

Early Childhood Explorers Camp & Summer Preschool

2025 Parent Handbook



Gurnee Park District
ENRICHING COMMUNITY THROUGH FUN AND NATURE.

WELCOME

Welcome to The Best Summer Ever Summer Camp and Summer Preschool 2025. We are looking forward to having your child attend. Summer Camp is a wonderful opportunity for children to make new friends and renew old friendships along with summer songs, games, crafts, nature, and sprinkler water play built around a weekly theme. Summer Preschool is designed to give your child an opportunity to transition to preschool in the fall or bridge between preschool and kindergarten, through activities that help develop fine motor, gross motor, self-help and social emotional skills along with socialization with friends. Most of all, the children will have fun in our fenced playground or bright classroom in the care of our experienced staff.

The Early Childhood Team

The key to an amazing summer at Gurnee Park District is our dedicated and talented staff who create a safe and positive environment for the children.

The Early Childhood Team consists of the Youth Recreation Manager, Preschool Coordinator, Site Directors, Counselors, and Volunteers. Team members are preschool teachers, adult staff, college and high school students.

Our priority is the safety and supervision of each child. The ratio of children to staff is 8:1. All staff members have attended a comprehensive training program and are required to be First Aid, CPR and AED certified. All staff are required to undergo a criminal background check. Volunteers who support our camps also go through a training program.

Meet the Staff– Tuesday, June 3rd

Join us at your child's specific camp site or preschool room between 6:00-7:00 pm.

This is a great way to reduce anxiety before the first day of camp and summer preschool. Bring your camper/student to meet the staff and become familiar with their camp site or preschool classroom.

Camp Phone Numbers

	Cell Phone
Explorers Camp – Hunt Club	224-548-0002
Summer Preschool - Hunt Club	224-548-0014

Additional Numbers

Gurnee Park District Main Office	847-623-7788
Aimee Schneider, Preschool Coordinator	847-599-5499
Sabrina Hinkens, Program Manager	847-599-3767
Melissa Marsh, Director of Recreation	847-599-3756

Summer Camp/Preschool Dates and Times

Session I	June 9-June 27
Session II	June 30-July 18 (no camp July 4)
Session III	July 21-August 8

Explorers Camp meets M/W/F and Tu/Th from 9:15-11:45 am – drop off is from 9:05-9:15a
Summer Preschool meets on M/W/F from 9:15-11:45 am – drop off is from 9:05-9:15a

Camp Locations

Hunt Club Park Community Center: 920 N Hunt Club Road

Explorers Camp (M/W/F and Tu/Th)	Preschool Rooms #2 and #3
Summer Preschool (M/W/F)	Preschool Room #1

Drop off and pick up takes place in the preschool rooms noted above.

Explorers Camp takes place outdoors in a fenced playground area, weather permitting. This camp may leave the fenced in area to take a walk. During inclement weather the camp will use preschool rooms #2 and #3.

Summer Preschool will be held mainly indoors with recess time outdoors each day.

General Information

Explores Camp

Camp provides a wonderful opportunity for children to socialize, learn songs and games, enjoy nature, and participate in arts and crafts and water play with sprinklers. In addition, campers develop or maintain important skills such as following directions and a daily routine, sharing, taking turns, and playing cooperatively.

There is sometimes a period of adjustment after dropping off at the beginning of the camp day. It is best to give a warm and cheerful goodbye. Generally children who are experiencing separation anxiety will become distracted when engaged in activities.

Except during inclement weather, camp is conducted outdoors. Children should wear comfortable clothing, appropriate both for the weather and for messy camp activities and closed-toe shoes. Please do not send your child wearing Crocs or sandals as they make it difficult and sometimes dangerous to navigate play equipment and can cause campers to trip when running or playing games.

Campers will receive one camp T-shirt for each session registered. They will receive this on the first day of each session.

Things to bring to camp - Please label all belongings your child brings to camp.

- * Wear comfortable clothing, easy to pull down for using the bathroom
- * Water bottle filled with water
- * Complete change of clothing
- * Jacket or sweatshirt
- * Backpack

Children must arrive at camp each day with sunscreen and insect repellent already applied, and bring extra spray-on sunscreen in their backpack.

