



Western DuPage

Special Recreation Association

Summer Day Camp Manual 2024

Last updated: March 2024



Welcome to WDSRA!

WDSRA is THE place for engaging community-based social & recreational programs for individuals of all ages with special needs. Our expert staff is dedicated to making sure every experience is positive.

WDSRA's programs started in 1976 with a single-day camp, and here we are celebrating over 46 years of providing numerous day camps and programs for countless campers and counselors. At WDSRA, the benefits are endless. We strive to provide a safe place with an environment that is fun and focused on nurturing and developing social skills, motor skills, and community awareness.

Our WDSRA Programs are designed similar to traditional park district programs. There is something for every interest, including competitive and recreational athletics, Special Olympics, adaptive sports, music, dance, art, theater, social clubs, camps, trips, special events, and more!

Through Inclusion Services, we offer assistance to any individual with a disability who registers for a park district program from any of our member districts. Assistance varies depending on the needs of the individual and can range from adapting materials to sending support staff. There is no additional cost for participants to receive inclusion services. If you have a question regarding inclusion services, please contact the WDSRA office.

Serving Bloomingdale, Carol Stream, Glen Ellyn, Naperville, Roselle, Warrenville, West Chicago, Wheaton, and Winfield.

WDSRA's Camp Staff and Ratios

Our support team is selected based on their strengths and experiences working with individuals who have disabilities. Their creativity, enthusiasm, and desire to learn inspire our camps to reach the next level of fun. Our staff includes high school peers through professionals in the fields of Therapeutic Recreation, Special Education, Adapted Physical Education, Physical Therapy, Speech-Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy, and so much more! All support staff has completed a background check as part of our hiring process.

In addition to their recreational backgrounds, all camp staff and volunteers receive training specific to camp and WDSRA policy and procedures. Training topics include awareness and education regarding various disabilities, behavior management strategies, camp schedule,



planning and activity adaptation, implementing assistive communication devices, medication, and emergency procedures. Should your participant require specific support, WDSRA may provide specialized training on an as-needed basis. **Please notify your camp supervisor prior to the start of camp should your camper require specific adaptations.**

Participants are placed in groups based on their WDSRA intake form and medical roster information. If participants are not successful in their grouping, we will adjust as needed as safety is our priority. Participants may be a 1:1 in a school setting but WDSRA does not guarantee they will have 1:1 in camp.

Registration Information

Online Registration: register online at www.wdsra.com. You must have a User ID and password before you can register. To receive a User ID, you must establish a household account by calling the front office before registration day.

Mail Registration: complete the camp registration form and mail to WDSRA 116 N. Schmale Rd., Carol Stream IL 60188 prior to March 18th. The WDSRA office is under construction and will not be accepting drop-off registrations. If you would like to arrange drop-off, please contact WDSRA at (630)681-0962 for further instruction.

Email Registration: camp registrations may be emailed to registration@wdsra.com. Fax registrations will no longer be accepted. Registration and annual forms can be found online at www.wdsra.com and clicking on the forms tab.

Summer 2024 Day Camp Registration:

Day Camp registration will utilize lottery registration.

Registration Begins: Monday March 18th at 9am

Registration Ends: Tuesday, April 5th at 5pm

Lottery Spin (residents are spun first, followed by nonresidents): Friday, April 8th



ePACT:

WDSRA utilizes ePACT to securely collect health and emergency contact information for our participants. If you are registering for programs for the first time since Fall 2023, you will need to contact the front office to set up a household account. You then will be invited to enroll and update your participants information through ePACT. Watch your email for the invitation, which may take approximately one week. Follow the prompts to create your account.

With ePACT, you only need to complete your child's information once. Then, you must verify that the information is correct every year. Need to make a change? You can make changes at any time. We'll be notified of your updates directly from ePACT.

Payment Options and Refunds

Scholarships -Scholarships (up to \$100 per camp) are awarded to those who qualify based on financial need. Scholarship Applications can be requested by calling the front office or online at: www.wdsra.com and clicking on the forms tab. A Scholarship Application must be completed and submitted with your Registration.

Full payment is due two weeks before the first day of camp. If payment is not received by this time, your child will not be allowed to attend camp. If you cannot pay the entire camp fee by this time, a payment plan may be set up by calling the WDSRA office at (630) 681-0962.

