



Discover Camp Parent Handbook



Respect

Responsibility

Safety

Kindness



2018

Thank you for choosing Groton Parks & Recreation (GPR) for your child's summer camp experience.

Mission

Our goal is to provide children with a safe and enjoyable camp experience where they can develop skills, form friendships and enhance self-esteem.

We promote and expect (four) 4 basic principles: **Respect, Responsibility, Safety and Kindness.**

Most of all, we want your child(ren) to have fun! Our staff is trained and committed to providing a safe, welcoming environment.

Visit our website at GrotonRec.com/camps to find camp calendars, menus, phone numbers and more!

Diversity and Inclusion

Groton Parks and Recreation programs are inclusive. We make every effort to provide a welcoming environment for children of all types, including those with special needs. In order to create a successful and enjoyable environment for your child, please communicate any special needs or concerns with us early to allow us to plan for the best possible experience for your child. If you would like to request any type of modification for your child, please fill out an assessment form from GrotonRec.com/camps or call us at 860-536-5680.

Camp Calendars

A calendar of daily activities is posted at each site and it is available online at GrotonRec.com/camps.
Hint: Take a picture of the big calendar at camp with your phone!

Camp Staff and Ratios

Each camp site has two (2) directors. Each site is divided into groups that are each led by a senior leader and several group leaders. There is always someone present who is trained in first aid, CPR, medication administration and Epi pen. A majority of our staff members are between 16 and 22 years old.

Prior to the start of the summer, all staff members take part in an in-depth training program. This training includes behavior management, recognizing illness, camp activity programming and safety.

Based on each week's enrollment, we split campers into groups based on age and/or grade. Please note there may be changes from week to week. Sorry, we can't accommodate special requests for camper-group placement for children who don't meet either age or grade determinations. We strive to adhere to the ratios recommended by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood.

Ages 4-5
Ratio 9:1

Ages 6-8
Ratio 10:1

Ages 9-12
Ratio 12:1

Registration Deadline

The deadline to register for each week of camp and field trips for that week is **Wednesday of the prior week**, provided space allows. Registration is available on-line at GrotonRec.com/camps or at the Recreation office.

Children signed up after the maximum enrollment is reached are put on the waiting list.

Transfers, Cancellations & Refunds

Sorry, no transfers between sites or refunds within 2 weeks of start date for each camp week.

A \$15 administrative fee is charged for any money returned. Customers get full credit if they place money on account and use it for a future program.

We do not issue refunds for a child who is suspended or dismissed from continuing attendance due to behavior issues

Please contact us before registering if you have any questions regarding this policy.

Meal Program - Mary Morrisson site

A free breakfast and lunch is provided by the Board of Education's Summer Feeding Program for children under 18 at the Mary Morrisson site. Campers may also bring their own lunches. We do not have refrigeration at the camp sites.

Please alert us of any allergies at the time of registration. We will work closely the Summer Food Program prior to the week your child attends to minimize any potential issues related to food allergies.

Child Abuse and Neglect

(Connecticut General Statutes §17a-101a)
GPR is a mandated reporter, therefore the staff is required to report any suspicions of abuse or any direct reports made to us.

Injuries or Incidents at Camp

If your child has a reportable injury that requires some treatment by the staff, you will be notified and an Injury Form is completed.

Contact information Phone Numbers:

Mary Morrisson Directors:	available on-line
SB Butler Directors:	available on-line
Camp Supervisor:	available on-line
Program Supervisor:	860-625-1024
Groton Parks & Recreation:	860-536-5680

Field Trips

Field trips are optional and most require payment of an additional fee.

The deadline to register for each week of camp and for field trips is **Wednesday of the prior week**. Trips have a maximum number of spots available based on staffing, transportation or other limits. Children who sign-up after the maximum is reached are put on the waiting list. An appropriate number of staff members remain at the site for campers not attending paid field trips.

If you are picking your child up from a trip destination, you must have given prior notice to the Camp Directors and you must sign your child out at the time of pick-up.

