



Summer Camp in the Gardens Parent Handbook

General Need-to-Knows

- **What to Wear:**
 - Dress your camper for the weather.
 - Campers will spend all day outdoors. They should be prepared with layers that can be added and removed. They should not wear costumes, clothing special to them, or fancy clothing not designed for free outdoor play.
 - Be prepared for the sun - hat, sunglasses, sunscreen
 - When rain is forecasted, send a rain jacket and rain boots with your camper. No umbrellas, please.
 - The grass is often wet in the morning, so waterproof shoes or closed-toed sandals are recommended. If possible, send an extra pair of shoes with your camper.
 - Please send a complete change of clothes (socks, underwear, shirt, and pants/shorts) with your camper every day.
 - Extra clothes are needed in case of bathroom accidents, or having too much fun and getting wet and dirty! We will do water balloons and sprinklers on particularly hot days.
 - Please be sure to label all extra clothing with your camper's name. You'd be surprised how many kids have the same shoes, hats, etc.!

- Please apply sunscreen and bug spray to your camper before the start of camp. Sunscreen and bug spray will be reapplied as needed for campers staying all day.
- **What to Bring (and what not to bring)**
 - Send your camper with a backpack or shoulder bag to store their extra clothing and snacks/lunch.
 - Send your camper with food that can be kept in their backpack with an ice pack, until snack and lunch time. Our programs are **peanut-free** (this includes peanut butter). Snack/lunch requirements are as follows:
 - Half-day camp- snack
 - Full-day camp- 2 snacks and lunch
 - Send your camper with a refillable water bottle and please make sure it is full each morning.
 - Campers under 5 years old will be given a 30-minute rest period in the morning and in the afternoon (if staying all day). Rest periods will be held in a temperature-controlled yurt. Rest mats are provided. You are welcome to send a blanket, pillow, and single special toy to cuddle for your camper during the rest period.
 - All distracting toys, games, and electronics should be left at home.
- **Drop off and Pick Up**
 - Park in our new lot at 1901 N 4th Ave.
 - Campers need to be walked to and from camp headquarters (yurt village) every day for drop off and pick up.
 - Despite our best efforts, drop off and pick up times can get a little chaotic. **Please be sure to make contact with the adult leading the group each time you drop off and pick up your child. This is the “hand-off of care”. DO NOT drop off or pick up your child without alerting the staff of their arrival/departure!**
 - Dropping off
 - You are welcome to drop off your camper anytime between 7:30-8:30 am. During this time, campers have free choice between various activities. Scheduled activities start at 8:30 each day.
 - Please do not drop your camper off more than 5 minutes early.
 - Picking Up
 - Half-day camp: 12:00 pm
 - Full (“extended”) day camp: Anytime between 3:30-4:30 pm. During this time, campers have free choice between various activities. Scheduled activities end at 3:30.
 - Please let us know if you will be more than 5 minutes late picking your camper up.
 - **Please drive slowly and with caution.**
 - Let us know of any absences or if you’ll be late (920-359-4488).
 - Text message is preferred. Please do not email to let us know about late arrivals, as it is not likely to be checked in time. Please indicate the child’s name and age

group when notifying us about absences or late arrivals, so we can alert the appropriate group leader.

- We understand that issues may arise that cause you to be late picking up your camper. If you know you will be late, please contact us as soon as possible. We reserve the right to issue a fee to families who are consistently late picking up their camper.
- **Other Need to Knows**
 - Camp is rain or shine unless the weather is dangerous. Dangerous weather conditions would include thunderstorm warnings, some high wind conditions, or any kind of tornado watch or warning. We will do our best to notify you by email the evening before and at the latest by 2 hours prior to camp start time.

If your camper is missing any paperwork, it will need to be completed before you leave your camper with us on the first day of camp. Please plan accordingly.

Please reach out to Kaytie (920-359-4488 or kruesch@monkgardens.org) with any questions or concerns.

Admission, Registration, and Fees

Parents of campers are required to complete all enrollment forms and pay the weekly camp fee to complete the registration process.