Children must be toilet trained to attend Explorers Camp. Should a messy accident occur, the parent/caregiver will be contacted to come and change the child. Please dress your child in pants/shorts that they can easily pull up/down.

You will receive a schedule of activities for the session that will include information about water play. Explorer Campers use sprinklers. On water days children come to camp wearing a bathing suit under their clothing or cover up, as well as sport sandals or water shoes that can get wet. Due to the length of time camp meets and the number of children attending, it is not possible for staff to change campers into/out of bathing suits during camp. With this in mind, we do plan water activities to limit the amount of time the children are in a wet bathing suit.

SUMMER PRESCHOOL

Summer Preschool provides young children with an opportunity to experience the routine of preschool, play and interact with peers and gain confidence in a classroom setting. There is sometimes a period of adjustment at drop off. It is best to give a warm and cheerful goodbye and leave promptly. Generally children who are experiencing separation anxiety generally calm down when engaged in the activities.

Children must be toilet trained to attend Summer Preschool. Should a messy accident occur, the parent/caregiver will be contacted to come and change the child. Please dress your child in pants/shorts that children can easily pull up/down.

What to Bring/Wear to Preschool: Please label all belongings

- * Wear comfortable clothing, easy to pull down for using the bathroom
- * A reusable water bottle filled with water
- * Backpack
- * A complete change of clothing

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR BOTH EXPLORERS CAMP AND SUMME PRESCHOOL

ePACT INFORMATION FORM

An online ePACT Information Form must be completed and submitted to the Gurnee Park District prior to your child starting. This form includes those adults authorized to pick up your child, phone numbers to reach parents, and any special needs or accommodations. Instructions on how to complete the online ePACT Information Form will be emailed to you at the beginning of May. This form needs to be updated/completed each summer. This is a different form than the Growing Tree Preschool ePACT Form.

PICK UP/DROP OFF

All parents will drop off/pick up their child each day at the designated preschool room found on page 3.

SIGNING OUT

All children must be signed out each day by a parent or other adult over the age of 18 authorized on the ePACT Information Form. Anyone whom the staff are not familiar with will be asked to show identification. Children may leave only with those who are listed on the ePACT Information Form.

ABSENCES

If your child will be absent from camp or preschool, please call or text the cell phone (number listed on page 3) before the start of the camp day. When calling or texting in an absence, please state your child's name and the date of the absence.

TOILET TRAINING

Children must be toilet trained to attend camp and preschool. Should a messy accident occur, the parent/caregiver will be contacted to come and change the child. Please have your child wear clothing that can be easily pulled up/down by your child. No pull ups, belts or overalls please.

LATE PICK UP POLICY

We ask that you observe the scheduled pick up time. One warning will be given if your child is picked up after your scheduled pick up time. Thereafter, you will be charged a \$10.00 late fee per child for every 15 minutes or fraction thereof when you or your authorized pick up person is late, and risk having your child dismissed from the program. Please note: Should you be more than 30 minutes late for your first late pick up, you will receive a warning for the first 30 minutes, and the late fees will be assessed at \$10.00 for each 15 minutes thereafter per child.

We understand that emergencies may occur, so if you find yourself in such a situation, please call the camp cell phone found on page 3. This courtesy will alleviate anxiety on the part of the staff and your child. A late fee will still occur. We understand your required work time and respectfully ask that you respect our staff's required work time.

SUNSCREEN POLICY

We require that children arrive with sunscreen already applied. Staff may reapply sunscreen to the face, shoulders, arms and back only if the sunscreen is in spray form.

PHOTOGRAPHS

By registering for a program or class, participating in an activity, attending an event or using district facilities or property, you authorize Gurnee Park District to use photos and videos footage for Park District promotion. All footage is property of Gurnee Park District. Media will be used without granting compensation, prior notice or permission. Local media/newspapers may also visit our camps to take pictures or write a story.

