

CAMP AT THE J

SUMMER 2023
FAMILY HANDBOOK

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Welcome to Camp at the J!

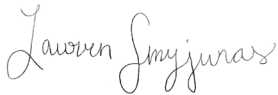
Thank you for choosing Camp at the J for your child's summer experience! You have given your child the gift of camp; a place for campers to develop skills, make new friends, build self-confidence and participate in activities that promote Jewish Values.

We are committed to creating valuable experiences and a community that supports what your children are learning at home. Safety and supervision are essential components of our program. We carefully select our staff members from a vigorously screened group and train them extensively.

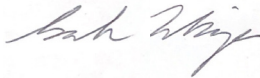
This handbook has been designed to answer your questions, to promote communication between our staff and your family, and to assist you in understanding our policies and procedures. By subscribing to the rules of Camp at the J and remaining familiar with this information, we can work together to help your child have the best camp experience possible. This handbook also contains important information regarding Camp at the J, an American Camp Association (ACA) accredited camp.

We hope to meet and exceed the expectations of you and your family. Camp at the J strives to provide a safe, fun and educational camp experience. Should you find yourself with further questions about camp, please contact us. We're here all year, and love to talk to people about Camp at the J!

Sincerely,



Lauren Smyjunas
Camp Director
513.722.7245
lsmyjunas@mayersonjcc.org



Swess Wessinger
Assistant Camp Director
513.644.0703
swessinger@mayersonjcc.org



MAYERSON JCC
of Cincinnati

Contact Information

Camp Office:

513.722.7249

daycamp@mayersonjcc.org

Camp Director: Lauren Smyjuna

513.722.7245

lsmyjuna@mayersonjcc.org

Assistant Camp Director: Swess Wessinger

513.644.0703

swessinger@myasersonjcc.org

Address:

Mayerson JCC: Attn. Camp at the J

8485 Ridge Road

Cincinnati, OH 45236

Camp Hours:

9:30am - 3:30pm

Communication Policy

The majority of regular communication from camp will be via email. This includes reminders, updates, photos, and weekly newsletters with a recap of the week's activities, information about the upcoming week, and other community events.

Please save daycamp@mayersonjcc.org in your address book to ensure you receive our email.

Camp Units & Ages

PIONEERS GRADES K

TRAILBLAZERS GRADES 1 - 2

RAIDERS GRADES 3 - 5

QUEST GRADES 6 - 8

LIT GRADES 9 - 10

Camp Team

Our committed Camp Team meets year round to plan the best possible summer experience for our campers. Many of our staff members were campers too, and are truly passionate about camp. Each staff member was chosen for their leadership skills, safety consciousness, responsibility, and caring attitude toward children. All staff members are carefully background screened, receive specialized training, and key staff are CPR and First Aid certified. Additionally, staff are required to participate in a weeklong staff orientation and training where they acquire valuable knowledge and skills.



LAUREN SMYJUNA
CAMP DIRECTOR

Lauren is overjoyed to be returning for her ninth summer at Camp at the J! She has attended and worked at Camp for the past 20 years as a camper, counselor, unit head, and program coordinator. Lauren graduated from Indiana University with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and a license in Computer Education. She has her Masters of Education, with a certificate of Camp Administration and Leadership. Lauren loves to surround herself with camp year-round, and to make camp a special place for campers, families and staff!



SWESS WESSINGER
ASSISTANT CAMP DIRECTOR

Swess has been at the Mayerson JCC for seven years and has worked in various JCC programs, including JPlay and After Crew. They are excited to return for their fourth summer with Camp at the J and hop to build a positive, fun and safe environment for the campers this summer!

Counselor Tipping Policy

In keeping with the policy of the Mayerson JCC, Camp at the J staff may not accept cash gratuities. If you want to say "thanks for a job well done," we encourage you to make a contribution to Camp. Contact Rick Lefton, Director of Development, at 513.722.7233 or rlefton@mayersonjcc.org for more information.

