

Afterschool Program Handbook 2026-2027



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 participants. 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 program.

Welcome to Camp Summer Garden

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

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 program for children with autism.
2	Provide training to teachers and other professionals serving children with autism.
3	Support the inclusion of children with autism in educational and enrichment programs.

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.”

Dates, Hours, and Location

We follow the Leon County Schools schedule for opening and closing unless otherwise noted.

Location: 1190 Capital Circle NE (Element3 Church)

Hours: 3pm–6pm: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
3pm–5:30pm Wednesday

Fees

Pay your monthly fee by the 5th of the month

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

Fees can be paid at

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

Sign in and Out Daily

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

Children will be served an evening meal each day.

Sample Menu:

Turkey Sandwich

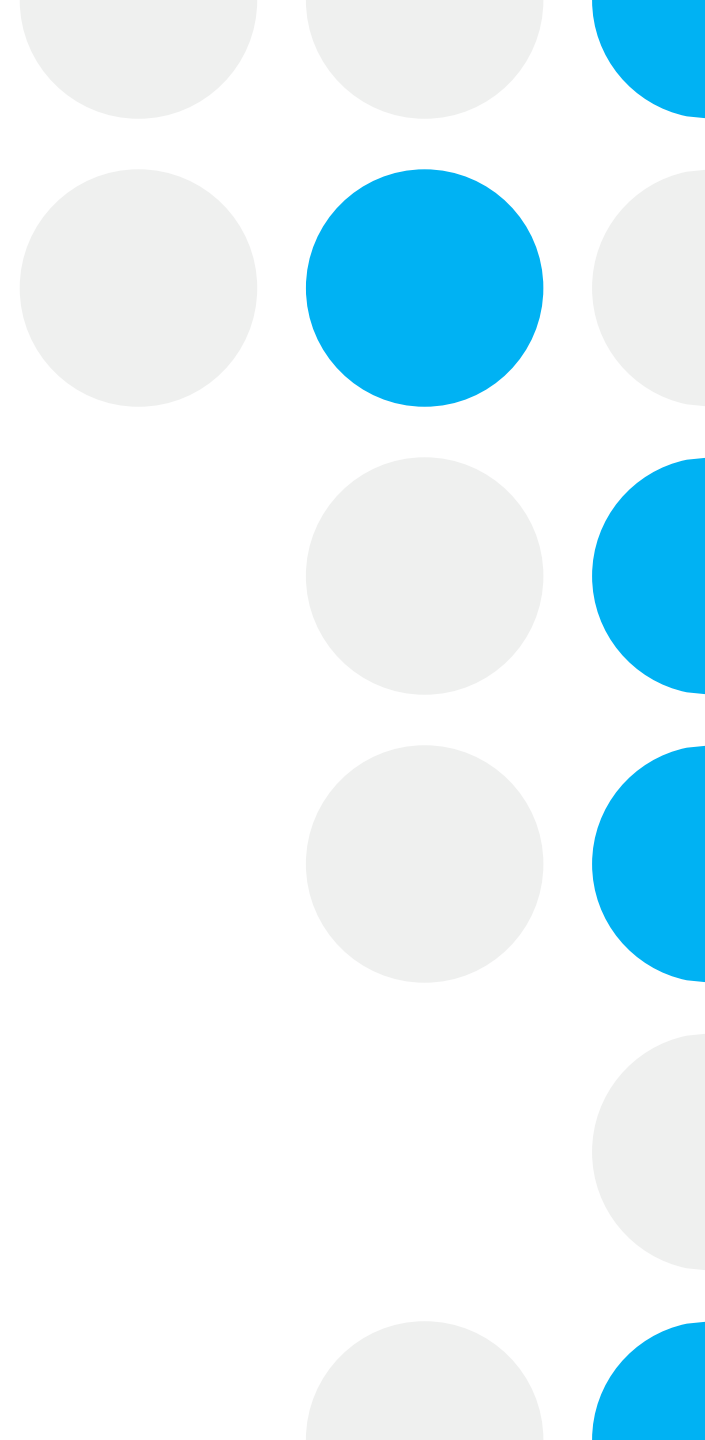
Fruit

Sliced vegetables with dressing

Water

Fruit Juice

Milk (dairy or non-dairy)



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)
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Cell Phones

