

# Safety Town Camp Family Handbook 2025



## 2025 Camp Season

Welcome to the 2025 summer camp season. The Vernon Hills Park District is pleased to provide a variety of safe summer day camp experiences for the children of our community.

The following information will be used throughout the summer and should be saved as a reference. Updates will be made to our Safety Town Camp Family Handbook as necessary as guidelines/recommendations change. **Last updated: February 1, 2025.**

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Recreation Supervisor at (847) 996-6808.

## Camp / Location

Safety Town Camp

Sullivan Community Center

Preschool Room C

## Brightwheel App / Communication

Our camp staff is looking forward to providing your child with a positive and rewarding camp experience. On-going and open communication between parents/guardians and camp staff is essential. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss questions and concerns with camp staff.

Daily communication is completed through the Brightwheel App. The Brightwheel App can be downloaded to your mobile phone or accessed on the web. You will receive an invitation to the Brightwheel App via either the email and/or phone number on your registration account.

A parent/guardian must complete the camper's Brightwheel profile prior to the first day of camp. Your child will not be able to participate until this procedure is completed.

Camp staff will post an overview of the day's activities, photos, announcements, and reminders on the Brightwheel App on a regular basis. If you have questions/concerns, contact the Camp Director via Brightwheel.

Remember that drop off and pick up times are very busy; please be patient when approaching camp staff with questions/concerns. If you are rushed for time, you may submit your concerns through Brightwheel and staff will contact you by phone or Brightwheel later in the day.

## Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

To report an absence, please use the absence feature in Brightwheel.

Escort your child into the building and enter the preschool wing through the security door. You will receive the security code via email prior to the first day of camp. This code should only be shared with the authorized drop-off/pick-up individuals on your list in Brightwheel (not children).

Upon arrival, check your child in via the Brightwheel App and wait in the hallway outside of your child's classroom. Staff will open their doors promptly at the camp start time. Make direct and verbal contact with the camp staff when dropping the child off. Arrival activities are an important component of the daily schedule. Arriving promptly to camp ensures that your child can fully participate in the arrival sequence and also reduces disruptions. Classroom doors will be locked after the start of camp.

Children may experience separation anxiety at the beginning of the session or throughout season. Children usually do best when parents/caregivers project a confident, positive attitude and depart with a quick goodbye. If your child experiences difficulty at drop off, you may wait in the lobby or your vehicle; not in the preschool wing. Camp staff can typically comfort an upset child and engage them in an activity. If the child has not been comforted or engaged in activities, staff will contact the parent/guardian to provide an update.

Children must be picked-up and signed out through the Brightwheel App promptly at the end of camp by a parent/guardian or an authorized individual. Authorized individuals must be listed in the Brightwheel App and be able to present a valid state identification card or driver's license. Your child's camp staff will come out into the hallway a few minutes before dismissal to give parents a very brief overview of the day's activities and keep you up to date about upcoming events, reminders, etc. Please be prompt in dropping off and picking up your child. If an emergency occurs, please notify camp staff through Brightwheel.

**Late Pick-Up Fee:** After a five-minute grace period, you will be charged a late pick-up fee of \$10.00 for every 10 minutes you are late in picking up your child. This is a per child fee. The late fee must be paid in full at the registration office before the child can return to the program.

## Health Policy

To maintain a healthy camp environment, keep your child home if they have experienced any of these symptoms within the past 24 hours: fever of 100.4 or higher, shortness of breath, muscle aches, loss of taste, headache, chills, sore throat, cough, runny nose, rash, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, earache, or any communicable disease. All children must be symptom-free within 24 hours of attending camp.

To report an absence, please use the absence feature in Brightwheel.

Parents/guardians whose children develop communicable diseases; i.e. chicken pox, head lice, pertussis, COVID, etc. must notify the Recreation Supervisor as soon as the child is diagnosed. The name of the affected child is not released; however, parents are notified of the occurrence of a contagious illness. Depending on the illness, a doctor's note may be required for your child to return to camp.

Should a child become ill at camp, parents/guardians will be notified immediately so that the child can be picked up. Parent/guardian must pick up child immediately after being notified of their health condition, or make arrangements for an approved caregiver to do so. If we cannot reach a parent/guardian, the emergency contact will be called. The child will be quarantined until picked up.

## Food Allergies

Indicate your child's food allergies and/or dietary restrictions in Brightwheel. Notify the Camp Director of any food allergies and/or dietary restrictions. If your child has food allergies, a Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan signed by the child's physician must be submitted prior to participation.

