

# Camp Handbook



**CAMP SUMMER GARDEN**

PLANTING SEEDS OF GROWTH, SO ALL CHILDREN BLOOM



# Goals and Objectives

The purpose of this handbook is to provide families with a set of guidelines that will promote a safe and healthy environment for our campers. This handbook is designed to enable our families to have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and to know what they can expect from the camp this summer.

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# Welcome to Camp Summer Garden

It is our goal to provide a safe, positive learning environment for campers that considers each child's unique abilities and needs while providing caring instruction and guidance.

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# Vision and Mission

At Camp Summer Garden we support the inclusion and participation of children with autism in developmentally appropriate educational and enrichment programs.



At Camp Summer Garden we “Plant seeds of growth so ALL Children Bloom Where they Are.”

# Program Goals

1

Provide an inclusive summer camp program for children with autism.

2

Provide training to teachers, camp counselors, and other professionals serving children with autism.

3

Support the inclusion of children with autism in educational and enrichment programs.

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# Our Program Philosophy

**At Camp Summer Garden,** when a child exhibits “challenging” behaviors, instead of blaming the child, we first examine the learning environment we are offering to find a solution.

**At Camp Summer Garden,** rather than focusing on “fixing the child” who exhibits challenging behaviors, we focus on adapting the conditions in which the child is growing and learning.

**At Camp Summer Garden,** we know that “it’s not about adding people in after the fact. It’s about planning for differences up front.”

**At Camp Summer Garden,** children “bloom where they are.”

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# Camp Fees

Pay your weekly camp fee the Friday before your child's camp week begins

\*\*\*Please disregard this information if you have been awarded a scholarship from the Leon Children's Services Council. \*\*\*

Camp Fees can be paid at

<https://campsumnergarden.org/pay-fees>

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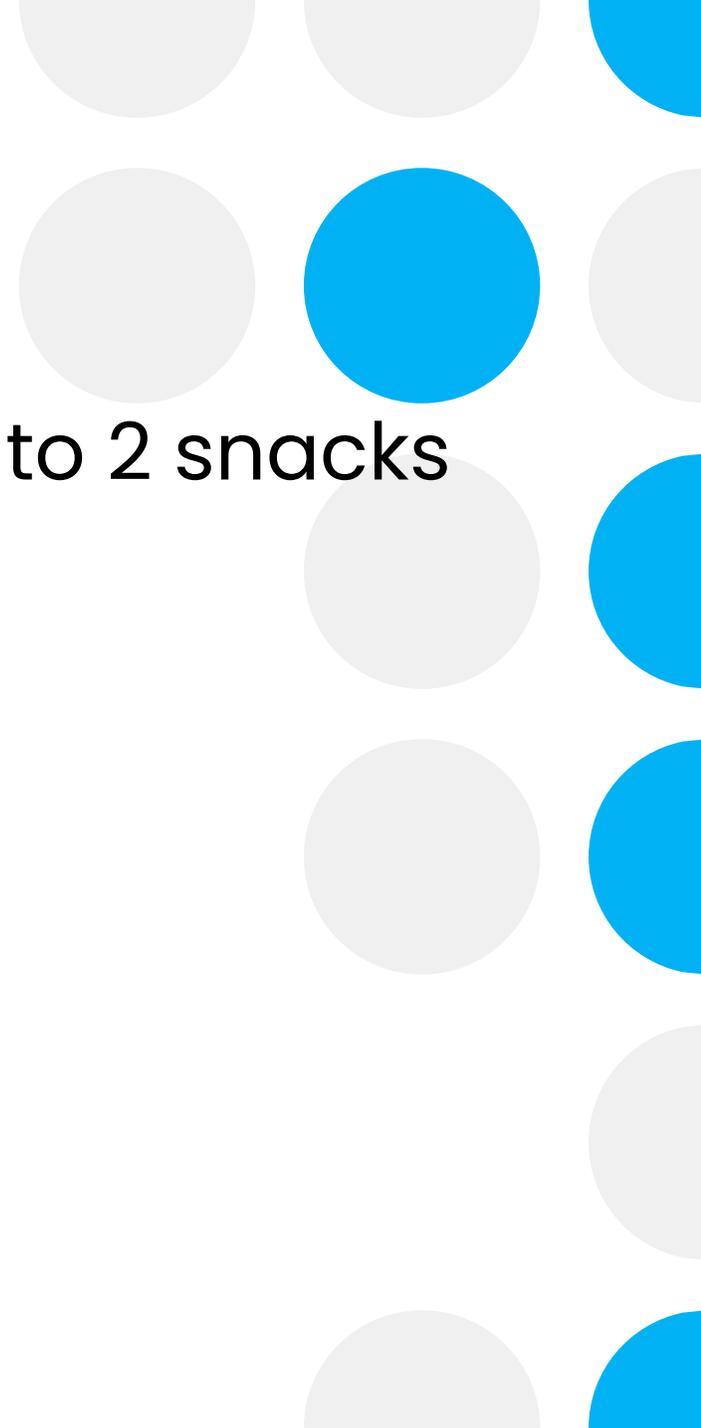
# Sign in and Out Daily