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



Camp Summer Garden-Social Skills Squad-Afterschool Schedule (3-hour sessions)-Monday-Friday (August 2025-May 2026)

Activity	Time
Check-In/Sign-In	3pm-3:10pm
Snack/Afternoon Meal	3:10pm-3:30pm
Checking My Social Battery, Schedule Review, Rules Review	3:30pm-3:40pm
Minecraft Fitness Run	3:40pm-3:50pm
Minecraft Story, Homework, and Education Enrichment	3:50pm-4:30pm
Minecraft Games/Activities/Enrichment Activity	4:30pm-5:10pm
Gym Play/Inside Gross Motor Play	5:10pm-5:50pm
Minecraft Store, Sign Out and Goodbye	5:50pm-6pm

Incentives

Your child will be able to visit our Minecraft store/Treasure box at the end of the **week**.

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.

Personal Belongings and Lost Items Policy

- Camp Summer Garden encourages families to clearly label all personal belongings brought to the program with the child's first and last name.
 - Children should only bring personal items that are necessary for participation in the program or that have been approved by program staff.
 - Families are discouraged from sending valuable, expensive, or irreplaceable items, including electronics, jewelry, money, collectible items, or special toys.
 - **Camp Summer Garden is not responsible for personal belongings that are lost, misplaced, damaged, or left behind while a child is participating in the program.**
 - Staff will make reasonable efforts to help children keep track of their belongings and to locate missing items; however, Camp Summer Garden cannot guarantee that lost items will be recovered. Items that are found will be placed in the program's designated lost-and-found area when possible. Families are encouraged to check the lost and found promptly if an item is missing.
 - By enrolling a child in Camp Summer Garden, parents and guardians acknowledge that they are responsible for determining what personal belongings their child brings to the program and accept responsibility for the risk of loss or damage to those belongings.
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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 program office immediately at 850-778-2556 or **send a message through the WhatsApp group**.
- Ensure that all emergency contact information is up to date and that authorized adults are available for pickup.
- **1st and 2nd late pick up**=Warning
- **3rd Late pick up**=Meeting with Program Director
- **4th 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.

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.

Parents/guardians are informed at the time of enrollment that some children in care may not have current immunizations.

Medication Administration Policy

At Camp Summer Garden's Afterschool Program, the health and safety of all children are extremely important to us. To ensure a safe, consistent, and manageable environment, we have adopted the following Medication Administration Policy.

Policy Overview

- Staff members of the Camp Summer Garden Afterschool Program do not administer any medications (prescription or over-the-counter) to children during program hours. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Oral medications (e.g., antibiotics, allergy medicine)
- Topical creams or ointments
- Eye drops or ear drops
- Pain relievers or fever reducers
- Vitamins or supplements

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

- If your child requires medication during the afterschool program hours, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to:
 - Administer the medication before or after program hours, or
 - Arrange to come on-site to administer the medication during program hours.
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Medication Administration Policy

- The only exception to this policy applies to life-saving emergency medications such as:
- EpiPens (for severe allergic reactions)
- Rescue inhalers (for asthma)

In these cases, the following must be submitted prior to the child's attendance:

- A signed physician's authorization with clear instructions
- A signed parental consent form
- A written emergency action plan
- Medication in its original, clearly labeled container
- Staff may only assist in administering emergency medication after appropriate training and with all required documentation in place.

Storage of Emergency Medications

- Approved emergency medications will be:
 - Stored in a secure but accessible location
 - Labeled with the child's full name and usage instructions
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- Available to trained staff in the event of an emergency

Absences

- To ensure the safety and well-being of all participants, we require families to notify us if their child will be absent from the program.
 - If your child will be absent from the program, please call/text (850-778- 2556), **send a message in the WhatsApp group**, or email (campsummergarden@gmail.com) us as soon as possible. Notifications should be made no later than 3pm 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.
- Participants 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 program activities, a staff member will be available 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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Safe Behavior Policy

At Camp Summer Garden, the safety and well-being of all students and staff is our top priority.

All children are expected to follow safety rules and avoid behaviors that put themselves or others in danger.

Unsafe Behavior Includes (but is not limited to):

- Physical aggression (hitting, kicking, biting, pushing, etc.)
 - Throwing objects with intent to harm
 - Running away from staff or out of designated areas
 - Bullying, threatening, or intimidating others
 - Engaging in any action that could cause physical or emotional harm to themselves or others
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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:

- Students 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 Unsafe Behavior

1st Offense: Verbal warning; Staff-facilitated conflict resolution; Student may return the following day.