HEALTH POLICIES

Parents will be asked to complete an information form via ePACT. This form will ask about any allergies your child may have, as well as if your child will need to be given medication during program hours (this includes an inhaler). If medication is to be given during program hours, a separate Dispense Medication Form must be completed and uploaded to the ePACT Information Form. Instructions on how to complete the ePACT Information Form will be emailed to you at the beginning of May as well as in an email the week prior to the camp session starting. Children may not attend Explorers Camp or Summer Preschool unless an ePACT Information Form is completed.

It is the responsibility of each parent to ensure that a child is fever-free and is not exhibiting any sickness or any illness before dropping off their child to Explorers Camp/Summer Preschool. If a child is not feeling well, **do not** bring them to this program. Children who have been out due to illness may only return when they are 24-hour symptom free after taking an antibiotic, 24-hours after the last occurrence of diarrhea or vomiting, when fever free for 24-hours without the use of fever reducing medication, or with a note from their doctor stating that it is safe for them to participate in the program.

If a child displays signs of illness during the program, they will be isolated from others and a parent or authorized pick up must come within 30 minutes.

Parents should report any diagnosed case of a communicable disease such as COVID-19, strep throat, ringworm, pinkeye, lice, etc. to the program staff. If a child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, the child is not allowed to attend the program for any reason without a doctor's note stating that it is safe for them to do so, or they have completed their quarantine period.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

All Early Childhood staff are CPR, 1st Aid and AED Certified. Staff will administer first aid when necessary. If your child is injured or ill and requires more than basic first aid, we will first attempt to contact the parent/guardian, before calling any listed emergency contacts. If staff is unable to reach any contacts listed on the ePACT Information Form, staff will call 911 when the situation requires more aid than we can provide. All steps will be taken to ensure the safety and welfare of your child. **If the injury is serious, the paramedics will be called immediately.** If an injured or ill child is transported by ambulance to the local hospital, a staff member will stay with the child at all times until a parent or guardian arrives.

Behavior Code of Conduct

Our staff strive to provide a happy and positive atmosphere for children to learn and grow. Children and parents are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior while participating in programs and activities. A positive approach to discipline for children will be used.

Children or parents who are a danger to themselves or others, use inappropriate language or actions, whose behavior negatively impacts the experience of others, who physically/verbally aggressive or threatening may be dismissed from the program. Gurnee Park District reserves the right to dismiss a participant whose behavior, or that of his/her parent, is inappropriate or endangers the safety of himself/herself or others.

Camp/Preschool Refund Policy

Refunds will be processed up to two weeks prior to the start of a session. A service charge of \$50 per session per child will be assessed. Camp service charges cannot be transferred. No refund will be issued if requested less than two weeks prior to the camp start date. No refunds will be given for partial attendance.

Payment Policy

- All camp participants may pay either a \$50 deposit or the full amount per session per child at the time of registration to hold your spot. The \$50 deposit is non-refundable.
- Once you pay the non-refundable \$50 deposit, all future payments will be set up via autopay. These payments will be charged to the card on file 2 weeks prior to the session start date. (see dates below)
- A \$25 late registration fee will be added to anyone registering for camp within two weeks of the camp starting if spaces are available
- A \$25 late fee per child will be charged for payments not received by the final due date
- Payment arrangements can be made when other financial aid by a third party is available to the participant. The \$50.00 deposit is required to process the registration. The Gurnee Park District does not accept payments for summer camp from the Child Care Assistance Program (YWCA.)

- The Gurnee Park District does offer scholarships for their summer camps. The scholarship paperwork can be found on our website or at the front desk at the Hunt Club Park Community Center. In order to guarantee a spot the \$50.00 deposit is required.

NOTE: Registrations will be accepted up to two weeks prior to the start date of each camp session if openings are available. All registrations made less than 2 weeks before the start of camp must be paid in full and will have a \$25 late registration fee added to your camp fee

Final Balance Due Dates: Two weeks before the session begins.

All payments will be made via autopay, and payments will be taken two weeks before the session begins.

Session I:	Tuesday, May 27 th
Session II:	Tuesday, June 17 th
Session III:	Tuesday, July 8 th