Inclusion Policy

Our welcoming and inclusive environment values the dignity and worth of each individual, and we work to foster positive relationships and build greater understanding among campers of every background, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, ancestry, genetic information, immigration status, hair style or any other protected status covered by federal, state or local law, culture, religion, gender identity, race, and physical and intellectual capability.

Questions and Concerns

While it is against Camp at the J policy to give out personal cell phone numbers or email addresses of our camp staff to guardians and campers, guardians are welcome to call or email the camp office any time at daycamp@mayersonjcc.org or 513.722.7249. Should you have questions or concerns, please leave a message for the Camp Director or your child's Unit Head with our Camp Office, and someone will get back with you as soon as possible. See page 4 for additional contact phone numbers.



American Camp Association (ACA)

Camp at the J is accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). ACA accreditation requires camp excellence in safety, programming, staff training and education. Camp at the J exceeds the 300+ standards and guidelines established in policies, procedures, and practices on an annual basis, and participates in the re-accreditation process every three years.

Camp at the J Mission Statement

Camp at the J offers a fun, active and safe summertime experience providing opportunities for children and young adults in the Jewish and broader communities to build friendships, learn valuable skills, participate in physical activity, and enhance their self-esteem. Our welcoming and inclusive environment values the dignity and worth of each individual, and we work to foster positive relationships and build greater understanding among campers of every background, culture, religion, gender identity, race, and physical and intellectual capability.

CAMP AT THE J STRIVES TO:

- Offer constructive, meaningful, and fun developmental growth experiences to campers and staff.
- Develop positive individual habits, attitudes, knowledge, and skills to enable the campers to function more effectively as individuals and as part of a community.
- Increase all campers' awareness and appreciation of Jewish culture, traditions, and values.

Registration/Application

The JCC reserves the right to deny or limit service due to non-payment or prior outstanding financial obligations to the JCC. Spaces are limited. Once the limit is reached, registrations will be denied unless space becomes available.

Financial Policies

Please contact daycamp@mayerosnjcc.org for billing information and questions.

Cancellations and Refunds

Camp registration closes and payments are due on May 22, 2023 so we have time to process all of the medical forms, plan specific trainings based on camper needs, collect medication and create attendance sheets for the summer.

Financial Assistance

Please contact our Susan Lyons at slyons@mayerosnjcc.org for more information about financial aid.

Membership Info: A child under the age of 13 is considered a member only when they are part of a family membership. Teens 13 & 14 are considered members when they have a student membership or are part of a family membership. For more membership information please contact our Director of Membership, Susan Lyons at slyons@mayerosnjcc.org

Arrival and Dismissal

Your child may only leave with those authorized on their enrollment form. We must have advanced written permission from a guardian to accept a substitute. Anyone picking up your child (including yourself) must be prepared to present picture identification DAILY.

The regular camp day is 9:30am - 3:30pm.

For the safety of all campers, Camp at the J has a strict drop-off and pick-up policy.

For campers who are dropped off 9:15 - 9:30am and/or picked up at 3:30pm:

- Drop-off begins at 9:15am in the back parking lot - please do not arrive before 9:10am. If your child will arrive after 9:30 am, please call the Camp Office at 513.722.7249, and Camp Staff will come pick them up from your car.
- Pick-up begins at 3:30pm in the back parking lot.
- Camp staff will direct you where to go and assist your camper(s) in and out of your vehicle. You do not need to leave your car at any time. Do not attempt to exit the carline out of turn.
- Please have your photo ID ready and present.

- Afternoon carline is expected to last 15-20 minutes. We appreciate your patience as we are carefully assisting campers to their cars in a safe manner.

Late Arrivals and Early Pick-Ups

Please provide advance notice directly by written note or e-mail to: daycamp@mayersonjcc.org

- **If your child will arrive after 9:30am or leave before 3:30pm**, please call the Camp Office at 513.722.7249 when you arrive, and Camp Staff will come pick them up or drop them off to your car.

What to Pack

Each day, your camper should bring the following items to camp in a backpack.