Summer Camp Required Forms:

Camp in the Gardens is licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families and complies with all DCF record keeping requirements.

All required forms are completed online via Sawyer when registering. All forms must be completed before you are able to checkout.

If you would like a paper copy, please reach out to Kaytie-kruesch@monkgardens.org

- Enrollment Form
- Health History & Emergency Care Plan
- Immunization Record
- General Permissions

Fees and Payments:

Half day nonmember price: \$170/ week

Extended day nonmember price: \$265/ week

All prices listed are per child.

All payments are made via card or ACH entered in Sawyer at checkout. If you need to pay with a check, please call our office at 715-261-6309 to schedule a time to complete your child's forms and deliver the check. Check payments and paperwork need to be completed one week after the initial call in order to complete registration and hold your child's spot in the camp. A 3% processing fee will be added to all payments, regardless of payment type.

Order total is due at checkout unless the camper is registered for all 10 weeks of camp, in which a 4 installment payment plan is available. Once registered, the client is responsible for completing all 4 payments even if the child does not attend all 10 weeks of camp for any reason. Payments will automatically withdraw from the default payment method in Sawyer. The due dates are as follows:

Payment 1- at checkout

Payment 2- June 15

Payment 3- July 15

Payment 4- August 15

This payment plan is only available for those registering for all 10 weeks of camp.

Discounts:

Monk Botanical Gardens members receive a 20% discount on all camps. Refer to your membership card or membership letter to find the promo code. Refunds for the membership savings will not be issued if camp registration is completed without the membership promo code. Please call our office at 715-261-6309 with any membership questions.

[Become a 2025 member.](#)

When the order contains 5 or more weeks of camp (for all children) a 5% discount will automatically be applied.

Schedule

Half-Day: 7:30 AM- 12:00 PM

Full Day: 7:30 AM-4:30 PM

7:30- 8:30 am Drop off window, free choice for campers

8:30 am Scheduled morning activities begin

12:00 pm Pick up for half day campers, lunch for full day campers

1:00 pm Scheduled afternoon activities begin

3:30-4:30 pm Pick up window, free choice for campers

Campers must be registered for either all half days or all full days each week.

Late Pick-up Policy

Campers should be picked up on time. MBG understands that issues may arise that cause you to be late picking up your child. If you know you will be late, please contact Kaytie as soon as possible. MBG reserves the right to issue a fee to families who are consistently late picking up their children.

Withdrawals and Refunds

No refunds are issued for a camp week if that week has already begun or for registration canceled within 4 weeks of a camp's start date. Refunds (minus a 15% admin fee) may be issued when requested 4 weeks prior to the first day of camp. Each refund is handled on a case-by-case basis.

Grouping of Children

MBG campers join us at various ages, and every summer they're here we want to leave them looking forward to the next. By placing campers in specific age groups, we're able to customize activities that meet their developmental needs and interests. However, when appropriate, we will combine age groups for certain events and activities. Counselor-to-child ratios presented in the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families 252: Licensing Rules for Day Camps for Children will always be followed.

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/202.pdf>

Family Expectations & Understandings

To create the best possible learning environment and provide the best role models we can for our Campers, we ask that all families agree to the following outline of expectations and

understandings.

- Respect the Gardens' rules when on the property
- Supervise children before signing in and after signing out
- Be respectful to all others you encounter on the property
- I understand that I do not receive refunds or adjustments for inclement weather closings or days missed.
- I understand that a \$35.00 charge is assessed for each Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) check received.
- I understand that per our policies, my child must be fully toilet trained to attend Summer Camp. By "fully toilet trained," we mean that your child must wear underpants (no pull-ups) and be able to urinate and have their bowel movement on the toilet as well as wipe themselves after.
- I understand that I am required to complete all enrollment forms to complete my child's enrollment in Summer Camp.

Unexpected Absences

Campers are expected at camp unless staff is otherwise notified by the campers' parents.