- You must sign your child in and out each day at camp.
  - Only individuals listed on the child's authorized pickup list will be allowed to pick the child up from camp.
  - Individuals who pick up a child may be asked for identification to ensure the safety of our campers.
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# Daily Lunch and Snacks

Children will receive breakfast, lunch, and up to 2 snacks each day.

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# Child Dress Code

- Children should wear comfortable clothing and closed-toe shoes.
  - Optional: Bring a sweater or hoodie to wear inside the building because the temperature can be quite cold at times.
  - Optional: Bring a change of clothing for your child labeled with their name and placed in a Ziplock bag (in case of potty accidents)
  - On Fridays, we will have Water Day, so please allow the child to bring clothes that can get wet as well as a change of clothes and a towel.
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# Cell Phones

- Children will not be permitted to be used during camp.
  - If you need to reach your child during the Camp Day, you can call (850)-778-2556.
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# Daily Schedule

Activity	Time
Check-In/Sign-In/Breakfast/Free Play	8am-9:00am
Bathroom Break	9:00am-9:15am
Schedule Review, Checking My Social Battery, Rules Review (Videos)	9:15am-9:30am
Minecraft Fitness Run Activity (Video)	9:30am-9:40am
Social Skills Story (Video)	9:40am-9:50am
Minecraft Enrichment Activity (See the weekly/daily lesson plan)	9:50am-10:50am
Outdoor Play or Inside Gross Motor Play (depending on the weather)	10:50am-11:50am
Bathroom Break	11:50am-12:00pm
Lunch	12:00pm-12:30pm
Outdoor Play or Inside Free Play (depending on the weather)	12:30pm-1:00pm
Minecraft Game Exploration/Enrichment Activity (See the weekly/daily lesson plan)	1:00pm-2:00pm
Afternoon Snack	2:00pm-2:15pm
Bathroom Break	2:15pm-2:30pm
Early Dismissal (Minecraft Store, Goodbye, and Sign Out)-7-hour day ends	2:30pm-3:00pm
Checking My Social Battery, Schedule Review, Rules Review	3:00pm-3:15pm

Minecraft Fitness Run Activity	3:15pm-3:25pm
Minecraft Game Exploration/Enrichment Activity (See the weekly/daily lesson plan)	3:25pm-4:25pm
Outdoor Play or Inside Free Play (depending on the weather)	4:25pm-5:25pm
Bathroom Break	5:25pm-5:35pm
Afternoon Snack #2 (if needed)	5:35pm-5:45pm
Late Dismissal Group (Minecraft Store, Goodbye, and Sign Out)-10-hour day ends	5:45pm-6:00pm

# Incentives

Each day your child will earn Minecraft dollars based on their behavior and the social skills they have been observed practicing. All children will be awarded Minecraft dollars each day. These Minecraft dollars can be used to visit our Minecraft store/Treasure box at the end of the day.