## **Medication**

We make reasonable accommodations in our programs and camps for individuals with disabilities, including staff dispensing or administering medication in appropriate instances. All requests for medication dispensing or administration will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Park District.

Whenever possible, medications should be dispensed or administered by parents or guardians before or after programs and camps. Please note that the Park District does not have medical providers (e.g., licensed medical professionals such as doctors, nurses, etc.) on staff. In some circumstances, the administration of medication cannot be performed by Park District staff because of specific and/or complex physician or manufacturer instructions, because a request requires medical diagnosis or judgment from our lay staff, and/or because the medication requires invasive procedures.

Your request for medication dispensing/administration will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and assigned staff will follow-up with you regarding any questions or regarding any request that cannot be accommodated, including providing you with the reasons the request(s) cannot be accommodated.

If there is a need for the dispensing/administration of medication during a minor's participation in a District program, the parent/guardian should follow the steps outlined in the Medication Dispensing/Administration Information and Process for Parents and Legal Guardians Form available online at [vhparkdistrict.org](http://vhparkdistrict.org). Any necessary medication must be submitted in person to the Camp Director on the first day of camp.

If you have questions or need further assistance, please contact the District's ADA Compliance Officer at (847) 996-6802.

## **Bee Safe & Kind**

The Vernon Hills Park District is committed to promoting safety, diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Bee Safe & Kind program reinforces the importance of being safe & kind to everyone.

Our goal is to make all campers feel safe, comfortable and welcome regardless of their ability, race or ethnic origin, age, socioeconomic level, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender, religion, citizenship, or language. To reinforce this message, campers and staff will be asked to complete a "Safety & Kindness Pledge".

Vernon Hills Park District Staff will promote safety, empathy and respect and will work to resolve issues by having discussions and asking questions. To further this mission, we encourage parents/guardians to review the importance of safety and treating each other with respect and kindness with their children.

## Behavior Management Techniques

Camp staff implement a variety of positive guidance strategies including modeling skills, offering choices, employing redirection, altering the environment, and reflection. All behavior management strategies are suggested to the children in a gentle, positive, and discreet manner.

If inappropriate or unacceptable behavior occurs, prompt resolution will be sought and the Behavior Code of Conduct will be used as a guideline. The Park District reserves the right to remove a participant whose actions endanger the safety of himself or others.

### Behavior Code of Conduct

All participants (and their parents/caregivers) must adhere to the District's Code of Conduct.

1. Show respect to all participants, staff, and volunteers. Participants should follow program rules and take direction from staff.
2. Refrain from using abusive, inappropriate, or foul language.
3. Refrain from threatening or causing bodily harm to self, other participants, or staff.
4. Show respect for equipment, supplies, and facilities.
5. Not possess any weapons.

## Inclusion Services

The Vernon Hills Park District is committed to promoting and encouraging positive interactions among participants with and without disabilities. The Vernon Hills Park District works together with SRACLC (Special Recreation Association of Central Lake County) to provide additional services for children identified with special needs. Staff are available to assist participants with reasonable accommodations needed for success in and enjoyment of our programs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Once registered, immediately contact the Recreation Supervisor (at least fifteen business days prior to the start of camp) to discuss your child's special needs. Request are accommodated in the order they are received. Should a request for inclusion services arise throughout the season, please contact the Recreation Supervisor as soon as possible.

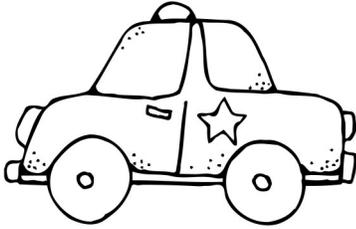
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# Safety Town Camp Curriculum & Daily Schedule

An early safety education is important—children are more prepared to act/react when they have basic knowledge and skills. Occasionally, children find safety presentations scary or worrisome. Safety Town Camp staff and guest speakers recognize the potential for anxiety or fear and have created age-appropriate lessons that make children feel safe and secure.

**Note: Guest speakers may vary. On occasion, guest speakers may cancel their visit due to work emergencies or unforeseen circumstances. In the event a guest speaker is unable to visit, Safety Town staff have prepared alternate lessons.**



## Police

A police officer from the Vernon Hills Police Department visits to speak about the role of police in the community as well as bike safety and maintenance. The police officer often accompanies the campers to the outdoor Safety Town and monitors proper use of bike lanes, stop signs, and rules of the road.