If your child will be absent, camp teachers will need to know. If you are unable to let them know by the day before, please contact us in one of the following ways.

1. Call or text Kaytie (920-359-4488)
2. Email Kaytie (kruesch@monkgardens.org)
3. Call the Gardens office (715-261-6309)

Absences should not be reported by email the morning of a missed camp, as staff may not be checking email at that time. If, by 20 minutes past the start of your child's camp, your child is absent without notice and we have not heard from you, we will call you.

Clothing

Remember: "There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing."

Send your child to camp dressed to spend the morning outdoors. Campers should dress in layers, comfortable shoes, and avoid wearing clothing that is special to them or restricts outdoor play. Always send full set of extra clothing in the camper's backpack.

Sun Safety

We do our best always to do activities, projects, and enjoy snacks in shaded areas when adventuring through the Gardens.

We encourage you to:

- Send your child to camp with a wide-brimmed sunhat and sunglasses.
- Apply a broad spectrum, 30+ SPF, water-resistant sunscreen to your child before camp starts.
- Give permission to camp teachers to help your child reapply sunscreen if needed. To be most effective, sunscreen needs to be reapplied every 2 hours.

Sunscreen & Bug Spray

Staff will only apply sunscreen or bug spray to your child if we have been given permission on your child's enrollment forms.

Please send your child to class prepared for the outdoors by applying sunscreen or bug spray to your child at home before coming to camp or outside during drop-off.

Send Campers to camp wearing appropriate clothing for the weather that also protects them from the sun. Sunglasses and long-sleeved shirts are encouraged. Campers should be sent to camp with a hat if possible.

Plants & Insects

Campers will play off the trails within the Gardens' property. While playing and learning at the Gardens, children may encounter plants such as poison ivy, stinging nettles, other thorny plants, mosquitoes, bees, hornets, other stinging or biting insects, and different types of ticks.

All of these are a part of nature, and Campers will learn about them, and staff will guide Campers in identifying them as they're playing and learning. Appropriate dress is one way to help avoid uncomfortable encounters with hazardous plants and insects.

In the situation that your child comes into contact with any hazardous plants or insects, staff will contact you immediately if it is an emergency (bee sting) or will inform you at pick-up if it was a minor incident (ran through poison ivy with long pants on).

Find Poison Ivy information here:

- <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/poison-ivy/>

Find tick information here:

- https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing_a_tick.html
<https://wisconsin-ticks.russell.wisc.edu/tick-identification-for-public-health-and-medical-professionals/>

Risks and Hazards

At Summer camp in the Gardens, Campers will be exposed to age-appropriate risk through lessons and free play. Learning how to take appropriate risks helps children gain independence, confidence, and decision-making skills. Age-appropriate risks Campers might take include walking along fallen logs, climbing small trees, and using natural items like sticks while playing.

While age-appropriate risks are good learning opportunities for Campers, hazards are situations in which Campers have no control, and hazards will be monitored and controlled by teachers at all times. Hazards include sharp branches at eye level, dangerous weather, or ice.

Discharge Policy

Summer Camp in the Gardens reserves the right to cancel a camper's enrollment for the following reasons.

- Failure of the parent to complete and return all required forms
- Physical or verbal abuse of children or staff by a parent
- Failure of the parent to observe the rules and expectations of Summer Camp
- Following reasonable efforts on the part of Summer Camp staff and the child's parents, a child may be discharged if there are behavioral or developmental concerns beyond the scope of what Summer Camp is able to manage

If parents decide to withdraw their child from Summer Camp, the parents must notify the Program Manager in writing. Tuition is non-refundable.

Camper Behavior

Camper behavior is guided by setting clear limits and rules. Expectations are made clear for daily routines and each new activity and project. All teachers model behavior expectations. Undesirable behavior is redirected to another activity, or children are given choices of acceptable activities.

If a camper is upset, teachers get down on the student's level and talk to them to find the cause. Campers are encouraged to express their emotions in healthy ways and to talk through their feelings.