All items must be clearly labeled:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swim suit and towel • Lunch with utensils • Refillable water bottle with a carabiner (campers are required to bring a refillable water bottle and will have frequent opportunities to refill) • Hat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunscreen • Shoes that can be worn to the pool (flip flops or crocs) are optional • Plastic bag in which to put wet swim suits or towels • Snack |
|--|---|

Lunch and Food at Camp

Packed Lunches

Campers may eat ONLY what is in their own lunch. All lunches brought from home are stored in an air-conditioned area but are not refrigerated. Please send all required utensils and **do not send any food that must be heated or cooked** - we do not have access to a microwave. The camper's first and last name should be clearly marked on the outside of the lunchbox or bag. We encourage campers to use their personal water bottles as a drink. Packed lunches do not need to be kosher.

Note: Campers are not permitted to make purchases from the fitness desk or the J Café or vending machines.

Snacks

Please pack a snack every day, if you feel your child may need one.

Nut Policy

Camp at the J is a "nut aware" camp. We avoid items that contain nuts, or that may contain nut products. Campers with severe nut allergies will have a designated place to sit during lunch, if necessary.

Special Events and Programs

Campers get to enjoy several special events throughout the summer that may include programs like the popular Fire Truck Spray Day, Maccabi (healthy sports and arts competition), and much more.

What to Wear

For your child's safety, socks and sneakers (closed toe and closed heel) are required footwear.

Sandals, Crocs, or flip flops may be packed for swimming or water activities only. Your child should come dressed each day in comfortable shorts and t-shirts that can get dirty. **Please label all clothing and personal belongings with your camper's first and last name.** There is no lost and found at Camp at the J.

Sample Daily Schedule

While each unit has its own schedule, the following is an example of a typical day. A pre-Shabbat (Sabbath celebration occurs every Friday afternoon.

9:30 - 10am..... Arrival & Flagpole
10 - 10:45am..... Bunk Time/Unit Time
10:45am - 12pm..... Free Swim
12 - 12:45pm Lunch
12:45 - 1:30pm Art & Nature
1:30 -2:15pm Community Service & Music
2:15 - 3pm..... Sports
3 - 3:30pm..... Gather belongings, Certificates of Awesomeness, and Afternoon Carline

Swimming

Campers swim most days in our outdoor pool. Free swim is offered each day for all campers, weather permitting. Camp at the J is bringing back swim lessons Mondays-Thursdays! Friday is free swim only. Please notify the camp office in writing if you do not wish for your child to swim on any given day. Pioneers and Trailblazer campers swim in the morning and are encouraged to wear their bathing suit to camp under their clothing (remember to pack undergarments).

All campers must complete a swimming test to assure safety. It is not a pass or fail test, it is an assessment to see the level in which they swim. This review will happen on the first Monday of every week. Campers have the opportunity to complete the review and move up a level whenever they feel they are ready at any time during the week. The Deep End assessment is required of children 12 and under who would like to swim independently in the current channel, lap pool, leisure pool and deep end of the outdoor pool, including going off the diving board during the summer months.

Swimming Assessment Procedures

- The child is required to start in the shallow end of the indoor Lap pool, swim to within 5 ft. of the other end of the lane then stop, tread water for 20 seconds, and continue swimming to the end of the pool.
- The child may not stop and hold the pool wall at any time.
- They must show they have enough endurance to swim without difficulty.

RED BAND

Skills sufficient for
leisure pool only

- May swim in the shallow end of pool
- Staff must be in the water within arm's reach at all times
- Life jacket must be Coast Guard approved

GREEN BAND

Skills sufficient for
all areas of the pool,
can swim independently

- May swim the entire length of the pool
- Staff member must remain in water and have close supervision
- May swim without a staff member

Special Situations

At Camp at the J, every camper is seen as an individual. We are sensitive to each child's needs and encourage parents/caregivers to alert us if there are things our staff should know that can help make their child's experience the best it can be. Issues such as a recent divorce, sickness or death in the family, fears or phobias, or other situations that may cause a child to behave differently should be brought to the attention of our Camp Director.