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# Cameras

To ensure a safe environment, we have implemented the use of security cameras in our classrooms. The cameras are strategically placed to enhance our ability to monitor and respond to any potential safety concerns.

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# Late Pickup Procedure

We understand that unexpected delays can happen. Your communication and promptness are greatly appreciated in helping our camp operate smoothly and safely.

- If you anticipate being late, please notify the camp office immediately at 850-778-2556.
- Ensure that all emergency contact information is up to date and that authorized adults are available for pickup.
- **1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> late pick up**=Warning
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Late pick up**=Meeting with Camp Program Director
- **4<sup>th</sup> Late pick up**=Dismissal from the Program

\*\*\*Any child who is picked up more than 30 minutes late without prior notification is subject to immediate dismissal from the program. This is due to liability concerns and insurance coverage limitations that require strict adherence to our pickup procedures.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in helping us maintain a secure and well-organized environment for every child.

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# Parent Expectations

Parents and guardians play a vital role in supporting a positive camp environment.

To ensure respectful communication and a safe space for all children and staff, we ask that parents/guardians:

- Speak respectfully to all staff members and other families.
- Follow all camp procedures and safety protocols, including check-in/out.
- Address concerns calmly and professionally.
- Avoid using harsh, threatening, or aggressive language or behavior on camp property.

\*\*\*Failure to follow these expectations will result in a meeting with the Program Director and, if necessary, removal from the program.\*\*\*

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# No Physical Violence Policy

At Camp Summer Garden, we are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and respectful environment for all campers and staff.

Physical violence of any kind—including hitting, kicking, pushing, or any other form of physical aggression—is strictly prohibited.

## **Behavior Expectations:**

- Campers must keep their hands, feet, and bodies to themselves at all times.
  - Conflicts should be resolved using respectful language and problem-solving strategies, with support from staff as needed.
  - Our staff are trained to model appropriate behavior and facilitate peaceful conflict resolution.
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# Consequences for Physical Violence

**1st Offense:** Verbal warning; Staff-facilitated conflict resolution; Camper may return the following day only if accompanied by a parent/guardian who must stay on-site for the full day.

**2nd Offense:** Verbal warning; Staff-facilitated conflict resolution; Camper may return the following day only if accompanied by a parent/guardian who must stay on-site for the full day for the full next two days.

**3rd Offense:** Suspension from camp for up to 3 days.

**4th Offense:** Dismissal from the camp program.

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# Health Exclusion

If a child displays any of these symptoms while in our care, parents will be called to pick up their child immediately. The child must remain out of the program for at least 24 hours or until they are symptom-free, whichever is longer. For the well-being of all, we kindly ask that you keep your child home if they show any for these signs.

1. Severe coughing that causes a child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound.
  2. Difficult or rapid breathing.
  3. Stiff neck.
  4. Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24-hour period).
  5. Temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher in conjunction with any other signs of illness.
  6. Pink eye.
  7. Exposed, open skin lesions.
  8. Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool.
  9. Yellowish skin or eyes.
  10. Any other unusual sign or symptom of illness.
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# Absences

- To ensure the safety and well-being of all campers, we require families to notify us if their child will be absent from camp.
  - If your child will be absent from camp, please call (850-778-2556) or email ([campsummergarden@gmail.com](mailto:campsummergarden@gmail.com)) us as soon as possible. Notifications should be made no later than 9:00 AM on the day of the absence.
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# Safety and Supervision

- Close supervision is provided.
- Counselors are available to assist and be active in all activities.
- Campers are not permitted to leave the classroom without a counselor or staff member.
- Children will never be left alone.
- In the case of injury or illness, regardless of how insignificant we will complete an accident/incident report which includes the following: time of day, other witnesses, exact location, and a description of what happened). The caregiver/parent will sign a copy of the accident/incident report. \_\_\_\_\_

# Safety and Supervision

- When a child needs to use the bathroom during camp activities, a staff member will accompany them to the restroom and wait outside the restroom area while the child is inside. If a child requires assistance or encounters difficulties while in the restroom, staff members will verbal provide support from outside the stall. Staff are not permitted to go inside the stall with a child.
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# Guidance Strategies