If a camper chooses to remove themselves from an activity for a moment or to "take some space," teachers respect that decision, allow the student to move away from the group (but still within sight and sound), and check in with that student after 2-3 minutes if they have not chosen to rejoin the class.

If there is an unexpected incident with a camper's behavior during class or if teachers notice a repeated behavior, teachers will discuss it with that student's caregivers at pick-up or by phone/email.

Toilet Training

Campers must be fully toilet trained to attend camp. By "fully toilet trained," we mean that your child must wear underpants (no pull-ups) and be able to urinate and have their bowel movement on the toilet as well as wipe themselves after.

Waterfront Activities

The property includes 3 small ponds, which will be used by camp.

When interacting with the water, children are closely monitored. Children may engage in frog catching using their hands or nets and collecting insects and plants to take to shore to look more closely.

Nutrition

All camps are peanut free. Additional snack or meal restrictions may be implemented on a case-by-case basis depending on the known allergies of children in each camp. Children are required to bring a reusable water bottle to class every day.

Because Monk Botanical Gardens does not provide snacks or meals, we must provide families with USDA meal program requirements for your reference. This information is available on the USDA [website](#) and will be given to you at the time of enrollment.

Half-Day Snack Requirements

Parents must send a snack with their child to camp every day. Camper snacks should be able to be stored in a lunchbox with cold packs or at room temperature until snack time. Campers will not share snack, and Monk Botanical Gardens does not provide snack. Snack time will be held during the middle of the camp day (approximately 10 am).

Full-Day Snack & Lunch Requirements

Parents must send one snack and one meal with their child to camp every day. Both snack and lunch should be able to be stored in a lunchbox with cold packs or at room temperature until it is time to eat. Campers will not share snack or lunch, and Monk Botanical Gardens does not provide snack or lunch. Lunch is at 10:30 am, and snack is at 1:30 pm.

Rest

All campers under age 5 will be given a 30 min period for rest or quiet activities each morning and afternoon.

Birthdays

Birthdays and half-birthday celebration treats are welcome to be brought by families. Please

check with your camper's teacher regarding any food allergies in your child's class.

Daily Attendance

Parents are required to walk their child to and from the camp headquarters to sign them in and out every day. Parents should not leave any other children unattended in their vehicle while dropping off their child at camp. Parents with additional children in the car should bring them with them to sign in or out their other child.

Health

While we want to see your child at camp as often as possible, there are times when your child should stay home.

If your child has one or more of the following, please keep them home from school.

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher
- A low-grade fever and acting ill
- An infectious disease
- Vomiting or upset stomach
- Diarrhea
- Constant runny nose
- Continuous coughing
- Lice
- Rash

Coughs or Colds

Campers will be sent home if they have continuous nasal drainage, coughing spells, or if their symptoms interfere with their ability to learn. Campers may return to camp as long as they are fever-free (for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication) and other symptoms are improving.

Preventing the Spread of Illness

To do our part in preventing the spread of communicable diseases, staff and Campers will participate in the following good hygiene practices.

Campers will wash their hands:

- When arriving at school
- Before and after eating
- After any contact with wild animals or insects
- After using the restroom
- After sneezing and/or blowing their nose
- When hands appear dirty
- When entering the classroom after being outdoors

Staff will wash their hands:

- When arriving at school
- Before and after eating
- After any contact with wild animals or insects
- Before and after giving first aid
- Before and after administering medication
- After using the restroom
- After sneezing and/or blowing their nose
- When hands appear dirty
- When entering the classroom after being outdoors

Staff will wear gloves when giving first aid or when administering medication. Gloves are single-use and will be disposed of after use.

If your child has been exposed to another student who has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, we will let your family know.

Licensing

The day camp license, results of the most recent licensing inspection, and notice of any enforcement action, stipulations, conditions or exceptions that affect the license are available at the sign-in and sign-out location of Summer Camp in the Gardens every day. A copy of DCF 252 and the camp policies are available to parents upon request.

Confidentiality

Staff having access to children's records will not discuss or disclose personal information regarding the children to others except to the parent(s), or other person authorized by the parent, or as authorized by law.