All information is kept in the strictest of confidence and is meant to help us work as a team to be proactive as opposed to reactive in preventing potential issues from arising, and/or dealing with them appropriately and from a place of understanding.

Water and Hydration Stations

Part of what makes summer camp so much fun is getting to spend lots of time outdoors! However, active campers plus high temperatures can equal dehydration, heat exhaustion, and other illnesses. That's why one of our top priorities at Camp at the J is to keep our campers hydrated at all times. **All campers are required to bring a refillable water bottle with a carabiner with them each day. Please put your camper's name on their water bottle.** We have several "Hydration Stations" set up around camp that enable campers to refill their bottles with fresh, cold water whenever necessary.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special and we love to celebrate them at camp! If your child's birthday falls during camp, Camp at the J will provide popsicles for all the children in your camper's bunk at no charge, upon request.

Camp Evaluation

Families will receive an electronic evaluation form at the conclusion of the summer. Your feedback enables us to modify and improve Camp at the J programs. Also, feel free to share your camper's summer experience, **both during and after the summer**, with one of the camp director.

What Not to Bring to Camp

- Money
- Animals/Pets
- Jewelry or other expensive items
- Cell phones, iPads, iPods, computers, video game systems, and all other electronic devices
- Toys, trading cards, trading items, and personal sports equipment
- Weapons
- Alcohol and drugs

Valuables and Personal Items

We discourage you from bringing anything that is not absolutely necessary. Personal camping and sports equipment may cause a risk to the health and safety of our campers and staff. Secure this equipment in your car, or make arrangements with the Camp Director to safely store it.

The JCC's insurance does not cover any personal items. Items stolen or damaged are not covered!

Staff members are responsible for the care of their camper's personal items. If campers bring inappropriate items, i.e. cell phones, toys, trading cards, pocket video games, iPods, tobacco products, weapons (including but not limited to guns, knives, swords, explosives, and any chemical whose purpose is to cause harm to another person), and illegal substances (including alcohol and drugs) please turn in to the Camp Director or Unit Head and ask that the camper's parent be notified. The item will be returned to the parent of camper at dismissal or in other cases turned over to local law enforcement authorities.

Other than certified therapy pets approved by the Camp Director, pets are not allowed at Camp.

Medication

Medication Vacation

If your camper currently takes medication (other than an antibiotic) that your physician recommends a summer suspension from, please alert us of this change by contacting one of the Camp Director. Changes in medication can produce changes in health and behavior that can impact a child's camp experience. No one is better qualified to recognize and respond to these changes than caregivers. If your child's physician feels strongly about suspending a medication, please notify the Camp Office, prior to the start of Camp.

Medication Policy

All medications are kept in a locked area under the supervision of the Camp Director and Supervisor Staff. This complies with American Camp Association standards and State Department of Health guidelines. Please do not put any medications in your camper's lunch or backpack.

Upon the written request of family and with written and signed orders from a physician, routine personal medications are administered only by the Camp Director, Camp Nurse, Program Coordinator, or Unit Head when on trips.

Only the Camp Director, Office Administrator, Camp Nurse, or Unit Head administer over the counter medication when on trips with the written request of caregivers/guardians. All administration of medication is documented.

All medication must be in original prescription container or over-the-counter packaging with instructions written by caregiver/guardian. In cases where a question exists about medication(s), the Camp Office will contact the appropriate person (i.e., caregiver) by phone to clarify the issue. This conversation is documented.

Camp staff will not give medication that does not meet safety guidelines. Camp staff will carry epi-pens prescribed to campers in their bunks and are trained to use them. When medication is refilled, a medication check-in form must be filled out and signed by parent/guardian and camp staff. If your child is bringing medication, please meet with Camp Director the week of June 6 to train staff.