Refunds - If you choose to drop from camp two weeks before the start date, WDSRA will issue a refund but retain the non-refundable deposit. If you drop from camp after that date, there will be no refund issued. Once camp has started, refunds will only be issued for medical circumstances.

If you have any further questions regarding payment, don't hesitate to contact Emily Ackerman at the WDSRA office.

Say Cheese

WDSRA staff occasionally takes photographs or videos of participants for promoting/advertising our programs, services, events, activities, and facilities in our brochures, website or agency social media, and other promotional avenues. By registering for, participating in, or attending WDSRA



programs, events, or other activities, the participant (or parent/ guardian of a minor participant) irrevocably agrees to the use and distribution by WDSRA of their image (or of his minor child/ward) in photographs, video recordings, and any other electronic reproductions of such program, events and activities for any purpose without inspection or approval and without compensation, rights to royalties or any further consideration now and in the future.

ADA Compliance

Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA) complies with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits discrimination based on a disability. WDSRA will make reasonable accommodations in recreation programs to enable participation by an individual with a disability who meets essential eligibility requirements. The recreation programs offered by WDSRA will be available in the most integrated setting appropriate for each individual. If you have any questions regarding the ADA or believe WDSRA has unfairly discriminated against you, please call Jorie Meyer at 630-681-0962 ext. 558. A procedure is available to you to resolve your complaint against WDSRA.

Behavior Code

WDSRA promotes the concept of "Enriching lives, connecting communities, and creating fun through inclusive recreational opportunities" and strives to accomplish this belief through our program goals. The following guidelines have been developed to make WDSRA's programs safe and enjoyable for everyone. However, specific rules are necessary to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment. Participants, staff, volunteers, and parents are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times. Additional rules may be developed for particular programs and athletic leagues as deemed necessary by the staff. Staff, participants, volunteers, and parents shall:

- show respect to all participants, staff, volunteers, parents, and community members
- refrain from using foul language
- refrain from causing bodily harm to other participants, staff, coaches, or parents
- demonstrate respect for equipment, supplies, and facilities
- represent WDSRA in a manner that is consistent with the goals, objectives, and ethics of the association
- remain within the established program boundaries

Discipline:

Each situation will be evaluated on its merit. A caring and positive discipline boundaries approach



will be used. WDSRA reserves the right to dismiss a participant, staff, volunteer, or parent if it is in WDSRA's best interest.

Medication

We recognize that some of our participants need to take medication while participating in our programs. WDSRA has established procedures in which staff maintain and distribute medications in a safe and documented manner. All parties need to understand our procedures and work together to manage this responsibility. Please familiarize yourself with WDSRA's Medication Procedures. These can be found on our website [CLICK HERE](#), or you can request a copy by calling the WDSRA office. For the safety of all, medication cannot be delivered via personal belongings (in lunch boxes, backpacks, etc.), and participants cannot carry their medication at the program. They must be handed directly to the Head Instructor in a medication envelope on a daily/weekly basis.

Medical Emergencies

All camp Head Instructors are CPR and First AID certified. In the event of a serious injury that requires more than basic first aid, the following steps will be taken:

- Staff call EMS (Emergency Medical Services)
- Parent of Guardian is contacted (or listed emergency contact)
- If necessary, Paramedics will transport the participant to the nearest hospital

Parent/Guardian is responsible for any emergency medical charges. WDSRA staff cannot transport injured parties in WDSRA vehicles or personal vehicles.

Typical Day at Camp

A day at camp:

Arrive at camp -The camp day will start with camp staff reviewing the daily schedule for the camp that includes schedule breakdown in fifteen to thirty-minute increments.

Lunch - Campers need to bring a sack lunch with them to camp. Lunch will be eaten upon arrival to camp before their camp day begins.



Fieldtrip/Swimming - Campers will enjoy outings into the local community and weekly opportunities to swim at our park district pools.

Games/Activities - planned activities for camp will correspond with weekly themes indicated on the weekly schedule sent out in advance.

Home - depending on your camp location, parents/guardians are asked to pick up campers from the camp location or a designated pick-up location within our member districts.

Tips for Success

Label Belongings — Remember to label everything your camper brings/wears to camp. If marked, we can ensure that misplaced or forgotten items can be returned to their owner if marked.

