



**Earthplace Summer Camp 2022**  
**Parent Handbook**  
Updated 7/6/22

Dear Earthplace Summer Camp Families,

Earthplace Summer Camp is happy to provide a safe and fun camp experience while adhering to the latest guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), our regulatory agency. Please read through our policies and procedures carefully so that we all have the same expectations for summer camp.

Our policies and procedures demonstrate our commitment to the health and safety of our campers and staff. This document outlines our new operating policies and procedures to help you navigate your child's camp experience.

Sincerely,  
Ameé Borys, M.S. Ed.  
Summer Camp Co-Director

Becky Newman, B.S  
Summer Camp Co-Director

## Overview

### Summer Camp Groups

#### Toddlers & Preschoolers

Our summer camp programs for young children feature weekly nature-based themes. Our early childhood educators develop learning experiences based on the weekly themes.

A typical day in our program for young children includes:

- Free-Choice playtime
- Morning Meeting - social skills, music and movement, discussion of daily events
- Outdoor playtime
- Snacktime
- Indoor learning centers - theme-based learning experiences and free-choice playtime
- Lunch

#### School Age

Our summer camp programs for school-age children feature nature immersion and learning experiences.

A typical day in our program for school-age children includes:

- Free choice activities and games
- Morning meeting - social skills, games, discussion of daily events
- Outdoor excursions, trail walks, nature-based studies
- Lunch
- Indoor crafts, activities, games
- Outdoor playtime

#### CampDoc

CampDoc is our online registration portal. All of the required documentation can be easily uploaded using camp doc. Please ensure your CampDoc account is completed, at 100%, at least two weeks before your child's start date. If you have any questions or issues using CampDoc, send an email to [summercamp@earthplace.org](mailto:summercamp@earthplace.org).

#### Summer Camp Guidelines & COVID-19 Information

As a licensed childcare, early education, and summer camp program, we are mandated to follow the guidelines set forth by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC). These guidelines can be found by reading this detailed document entitled "[Practices to Protect Against the Spread of COVID-19 in Childcare and Youth Camp Programs](#)."

#### Updated Travel Policy

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that all individuals Delay travel until you are [up to date](#) with your COVID-19 vaccines. However, we recognize that it is time for families and individuals to determine their own acceptable level of risk.

Effective immediately, Earthplace Preschool no longer requires a COVID-19 test after traveling outside of CT unless a person is ill after traveling or has symptoms that could be attributed to COVID-19.

### **Social Distancing & Group Size**

Please see the Earthplace Summer Camp guidelines for social distancing below:

- Each summer camp group will be isolated from the other groups.
- Earthplace may operate at a maximum daily capacity of 131 children total.
- See the breakdown below:
  - Chickadees: up to 8 children
  - Blue Jays: up to 19 children 3 & 4 year olds
  - Barn Owls: up to 18 children 4 and 5 year olds
  - Hawks: up to 20 children entering grades 1, 2
  - Eagles: up to 20 children entering grades 3, 4
  - Trekkers: up to 12 children entering grades 4th-8th

### **Drop-Off Procedures & Health Inspection**

- Drop-off will take place at the following locations:
  - Chickadees: 9:00 am exterior classroom door
  - Blue Jays: 9:00 am exterior classroom door
  - Barn Owls: 9:00 am exterior classroom door
  - Hawks: 9:00 am exterior auditorium door
  - Eagles: 9:00am exterior auditorium door
  - Trekkers: 9:00 am exterior classroom door

### **Health Check:**

Upon arrival, your child's camp group leader will make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness. Some of the symptoms that would indicate to us that a child was contagious or did not feel well enough to remain at camp would be:

- fever 100.3 degrees or greater
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Severe and persistent cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Unexplained rash
- Loss of taste or smell
- Lethargy or extreme fatigue

Parents are required to keep children home when they have any of these symptoms and also to consult with their healthcare provider. If the healthcare provider does not suspect COVID-19, then an alternative diagnosis must be documented and the child must be cleared in writing before he or she can return to Earthplace.

- Staff or children who have a temperature of 100.3 degrees fahrenheit or higher are not permitted into the program until fever-free without fever-reducing medication for

48 hours and cleared by a healthcare provider.

### Pick-Up Procedures

- Pick-up will take place at the end of your child's camp day at the following location:
  - Chickadees: 9:00 am exterior classroom door
  - Blue Jays: 9:00 am exterior classroom door
  - Barn Owls: 9:00 am exterior classroom door
  - Hawks: 9:00 am exterior auditorium door
  - Eagles: 9:00am exterior auditorium door
  - Trekkers: 9:00 am exterior classroom door

### Visitors & Building Reopening

The Earthplace building is open for visitors from the public.