Beach Days – Everyone Goes!

When free beach trips are offered during your camp week, all campers attend. We will not have staff members staying back at site. The camp sites are closed until the bus returns from the beach.

Authorized Adults for Pick-up and Drop Off

For your child's safety, please indicate at the time of registration, who is eligible to pick up your child at the end of the day. Photo identification is required for daily pick-up of your child. Campers must be signed out each day. Children who have permission to walk home unattended must be approved in advance.

Drop-Off and Pick –Up

	Earliest Drop-Off	Latest Pick-Up
Camp Button	11:45 am	3:00 pm
Fri. only	10:00 am	3:00 pm
SB Butler	8:00 am	3:00 pm
Mary Morrisson	7:30 am	3:00 pm

Extended Day Policy

Extended Day -	3:00 pm	5:00 pm
Mary Morrisson site only		

All children must be picked up by a parent or authorized person by the time the camp location closes at 3:00 pm or 5:00 pm for those enrolled in Extended Day Program. Times are based on the time reported on the smart phone at each camp site.

Extended Day Policy - continued

A late fee is charged for any child(ren) not picked up by the closing time. There are no exceptions or warnings. This “no exceptions” policy makes it easier to apply the late policy to everyone consistently and fairly. **The late fee must be paid before the child attends the next day of camp.**

Online payments are accepted. Families are charged only one charge for each occurrence even if it involves multiple children.

If you know you are running late, please contact your child’s site to inform them of the anticipated time of pick-up. It is helpful know in advance so our staff can help your child adjust to the late arrival. A late fee is still assessed. This also helps the camp directors arrange for staff coverage during the minutes the child is remaining in the program.

If a parent has not contacted the camp phone by closing time, the camp supervisor will attempt to contact the parents using the primary and alternate phone numbers provided.

Consistent Extended Days without significant communication may lead to dismissal from the program.

Late Fees

\$10	1-10 minutes late
\$15	11-15 minutes late
\$20	16-20 minutes late
\$30	21-25 minutes late
\$50	after 25 minutes - if camp staff is unable to stay at the site, officials will be called to remain with your child(ren) until you arrive.

If You Have Concerns About Camp

We encourage you to directly communicate with the staff member who is responsible for your child. Feel free to ask specific questions or offer suggestions to the staff member in order to remedy a situation your child may be having at camp.

- A. Start with group leaders in your child’s group.
- B. If not satisfied, discuss with site Directors.
- C. If not satisfied, contact Camp Supervisor number available on-line.
- D. If not satisfied, contact Eileen Cicchese at 860-536-5691.
- E. If not satisfied, you will be referred to the proper GPR staff member to address your concerns.

Code of Conduct and Discipline

GPR encourages fun, friendship, and safety in a positive atmosphere. To accomplish this, we have established behavior guidelines that revolve around our four basic principles: respect responsible, safe and kind.

For children who experience difficulty with this structure, staff members work with the child and their parents to create an individualized plan that meets the need of the child while ensuring the safety and trust of other campers.

GP&R staff members treat each child with respect and set clear expectations and boundaries each day. Children are expected to show respect to their peers and staff, and to treat the facilities and equipment with care.

Frequent disrespect towards peers, staff or property may result in child’s dismissal from camp for a day or more.

At the start of each session, all camp rules, the reasons for them, and the consequences are discussed with campers. Our first step in preventing inappropriate behavior is to set clear limits as to what is expected. We attempt to redirect inappropriate behavior. If the problem continues, a Behavior Form is sent home and the Parent/Guardian to notify the parents. While it is not our policy to discourage participation because of behavior problems, in cases where there is no marked improvement of behavior, the child may be asked to stay home and/or be removed from the program.

Sending a child home

If we feel a child is deemed to be unsafe at camp or has been warned at least two times for their unsafe behavior, we may choose to send a child home.

In the case of any aggressive behavior that could harm a staff member or camper, the child will be sent home immediately.

