor's Assistants who ensure quality programming. All staff/volunteer members are selected based on their previous experience, desire to work with children, and attitude. As a condition of employment/volunteering, all must successfully complete a state criminal background check and reference checks prior to being hired. Staff/volunteers must also attend extensive training that includes child abuse prevention, CPR/First Aid, safety procedures, positive guidance and discipline, child growth and development, as well as other in-house trainings throughout the summer.

## **Confidentiality**

We maintain confidentiality and respect each family's right to privacy refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we are concerned about a child's welfare, it is permissible to reveal confidential information to agencies and individuals who may be able to act in the child's interest, i.e. NJ Office of Child Care Licensing.



## **Court Orders**

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (i.e.: Custody Order, Restraining Order or Protection from Abuse Order) Community Lifestyle must be provided with a certified copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) request a more liberal version of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the courts, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order. In absence of a court order on file with Community Lifestyle, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Community Lifestyle, without a court order, cannot limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, we suggest that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued. If conflicting court orders are present, the most recently dated court order will be followed. Once presented with a Protection from Abuse or a Restraining Order, Community Lifestyle is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees/Volunteers of Community Lifestyle cannot at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow the orders of the court to be violated.

## **Standards of Ethical Behavior ~ Child Abuse Prevention**

Affectionate touch and the warm feeling it brings is an important factor in helping a child grow into a loving and peaceful adult. Gentle touch, hugging and holding are important and memorable parts of Community Lifestyle camp experiences. However, Community Lifestyle's staff and volunteers need to be sensitive to each person's need for personal space, i.e. not everyone wants to be hugged. Periodic training will be sponsored for Community Lifestyle employed staff and camp volunteers on the subject of appropriate touch, inappropriate touch, and child sexual abuse.

Community Lifestyle encourages appropriate touch. However, at the same time we not only discourage inappropriate touch but will take prompt and immediate action as follows:

1. At the first report or probable cause to believe that child sexual abuse has occurred, the staff/volunteer person, to whom the incident has been reported to, will notify the Camp Director.
2. The Director will make a report in accordance with the New Jersey Child Abuse and Neglect Law.
3. In the event the reported incident or incidents involve a program volunteer or employed staff person, the Director will, without exception, suspend the program volunteer or employed staff person from Community Lifestyle.

4. The parent/guardian of the child, or children involved in the alleged incident, will be promptly notified by the Director.
5. Whether the incident or alleged offense takes place on or off Community Lifestyle's premises, because of the youth-involved nature of Community Lifestyle, it will be considered as job related.
6. Reinstatement of the program volunteer or employed staff person will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the persons named in item #1 above or designated legal advisor.
7. All staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in handling this information and therefore should only discuss the incident with the persons named in item #1 or designated legal advisor.

Child abuse can take many forms: "In general, abuse refers to acts of commission such as beating, excessive corporal punishment, or inappropriate sexual activity"-New Jersey Department of Education, Policy and Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse.

### **Expulsion Policy**

The Camp will make every effort to encourage appropriate and considerate behavior in individual children. Growing is difficult, and all children have setbacks, bad days and sometimes traumatic life experiences, which affect their behavior. Staff members are provided with training and guidance in positive supervision as outlined in the program discipline policy.

Occasionally, when an individual child's behavior proves to be consistently disruptive, and/or demands so much individual attention that supervision of the entire group is compromised, the following actions will be required:

1. Staff will document the child's behavior and the staff's actions to modify the behavior;
2. Parents will be provided with a written notification requesting a conference with the parent(s), the child and the staff to address the problem;
3. Staff will implement a plan mutually agreed upon with the parent(s) and the child to modify the child's behavior;
4. A second conference will be arranged to provide positive feedback for further planning, if necessary;
5. If all attempts, as outlined above, result in little or no change in the child's behavior, the camp reserves the right to suspend camp services to the family for a period of one week. At this time, parents will be required to pay tuition in order to reserve the child's space in the program;
6. If upon returning to the program, the child's behavior continues, the Camp reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment with one week's notice to the parent(s);

If a child's behavior results in causing purposeful physical harm to others, Community Lifestyle reserves the right to immediately terminate the child's

enrollment. Parent(s) may grieve any action taken by Community Lifestyle, in writing, to the CEO Louis Quinones.

**Signing below indicates that you have read the 2023 Community Lifestyle Summer Camp Parent Handbook and understand and accept its terms and that you have received a copy.**

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_