Immunization Policy

Camp at the J requires that all children be up-to-date on their immunizations as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>) before being admitted into our camp. A current ODJFS medical form with an acceptable record of immunizations must be validated by a physician with a signature and provided at registration. Validated proof of immunizations must be submitted as your child receives new immunizations or booster shots. There are no religious or personal exemptions to this policy. Medical exemptions will be reviewed by JCC management with medical consultation as necessary. All staff have received the COVID-19 vaccine.

Health and Safety

Safety & Security

In the event of an emergency, the first priority of the staff is the safety and security of your children. We will be in touch with parents as soon as possible through the Mayerson JCC's emergency text/voice message system. During an emergency situation, please do not attempt to contact camp staff and/or other parents, and please refrain from posting on social media, as you may unwittingly disclose confidential information about our emergency procedures.

If a text message is sent from the Emergency Notification System, the number will appear as 76127. This is a one-way communication only; replies to the text message will not be delivered.

If a recorded voice message is sent, it will come from: 1.866.419.5001. If you miss a call from this number, you may call the number back to listen to the last recorded message.

Sun and Heat

Please put an initial application of sunscreen on your child before they come to camp. Hats are encouraged. Refillable water bottles are required. As with all personal items, clearly mark your child's name on these items. Camp at the J staff will model sunscreen application. All campers will be reminded to re-apply sunscreen throughout the day.

Accident/Injury

In the event of accident or injury, first aid will be administered on site, and an accident/incident report will be completed. Should the accident or injury require more than basic first aid, 911 will be called and your camper will be treated by professional EMTs or be taken to the nearest hospital. If this occurs, the caregiver or guardian will be contacted immediately. In the event that the caregiver or guardian cannot be reached by phone, the emergency contact will be notified and a camp staff member will ride to the hospital with the injured camper. The Mayerson JCC's Aquatics Department serves as the first responders until EMS arrives.

Absences/Illness

The health and safety of your camper is the number one priority of our staff. For your child's safety and protection, please contact the camp at 513.722.7249 if they will be absent.

Please do not send your child to camp if they are not feeling well, or you suspect illness.

When children become ill at camp, a caregiver or emergency contact will be notified IMMEDIATELY to pick them up.

Returning to Camp after Illness/Lice

In order to return to Camp after any illness, your camper must be free of symptoms such as, but not limited to, cold symptoms, fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for at least 24 hours of the last episode. Campers returning after an episode of head lice must be free of lice and nits and will be checked by the Camp Staff and/or Nurse Consultant before returning to the bunk. Camp at the J has the right to not accept the camper if they still display any symptoms. If your camper is well enough to come to camp, they are expected to participate in all camp activities unless a signed note is provided by a caregiver or physician.

If your camper requires care for injury or illness that occurred at camp, the Camp Office will ask for a copy of the report.

What should you do if your child has head lice?

Please do not be alarmed, as this is a common occurrence among school aged children, head lice are not a sign of unclean people or homes. If your child does have head lice, everyone in your family should be checked, and anyone with nits should be treated. We will not allow children to return to camp until zero signs of eggs or lice are present.

Please take these precautions:

1. Check your child's hair for eggs (also called nits).
2. If you suspect your child has head lice, ask your health care provider to diagnose the problem and recommend appropriate treatment.
3. Tell us if your child is diagnosed as having head lice.
4. If head lice is diagnosed, do not return your child to camp until has been treated and all the nits have been removed.

Please remember to provide the JCC with up-to-date phone numbers so you or another contact can be reached in case of an emergency. Changes must be submitted in writing.

Camp at the J Behavior Policy

Establishing Expectations

All children and staff at Camp at the J are protected by and provided with a safe and secure environment. Age-appropriate rules and expectations are established for the Camp at the J campers and are based upon:

- Respect for the individual
- Respect for the environment
- Respect for others

It is important that children clearly understand behavioral boundaries. Rules are introduced at orientation and reinforced throughout the camp season. We understand that childhood is a process of learning to conform to rules and guidelines, and we view our role as enabling children to gain these important social skills in a positive environment.