#### **Birds of Prey Exhibit and Animal Hall:**

- Hours of public operation: Mon-Sat 9am-5pm Sun 11-5pm

#### **Natureplace and Indoor Restrooms on Lobby Level:**

- Hours of public operation: Mon-Sat 9am-5pm Sun 11-5pm

## Alternate Care & Supervision Forms

### Pick-up Authorizations

- Please limit the number of people who drop-off and pick-up your child. Preferably only one person will perform this task in order to reduce contact.
- A child may be picked up by his or her parents or by other adults authorized as listed as Emergency Contacts in your child's CampDoc account.
- In an emergency, you may call the office and authorize a pick-up over the phone. We will then update their account for you and alert your child's lead counselor.

### Children With Special Needs

If your child has special health or developmental needs, please contact the Director of Early Childhood Education, Ameer Borys at [a.borys@earthplace.org](mailto:a.borys@earthplace.org) to create an individualized care plan for your child. Our goal is for every child to have the best experience possible while at Earthplace Summer Camp.

## Sick Procedures

Sick children and staff members shall remain at home. All illnesses shall be reported to Earthplace Summer Camp by calling 203-557-4400 ext.101. Please ask to speak to the Summer Camp Nurse or the Director of Early Childhood Education or leave a message.

### Contagious Illnesses

If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness, please alert your child's counselors or the Summer Camp Directors so that the appropriate steps may be taken to protect all

campers and staff. We will keep this information confidential but will alert parents that the risk exists.

### **Illness-Notes to Return & Stay-Home Policies**

If your child becomes ill, your child's counselor or our summer camp director will call you to pick him or her up before further symptoms develop and other children are exposed to possible infection. The child must be picked up within 30 minutes of the time the counselor calls. **There are some health situations, such as but not limited to COVID-19 symptoms, impetigo and pink eye, which require a doctor's note for the child to return to our program.** [For our full Health & Wellness policy please see our website.](#)

### **If COVID-19 is diagnosed in a child or staff member**

For a person who has a confirmed positive case of COVID-19, the mandatory isolation period after infection will be a minimum of 5 days.

In order to return to school, one must be symptom-free and test negative using an antigen test. Acceptable testing methods are rapid antigen test, and at-home rapid antigen test. Documentation of a negative test must be provided in order to return to school. A mask must be worn indoors for five days after returning to school after infection.

The start and end date of the mandatory isolation period will be determined by the Earthplace Preschool COVID-19 response team. Typically, the start date of the isolation period is the test date or the first day the individual was infectious.

## **Refund Policy**

**Please register carefully.** We will not issue refunds, however, you are able to purchase insurance through CampDoc when you register and we encourage you to do so. In the event we must close due to causes beyond our reasonable control, including but not limited to: power outages, fire, pandemics, epidemics, or government action, refunds will not be issued.

## **Severe Weather Dismissal**

In the event of severe weather it may become necessary to dismiss the campers early. Parents will be notified by phone and by email. The information will also be posted on our website and on News Channel 12. *In the event we must close due to causes beyond our reasonable control, including but not limited to: power outages, fire, pandemics, epidemics, or government action, refunds will not be issued.*

## **Daily Preparations**

### **Communication**

Important Summer Camp information is shared with families via phone or email. To stay up to date on everything happening at Summer Camp be sure that Earthplace has your correct email address and phone number, and that your child's CampDoc account is completely up to date.

If you have any questions concerning your child or the policies of Earthplace, please speak with your child's lead counselor. You may also call the Director of Early Childhood Education at 203-557-4400 ext.101 and ask for Ameer.

Always feel free to contact us with any questions you may have. We assure you that your phone calls will be returned as soon as possible.

### **Clothes & Shoes**

**Yes, sneakers and socks. No, sandals or crocs.**

We want your children to have a fun, safe summer. We will be outside on the trails every day. Choose clothes for your child with this in mind. Sneakers worn with socks are the safest footwear for our program. Your child may also like to bring a hat and water shoes, such as Keens, for use outdoors.

### **Extra Clothing**

**Expect your child to get dirty and wet at Earthplace Summer Camp.**

Please send in an extra outfit and towel in a clear zip-lock bag labeled with your child's name and camp group. It will remain with us for use as needed, and it will be returned at the end of your child's session(s). Children in pull-ups or diapers should bring a supply of them, with wipes. Our diapering procedure is posted in all bathrooms.

### **Rain Gear**

Campers will continue outdoor activities during rainy days. Please send campers with appropriate raincoats and boots. Campers may arrive at camp with umbrellas, but umbrellas may not remain at camp. Please take umbrellas home and bring them back at dismissal time.

### **Items from Home**

Toys or electronics from home are not permitted at summer camp. Earthplace is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

### **Lunch & Snack**

Please send your child to camp with a daily snack and bag lunch packed in a separate bag that is labeled with your child's name. We will store all lunches in a refrigerator onsite.

**Peanut, tree-nut, and sesame products are not permitted at Earthplace.** Snacks must follow the same restrictions as lunch but must be non perishable.