Leave Valuables at Home — Do not send your camper with anything that you do not want to be lost, stolen, or damaged. While staff members will assist the campers with their belongings, WDSRA will not be held responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Dress for Success — Please send your camper in closed-toed shoes and comfortable clothing each day. Also, remember that this is camp, and they will be playing outdoors and participating in arts and crafts activities. They should come to camp in "play clothes" that can get dirty, and we encourage you to send an extra pair of clothes in the event campers need to change. A camp shirt will be provided for all campers and **is required to be worn on field trip days**.

Review the Camp Schedule — The full-time staff supervising your camp will email a schedule home each week for the following week of camp. Please review it with your child so that they know what to expect at camp. Look at the schedule to anticipate swim days, outings, and field trips, so that your child comes to camp prepared.

Dietary Needs - You may be asked to send or make appropriate food accommodations for your participant on occasion. Suppose the camp is eating at a restaurant in the community. In that case, the family is responsible for previewing the menu and relaying the participant's order to the head instructor upon arrival to camp. Due to various dietary needs, WDSRA will only provide an alternative option for meals when the camp is preparing/making their food.



Daily Camp Checklist

Backpack — Pack your camper's bag with all the necessities: lunch, bathing suit and towel on swim days, sunscreen, and a water bottle. Be sure to label all your child's belongings.

Lunch & Snacks – Pack a sack lunch each day. Campers will not have access to microwaves to warm up their lunches. It would also be helpful to pack a healthy snack for your camper to eat throughout the camp day.

Water — Please bring a water bottle that can be refilled throughout the day.

Sunscreen — Campers must bring waterproof spray sunscreen to camp each day, even if it is not a swim day, as they will be spending a lot of time outdoors. Staff do not rub sunscreen on campers, so please send the type of spray that does not need to be rubbed in. Please complete the sunscreen waiver if your child uses a particular sunscreen that does not come in a spray bottle.

Swim Gear — On swim days, send your camper with a bathing suit, towel, goggles (optional), a life jacket (only if necessary), and a plastic bag for wet clothes. Swim diapers/pool pants are required for all campers who are incontinent.

Transportation Details

School District Transportation - After summer school, participants will be transported to camp by District transportation services. It is essential to communicate to the district and the WDSRA camp supervisor if your participant is absent. This will help prevent miscommunication and avoid confusion between our staff and the bus company. In the first week of ESY, the buses are figuring out their routes of what participants need to go to camp and which ones get dropped off at home. There have been some incidences of participants getting dropped off at the wrong location. If WDSRA staff notice that campers are not at camp, we will either call the bus company or call home to see if they are still on their way. All transportation questions should be directed to your school district.

Field Trips and Swimming - Camps will be participating in community field trips. If allowed, some field trips and swim sites will utilize WDSRA vehicles. These vehicles will be driven by camp staff who have been trained as WDSRA drivers. Other camps will utilize an outside transportation company. If your child needs a child safety seat or harness on the vehicle, it is your responsibility to provide these items and train camp staff on how to use it.



Late Pick-Up Policy - To be fair to our participants and staff, WDSRA has enacted a late pick-up policy. We request that you double-check the pick-up time and be prompt. The first time you are late, you will receive a written warning. A \$10 fee will be charged at 15 minutes intervals for subsequent offenses.

Communication

Weekly Schedules/Calendar – Schedules will be emailed to parents/guardians the Thursday before with detailed information on what the group will be doing the following week. If you have questions regarding the schedule please contact your camp supervisors.

Reporting Absences/Messages - If a camper is absent, please call the WDSRA office before camp starts. To get in touch with your child or camp staff during the camp day, please contact the WDSRA office at 630-681-0962. The office is open Monday-Friday 9am-4pm.

Communication With Parents - Staff will do their best to communicate with parents daily. Camp staff are trained to fill out a "Notes Home" form as an overview of your child's day at camp. Please take the time before or at the beginning of the camp day to notify your child's counselor of anything they may need to know to make the day successful (i.e., he didn't sleep well last night or she is really anxious because her sister is visiting this weekend). If you do not bring your child to camp, it may be helpful to provide a communication notebook in which you and the counselor can write notes back and forth to each other. If you plan to communicate this way, please let the camp staff know.