Redirection and Discipline

When a child tests the rules, staff members will immediately remind them of the rules and expectations. Redirection, explanation, and constructive solutions are the first line of techniques used by the camp staff when a child requires behavioral correction, unless the behavior is an immediate threat to the child or others. Staff are expected to be fair and consistent with discipline and should not use demeaning language or raised voices. In addition:

- Children shall not be subjected to any form of corporal punishment, including rough handling, shoving, hair pulling, ear pulling, shaking, slapping, kicking, biting, pinching, hitting, or spanking.
- If a child hits or kicks another child, they will be asked to leave for the day.
- Children shall not be subjected to any form of emotional abuse, including name calling, ostracism, shaming, making derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family, or using language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child.
- Toileting habits, or lack thereof, will not be a cause for punishment of any form.
- The withholding of food, water, clothing, or medical care will not be used as punishment.
- Fitness will not be used as punishment.
- No physical restrains or mechanical restraints of any kind will be used on a child.
- Punishing a group for the infractions of an individual shall not be used as discipline.

Separation from the Group

A child may be separated from the group only after less intrusive methods of guiding behavior have been tried and proven ineffective. A child will be separated from the group only when his or her behavior causes concern for his or her safety or that of other children, when it prevents the group from engaging in planned activities, or when it frightens or threatens others. The separation shall be conducted in such a way so as not to intentionally demean or embarrass the child. When separated from the group, the child must remain in an area where his or her physical presence can be seen and heard by staff. A child may return to the group when the behavior has been brought under control and the child is no longer a threat to him/herself and bunkmates. The child shall be returned to the group at the earliest possible opportunity. Incidents requiring separation shall be documented in writing, dated, signed by all staff members involved, filed, and shared with parents.

Persistent Behavioral Problems

Persistent unacceptable behavior will be handled in the following manner:

- The child's behavior will be recorded by all staff members involved.
- Staff shall meet to discuss the behavior and will develop a program plan to meet the individual needs of the child in question.
- The parents of the child will be contacted to discuss this plan and enlist their input and cooperation.
- When necessary, the director may contact the appropriate professionals for guidance.

- The JCC reserves the right to suspend or terminate care if the child is consistently putting themselves or others in danger.

Termination of Enrollment from Camp at the J

When the individual needs of the child cannot be served by the program or program policies are consistently being disregarded, Camp at the J may terminate a child's enrollment in the program. Such termination decisions will not be made without prior consultation with the child's caregivers/guardians and will be communicated to the caregivers/guardians. In most cases, the caregivers will be given a grace period of 3 days to make other care arrangements; however, Camp at the J reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment at any point in time if a situation is determined to be extremely detrimental to the child concerned or to the other children or staff in the program. Caregivers are financially responsible for tuition covering the period of attendance.

Possible Reasons for Termination of Enrollment

The child may be terminated from Camp at the J if the child's behavior is having a consistent negative effect on the well-being and development of other children. Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:

- The possibility of danger to the child or others in the group.
- The impact of the problematic behavior on the rest of the participants.
- The frequency of the problem behavior.
- Availability of resources to address the problem behavior.
- The willingness of the family members to work with the staff and/or to get outside help.

Additional, non-behavioral causes for possible termination may include:

- Non-payment of tuition and fees.
- Non-compliance with Camp at the J policies and procedures such as, but not limited to:
- Habitual lateness in picking up the child (see late pick-up policy on page 7).
- Failure to provide the required enrollment forms

Camp at the J Babysitting Policy

In an effort to maintain the professional status of our staff and prevent any potential conflict of interest, the care giving, instruction or engagement in any type of outside social or employment relationship between Camp at the J families and any Camp at the J employee is discouraged. However, should you hire or otherwise engage any Camp at the J employee for any reason or period of time, it must be outside the Mayerson JCC property and with the understanding that such arrangements and payment for services are solely between you and the Camp at the J staff member. These arrangements are not sanctioned by the Mayerson JCC and the Mayerson JCC is not liable or otherwise responsible in any way for the Camp at the J employee or any act, inaction, injury, damage or result of such unsanctioned arrangement, engagement, activity, event or service.