### **Reusable Water Bottles**

Children in all groups must bring a reusable water bottle labeled with their name. Water bottles will be kept in the child's cubby. When outdoors, the child must carry his or her own water bottle. Earthplace is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### **Weekly Themes for Infant/Toddler & Preschool Groups**

**June 13-17**

**Space**

June 20-24	Meadow
June 27-July 1	Dinosaurs
July 5-8	Pond
July 11-15	Desert
July 18-22	Forest
July 25-29	Jungle
August 1-5	Stream
August 8-12	Rotten Log
August 15-19	Long Island Sound

### Field Trips (Trekking only)

Permission slips for field trips will be emailed to each family and must be signed and returned by pick-up time on Monday. Field trip details and instructions will accompany the permission slip. Field trip departure times cannot be changed to accommodate late arriving campers. Campers are scheduled to return to camp by the regular dismissal time. Campers will be transported in one of two Earthplace minivans. **Campers and staff members are required to wear a mask while riding in the van.**

### Heat & Ventilation-Related Concerns

Each group's schedule alternates between indoor and outdoor activities throughout the day to take advantage of our air-conditioned facility and our 62-acre campus.

Indoor air quality and ventilation are of great concern during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the fall of 2020 Earthplace completed an upgrade of the buildings ventilation equipment, installing filters to add Bipolar Ionization technology to the existing fresh air handling systems. This dramatically reduces sub-micron particles in the air including pathogens and viral particles, further helping to keep all campers and staff safe.

### Enhanced Cleaning Procedures

Earthplace, a licensed and accredited preschool, and summer camp program, is held to the highest standards of safety and cleanliness for all classroom and public spaces. Our program spaces are sanitized, and disinfected daily in accordance with the state Office of Early Childhood (OEC), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and the American Association of Pediatrics (AAP) [guidelines](#).

### Parking Lot Safety/Speed Limit 5 mph

Traffic safety is a priority on Earthplace grounds. Please follow the instructions of those who direct traffic in the parking lot **Speed limit of 5 mph into and out of our parking lot must be observed.** Additionally, there is no parking or idling in the fire lane loop in front of the building. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times. Please do not leave

children unattended in or around vehicles. These rules and procedures are for the protection and safety of your children.

## Pets

We would like to remind everyone that **no dogs or pets of any kind** are allowed on the grounds.

## Health & Wellness Policies

### Health Assessment Record

A valid Health Assessment Record is required for each child who is registered for our Summer Camp program. Your child's Health Assessment Record is valid for 13 months from the date of exam.

- Please make sure that the dates of the physical and the immunizations are all noted.
- Please keep a copy of your child's completed Health Assessment Record for your records.

### Medication Policy & Forms

**At camp, we administer only medicines that aid in life-saving situations.** These include EpiPens, Benadryl, and inhalers. If your child has allergies that would require these medications, you must complete and submit all applicable forms in the Health Profile section of your child's CampDoc account, two weeks prior to your child's first week of camp. It is very important that all forms be submitted prior to your child's session start date so that we can be sure they are filled out correctly. **Your child will not be allowed to join his or her group until all medications and forms are in place.**

**For Summer Camp, we ask that you bring two of each medicine, one for our nurse and one for your child's lead counselor.** In each group, there is an individual who has been trained to administer EpiPens, Benadryl, and inhalers. Prior to your child's session, please bring in the medication listed on your previously submitted forms. All medications should be unopened and sealed with the appropriately calibrated utensil for dispensing. All medications must be picked up within a week of the end of your child's last session or they will be destroyed by the nurse. The nurse will be available Monday-Friday, 9:00 am-3:00 pm to collect medications.

### First Aid

If your child requires first aid while at summer camp, parents will be notified and will receive an injury report detailing how the injury occurred, how the injury was treated and by whom. In most cases, this will be the Summer Camp Nurse.

### Environmental Allergies, Food Allergies, & Food Intolerances

We will be in touch with all parents who have indicated that their children have environmental allergies, food allergies, or food intolerances. Please review the medical form your doctor fills out to be sure that **all allergies** are listed. Although all lead counselors have been informed of the children who have allergies, please remind them on your child's first day with us.

### **Peanut, Tree-Nut, & Sesame Seed Allergies**

No nuts or nut butter, such as peanut butter or almond butter, are allowed for lunch or snacks. Sesame seeds and tahini products are also banned from camp. This includes trail mixes and other prepared items that include nuts. Suggested nut butter alternatives include soy butter and sunflower seed butter. Please label carefully.

### **Sunscreens & Insect Repellents**

We ask that any lotions, repellents, sunscreens, lip balms, etc., be applied by parents at home. Please note that insect repellents should be applied sparingly and to clothes rather than to skin and never to the face. Counselors may apply parent-provided sunscreen to campers that have sunscreen application authorizations in their CampDoc account.

### **Tick Procedure**

#### **Please Do a Daily Tick Check**

If a child has a tick on him or herself that has not embedded itself, we will brush it off. If it is embedded, our nurse will remove it, save it and give it to you should you choose to have it tested. We recommend that you do a daily tick check when your child comes home.