Volunteer Junior Counselor Program

The Junior Counselor program is a volunteer program for individuals ages 12-17 who are interested in working with kids and enjoy spending time outdoors. Volunteers are an integral part of everything we do at the Gardens!

Junior Counselors (JCs) practice leadership skills by assisting Lead Counselors with a group of 12-18 campers each week. Campers range in age from 3-8 years old, depending on which

group you are assigned to. As a volunteer, you will learn valuable leadership and job skills and have the opportunity to be part of a fun, hard working team.

To become a volunteer Junior Counselor candidates must:

- Be 12 years old by 6/9/25, no older than 17 years old
- Complete this application and be accepted. **When completing the application, the booking date does not matter. Sawyer requires a date to be selected in order to complete the application. Choose any available date.**
- You will receive your acceptance or denial notice by email within one week of applying.
- Complete the online registration form with the help of a parent or guardian (requires adult signatures).
- Attend a 4 hour training course at the Gardens (date options TBD)
- Commit to volunteering for a minimum of one full week of camp (Mon-Friday, 7:30am-4:30pm) and a maximum of 3 full weeks of camp.

Electronic Device/ Cell Phone Policy

The purpose of this policy is to help us all get the most out of our sessions while minimizing distractions, unkind acts, accidents, and frustrations caused by unpermitted, improper, and inappropriate use of electronic devices. This policy applies to all Naturalists in Training, Summer campers, and After School in the Gardens attendees. Cell phones, iPads, iPhones, Tablets, Smart Watches, other types of electronic communication devices, and electronic gaming devices must not be used, heard, or handled during the session unless directed in an emergency or medical situation. JCs are not permitted to be texting, taking photography or video recording at any time during the session. If you feel your child must bring a mobile device, it must remain on silent and completely out of view and on silent for the duration of the session.

Nutrition

All sessions and camps are peanut free. Additional snack or meal restrictions may be implemented on a case-by-case basis depending on the known allergies of children attending each session. JCs are required to bring a reusable water bottle to class every day.

Because Monk Botanical Gardens does not provide snacks or meals, we must provide families with USDA meal program requirements for your reference. This information is available on the USDA [website](#).

JCs should bring a snack to all camp sessions. Snacks should be able to be stored in a lunchbox with cold packs or at room temperature until snack time. JCs will not share snack, and Monk Botanical Gardens does not provide snack.

Behavior Expectations

In order to have a great experience, we expect the JCs in our program to follow some basic behavior guidelines. It is very important for all JCs to set a good example for the younger kids.

Remember, JCs are leaders and role models!

- Come prepared for the day's adventure with the appropriate clothing and equipment. (Sunscreen & bug spray should be applied in advance.)
- Stay with your group.
- Be respectful; to yourself, to others, and to all wildlife.
- Participate in all activities with enthusiasm and encourage others to do the same.
- Keep your hands and body to yourself. Do not touch other people or their property.

Examples of behavior that is NOT acceptable and will result in the removal of the NIT from the program.

- Angry or vulgar language, including swearing, name calling, and shouting.
- Reckless behavior that presents a safety threat to him/herself or others.
- Physical contact with another person in any angry or threatening way (such as pushing, shoving, hitting or biting).
- Harassment or intimidation by words, gestures, body language, or any other menacing behavior.
- Disrespectful "talking back" to leaders, other adults or other children.
- Theft or destruction of another's property.

*Please do not hesitate to contact a staff member if you or your child experiences any behavior from another child or adult that is not in keeping with our behavior policy. We will investigate all complaints. We want this to be fun, safe, and educational for everyone involved.

Please reach out to Program Manager, Kaytie Ruesch, with any questions or concerns. kruesch@monkbotanicalgardens.org or 920-359-4488

This handbook is subject to change. If an update is made, enrolled families will be notified and updated versions will be added to our website.

Summer Camp in the Gardens' full set of policies are available upon request.

Updated 1/9/2025