If a child is sent home due to behavioral issues at camp, parents must meet with camp staff members prior to the child's readmission to camp. See attached behavior form.

Bullying Policy

Our philosophy, which grows from our mission statement, affirms that each of our campers has the opportunity to experience a summer where they can explore new friendships, develop life skills and discover new talents free of judgment or negativity. We not only maintain a strict policy forbidding bullying, but our staff is trained to recognize incidents of bullying and intervene accordingly.

Groton Parks & Recreation addresses all bullying incidents seriously. We encourage our staff to promote open communication within their groups, so that campers feel comfortable letting us know if there are any problems at any point during their camp experience.

At camp, every child has the right to the best possible camp experience and we will act proactively to ensure that none of our campers are denied this opportunity.

As a camp, we believe positive behavior comes from a cooperative effort between campers, parents and staff. While we make every effort to establish communication with parents before taking any major disciplinary steps, it is important to note that fighting, demonstration of disrespectful behavior, hitting, biting, bullying, harassing and displaying dangerous or destructive behavior are grounds for immediate suspension

and possible dismissal from camp. Refunds are not made for suspensions or dismissals.

Medication at Camp

If a child needs to take medication which must be dispensed at camp or requires a medication in the event of an emergency (i.e. food allergy, asthma, Epi pen), the child's physician **MUST** complete the medication form and submit it to the office a minimum of 3 days before the start of the camp week. Visit GrotonRec.com/camps for necessary form.

Sunscreen

Please make sure you **apply sunscreen for your child before camp**. Counselors are available to reapply sunscreen after snack and in afternoon with spray sunscreen labeled with the child's name has been provided.

Tick Awareness

Children are especially at risk for Lyme disease and other diseases carried by small deer ticks. These diseases can be serious and not always easy to diagnose – so prevention is key. Parents can help minimize exposure and protect their children by bringing playscapes into a sunny area, keeping grass cut short and deer off their property. When hiking, keep on the path, wear long pants, and stay away from rock walls and leaf piles. It's important to check children daily for tiny ticks, which often hide on the body, and remove ticks promptly. Remember to check any indoor-outdoor pets for ticks, which may be brought into the home. For more information contact Ledge Light Health District at 860-448-4883.

Items you should send with your camper

All Items should be labeled:

Swim suit and towel

Water bottle

Snacks and lunch

Backpack

Healthy lunch and snacks (No refrigeration available on site)

Sneakers

Spray sunscreen

What not to bring to camp:

Anything you do not want shared, broken or lost.

GPR is NOT responsible for personal items.

Children are not allowed to use the phones at camp.



Groton Parks & Recreation Camp Behavior Form

(Child's Name)

(Date)

- _____ Breaking Camp Rules (Responsibility, Safety)
- _____ Fighting/Arguing (Safety)
- _____ Following Directions (Responsibility, Safety)
- _____ Misbehavior on Bus/Field Trip
(Responsibility, Safety)
- _____ Playing Fairly Respect, (Responsibility,
Safety, and Kindness)

- _____ Swimming Misbehavior (Safety)
- _____ Getting Along/Respecting Others (Respect,
Kindness)
- _____ Using Inappropriate Language (Respect,
Responsibility, Kindness)
- _____ Other _____

EXPLANATION:

THE FOLLOWING ACTION(S) IS REQUIRED:

- _____ Discuss the above noted behavior with your child and be clear that marked improvement in behavior is needed.
- _____ Contact the Camp Staff to discuss the problem/situation in more detail.
- _____ Child is suspended from attending camp on _____.
- _____ Child will be removed from the Camp Program.

Camp Director Signature Date

Group Leader Signature Date

AGREEMENT:

I discussed the above behavior with my child and understand that improvement is needed:

(Parent/Guardian's Signature) Date

I will do my best to behave well at camp: _____
(Child's Signature)

Comments:

The Behavior Form must be signed and returned to camp in order for your child to return to the program.