2nd Offense: Verbal warning; Staff-facilitated conflict resolution; Student may return the following day only if accompanied by a parent/guardian who must stay on-site for the full day or one day suspension.

3rd Offense: Verbal warning; Staff-facilitated conflict resolution; Student 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 or two-day suspension.

4th Offense: Suspension from the program for up to 3 days.

5th Offense: Dismissal from the program.

Note: While this policy outlines typical steps in our discipline process, the severity of the offense will determine the consequence. If a student's behavior results in an unsafe situation for themselves or others, it may lead to immediate suspension or dismissal, bypassing earlier steps in the process.

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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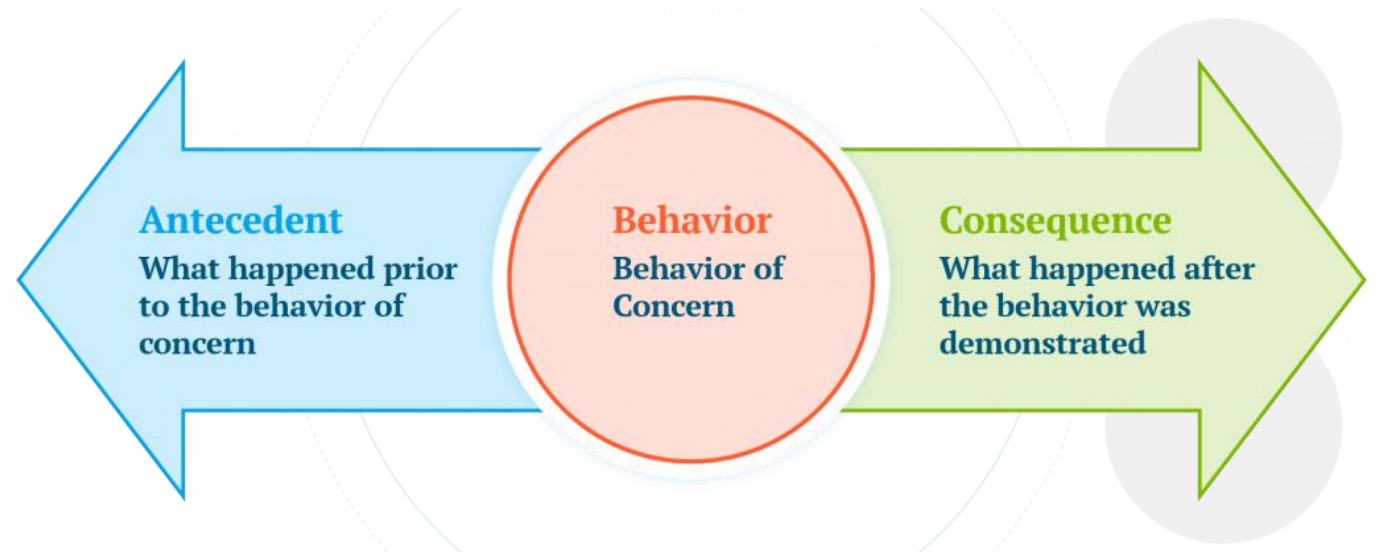
Guidance Strategies