- Children will not be subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating, frightening, or associated with food, rest, or toileting. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited.
  - Active play, both indoor and outdoor, will not be completely withheld from children who misbehave.
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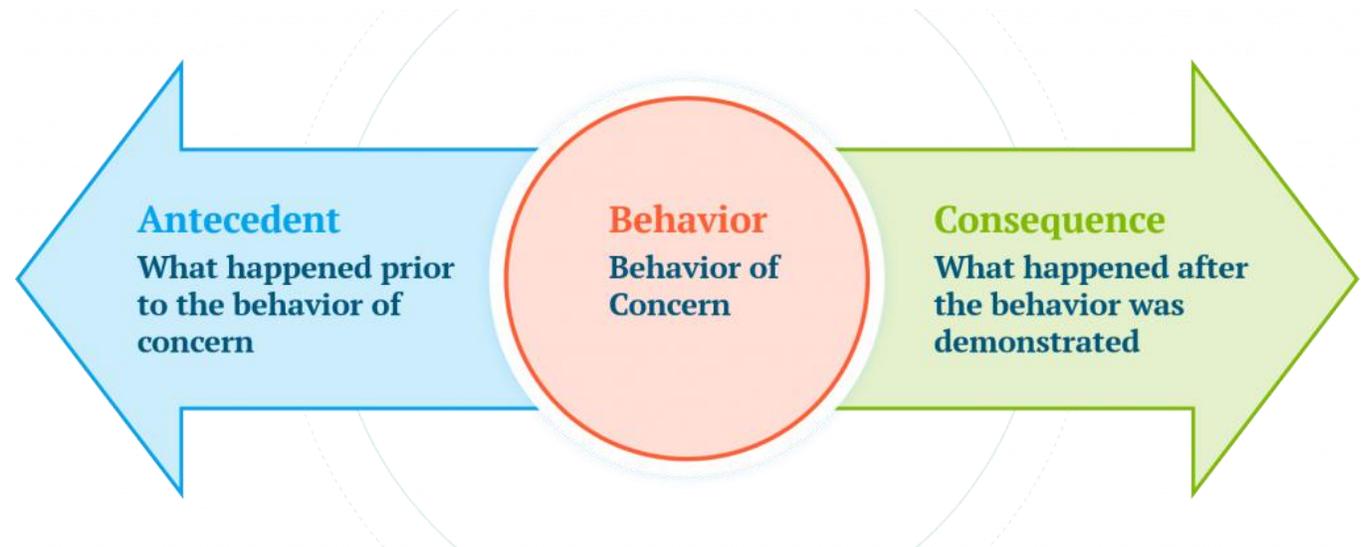
# Guidance Strategies

Whenever challenging behaviors occur, we focus on the A+B+Cs to find an appropriate solution.