Children also learn about stranger danger and the importance of staying close to their parent/caregiver.



## Fire Safety

Countryside Fire Protection District visits to discuss fire safety including “Get Out & Stay Out”, “Don’t Hide, Go Outside!”, and “Stop, Drop, & Roll”. Children will learn about smoke alarms, evacuation, safe meeting places, and what firefighters may look and sound like while in uniform.



## Water Safety

Campers learn how to safely behave in and around personal and community pools.

A lifeguard discusses water safety, the importance of adult supervision near water, and the role of lifeguards at the pool.



## 9-1-1 Preparedness

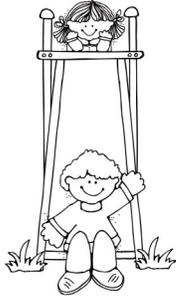
Children learn how and when to dial 9-1-1. Children practice dialing 9-1-1, stating their emergency, and telling the operator their name, address, and phone number on a pretend phone.



### **Basic Animal/Pet Safety**

Campers learn when and how to approach a pet belonging to another person. We will read the educational story *May I Pet Your Dog?: The How-To Guide for Kids Meeting Dogs (and Dogs Meeting Kids)* by Stephanie Calmenson and/or other educational books.

Campers also learn the basics of responsible pet ownership and care.



### **Playground Safety**

Campers learn about playground safety including how to safely use playground equipment, how to recognize and report broken or dangerous equipment, and what to do if a stranger is at the playground.

Children will practice their playground safety knowledge while enjoying a visit to the Sullivan Community Center playground.



### **Railroad/Train Safety**

Children learn about general railroad/train safety and crossing railroad tracks with and without gates.

Children will learn the "Stop, Look, & Listen" technique.



### **Tricycle/Pedestrian/Road Safety**

Campers learn how to be safe pedestrians and tricycle riders in our outdoor Safety Town designed just for camp! Children practice stopping at stop signs, obeying traffic lights, waiting for passing "trains" and other fun rules of the road.

Campers learn pedestrian safety the very first day and begin trike safety the second day. These skills are practiced daily in our Safety Town. Gym shoes and helmets required.



### **Basic First Aid & Health**

Campers learn how to recognize an emergency as well as basic first aid (e.g., cleaning a wound with soap and water, helping a friend with a wound, and applying adhesive bandages).

The importance of washing hands, covering coughs/sneezes, regular doctor checkups and first aid is discussed.

Everyday items in your home, such as household cleaners and medicines can be poisonous to children. Poison control will be addressed.



# Summer CAMP

## Daily Supply Checklist for Safety Town Camp

### Sun Protection

Apply sunscreen *before* camp. Campers will have opportunities to reapply sunscreen by themselves throughout the day. The parent/guardian must supply the sunscreen for their child. Hats and sunglasses provide additional protection from the sun.

### Water Bottle

Send a reusable water bottle (12-ounce minimum) labeled with your child's name to camp each day to help ensure that your child stays hydrated. Water bottle refill stations will be made available. Staff will assist campers in refilling water bottles as needed.

### Gym Shoes and Socks

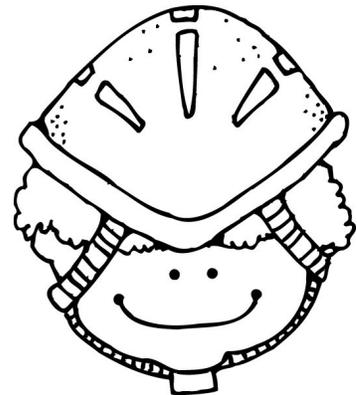
Gym shoes are recommended to permit full participation in activities; avoid sandals, flip-flops, cleats, etc. Children must wear closed toe shoes to participate in activities within Safety Town.

### Clean, Comfortable Clothing

Children should dress in clean, comfortable, washable clothing as many camp activities are messy. Send an extra set of clothes to be kept in the camp classroom for the duration of the camp.

### Bike Helmet (Required)

Campers must bring a bike helmet to camp everyday. Visit <http://www.safekids.org/video/bike-helmet-fit-test> for guidelines on fitting a bike helmet.



### Snack & Water Bottle

Campers should pack a snack and water bottle everyday.

### Label All Personal Belongings

Staff/Volunteers are not responsible for lost/stolen money, valuables, or personal items.

All personal toys, games, electronics, and items of high importance or value must remain at home.