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

A=Antecedent

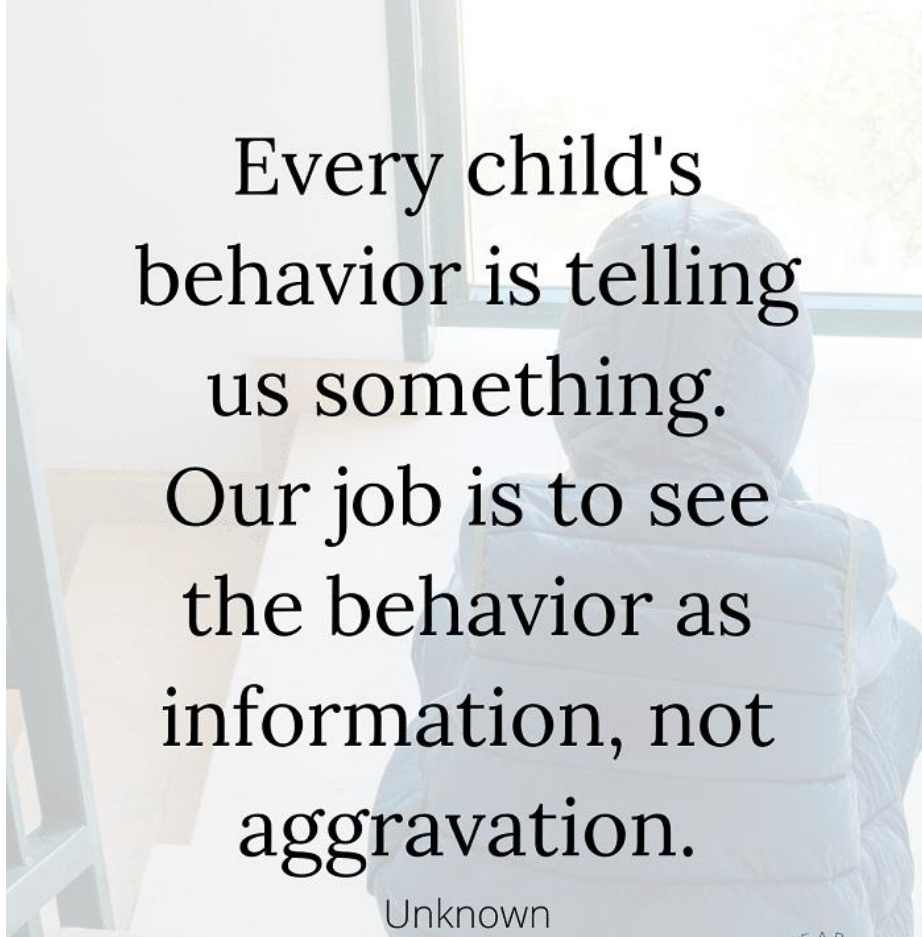
B=Behavior

C=Consequence



Guidance Strategies

We also view behavior as communication.

A photograph of a child wearing a white hoodie, sitting at a wooden table and looking out a window. The image is faded and serves as a background for the text.

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

Unknown

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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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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Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Policy

- Camp Summer Garden prohibits any form of physical punishment, including shaking or rough handling of a child. All staff members are required to take active steps to prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma and must follow outlined procedures to support children's well-being and safety:

Age-Appropriate Supervision and Care

- Staff provide gentle, supportive care to all children.
- Caregivers remain alert to the needs of children who may be especially vulnerable.

Prohibited Behaviors

- Shaking, striking, or handling a child roughly is strictly prohibited.
- All forms of physical discipline are forbidden.

Recognizing Signs of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma

- Unexplained bruises or injuries
 - Vomiting
 - Lethargy or difficulty waking
 - Seizures
 - Changes in behavior
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Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Policy

Reporting Suspected Abuse

- Any staff member who suspects harm must report it immediately. The Camp Director will file the report online or by phone with the Florida DCF.
- An incident report will be completed and kept on file.

Preventative Practices

- Encourage teamwork to support children with challenging behaviors.
- Provide breaks and emotional support for staff.
- Maintain appropriate child-to-staff ratios.

Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary based on changes to laws, licensing regulations, or best practices.
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Universal Precautions and Exposure Plan

1. Purpose

- To protect staff and children by minimizing exposure to bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials through consistent use of Universal Precautions.

2. Universal Precautions

- Universal Precautions apply to all bodily fluids, blood, and other potentially infectious materials (OPIM), whether or not visible blood is present. All individuals are treated as if they are infectious.

3. Staff Training

- All staff will receive annual training on Universal Precautions and the Exposure Control Plan. Training will include hand-washing techniques, use of gloves, cleaning procedures, and proper disposal methods.

4. Recordkeeping

- A record of exposure incidents and staff training will be maintained on-site. Confidentiality of medical information will be maintained in accordance with HIPAA.
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Safe Spaces

Our **Safe Spaces** are designated areas where students can take a break from the hustle and bustle of the daily activities. These areas are equipped with comforting items such as soft seating, calming sensory toys, books, and headphones. The Safe Space Spaces are not a punishment. The Safe Spaces are not designed as “Time Out” spots. They are designed to be a quiet, soothing refuge where children can relax and recharge.

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.

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.

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

Phone: 850-778-2556