**A=Antecedent**

**B=Behavior**

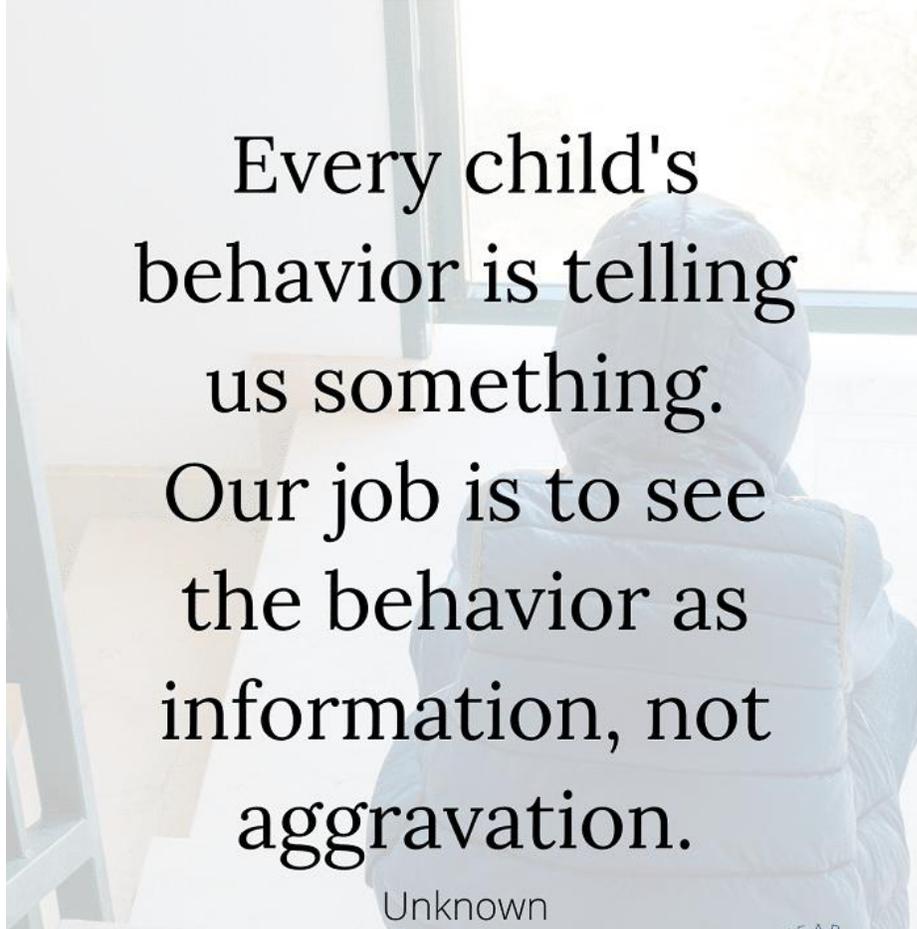
**C=Consequence**



# Guidance Strategies

We also view behavior as communication.

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Every child's behavior is telling us something. Our job is to see the behavior as information, not aggravation.

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# Guidance Strategies

- At Camp Summer Garden we focus on preventing challenging behaviors.
  - We also recognize that some of the behaviors that are commonly seen as misbehavior are characteristic of developmental age expectations of children or could be associated with autism, ADHD, or other developmental disabilities.
  - Our focus is not on punishing children.
  - Instead, we use proactive strategies aimed at preventing challenging behaviors.
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# Guidance Strategies

1. Refer to the Visual schedule using pictures or symbols depicting each activity throughout the day.
  2. We use visual timers, auditory cues like bells or chimes, and verbal reminders to signal transitions. For example, announce "5 minutes until snack time" or show a countdown timer.
  3. Break down tasks into small steps and give instructions one at a time. Use visual supports such as pictures or written instructions to supplement verbal communication.
  4. Create a token economy system where campers earn tokens or stickers for desired behaviors such as following instructions, participating in activities, or demonstrating good social skills.
  5. Offer specific praise immediately after observing positive behavior. For example, say, "Great job sharing your toy with your friend, that was very kind!"
  6. Offer sensory breaks and encourage the children to ask for them when needed.
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# Safe Space

Our Safe Space Tents are designated areas where campers can take a break from the hustle and bustle of camp activities. These tents are equipped with comforting items such as soft seating, calming sensory toys, books, and headphones. The Safe Space Tents are not a punishment. The Safe Space Tents are not designed as a "Time Out" spot. They are designed to be a quiet, soothing refuge where children can relax and recharge.

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# **We are Mandatory Reporters**

Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes (F.S.) mandates that any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, neglected, or abandoned by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Abuse Hotline of the Department of Children and Families.

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# Privacy and Confidentiality

All information about children obtained through Camp Summer Garden is considered confidential. This includes verbal, written, and digital information. This also extends to photographs of the children. Such information will not be disclosed to anyone outside of the camp program.

Additionally, the children's information and pictures will only be shared on social media sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) with consent from families.

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# Questions, Comments, Concerns

All questions, comments, and concerns should be directed to Iris Pendleton, Program Director, Camp Summer Garden

Iris Davis Pendleton, Ph.D.

Email: [campsummergarden@gmail.com](mailto:campsummergarden@gmail.com)

Phone: 850-778-2556

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