



Western DuPage

Special Recreation Association

Summer Day Camp Parent Manual 2026

Last updated: May 2026



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 50 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 similarly 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 experience 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 have 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:

1. 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.

2. Fill out an online Registration on the WDSRA registration site- this form can be found on the Schedules and forms page on wdsra.com or by clicking this link: [Online Registration](#)

Drop off or Mail Registration: complete the camp registration form and drop off or mail to WDSRA 116 N. Schmale Rd., Carol Stream IL 60188 prior to March 16th.

Note: Registration will not be processed until the deposit or payment for the total amount due is received.

Summer 2026 Day Camp Registration:

Day Camp registration will utilize lottery registration.

Registration Begins: Monday March 16th at 9am

Registration Ends: Friday, April 3rd at 4pm

Lottery Spin (residents are spun first, followed by nonresidents): Monday, April 9th

Confirmation of enrollment status will be emailed on: Thursday, April 13th

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 regarding 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.

Camp Payments, Refunds & Scholarships

Camp Payment Options:

We offer two convenient ways to pay for camp registration:

- **Pay in Full**
Submit the total camp fee at the time of registration.
- **Deposit & Auto-Pay Plan**
Pay a non-refundable deposit at registration. The remaining balance will be automatically charged in two installments:
 - **Camps & Friday Field Trips:** May 15 and June 15
 - **Extended Camp:** June 15 and July 15

Refund Procedure

Refund requests for all programs must be received no less than 2 weeks prior to the start of the program.

- If the withdrawal request is received prior to 2 weeks you will receive a refund minus \$10 drop fee, any prepurchase of supplies and non-refundable deposits.
- A refund will not be given if the request is received less than 2 weeks prior to the start.
- Refunds will not be issued for missed classes.
- A house credit will be issued for refunds of \$10 or less.
- Any variance to the refund procedures will be included in the program description.
- All refunds will be issued in the same form as payment was made, if amount is under \$45.
- If there is an outstanding balance, your refund will be applied to the household balance.

Scholarships

Scholarships of up to \$300 per year are available for those who qualify based on financial need. To review eligibility criteria, please refer to the [Scholarship Guidelines](#).

Scholarship applications can be requested by calling the front office or completed online [here](#).



A completed Scholarship Application must be submitted along with your registration.

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.

American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Grievance Procedure

The Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA) has established an internal grievance system for prompt and equitable resolution of grievances alleging any action by WDSRA that would be prohibited by the ADA or the applicable Title II Rules.

Grievances should be directed to:

Superintendent of Recreation, Compliance Officer, WDSRA

Mail: 116 N Schmale Rd, Carol Stream, IL 60188

Phone: 630-681-0962

Please call WDSRA to schedule a meeting.

Behavior Code

WDSRA is committed to *enriching lives, connecting communities, and creating fun through inclusive recreational opportunities*. To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all, the following guidelines must be followed. Additional rules may apply to specific programs and athletic leagues as needed.

All participants, staff, volunteers, and parents are expected to:

- Show respect to all participants, staff, volunteers, parents, and community members.
- Refrain from using foul or inappropriate language.
- Avoid causing bodily harm to others, including participants, staff, coaches, or parents.
- Demonstrate respect for equipment, supplies, and facilities.
- Represent WDSRA in a manner that aligns with its goals, values, and ethics.



- Remain within the designated program boundaries.

Discipline:

Each situation will be evaluated individually with a caring and positive approach. WDSRA reserves the right to dismiss any participant, staff member, volunteer, or parent if it is deemed in the best interest of the organization.

Medication Policy

We understand that some participants may need to take medication during our programs. To ensure safety and proper documentation, WDSRA has established procedures for staff to maintain and distribute medications appropriately. It is essential that all parties understand and follow these procedures.

Please review WDSRA's **Medication Procedures** available on our website: [Medication Procedures](#). A printed copy can also be requested by calling the WDSRA office.

For the safety of all participants:

- Medication **cannot** be sent in personal belongings (e.g., lunch boxes, backpacks).
- Participants **cannot** carry their medication during the program.
- Medication must be handed directly to the **Head Instructor** in a medication envelope on a **daily or weekly basis or dropped off at the WDSRA office prior to the start of the program.**

Emergency Medical Procedures

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

1. EMS (Emergency Medical Services) will be called by staff.
2. The parent/guardian (or listed emergency contact) will be notified.
3. If necessary, paramedics will transport the participant to the nearest hospital.
4. The parent/guardian is responsible for any emergency medical charges.

For safety reasons, WDSRA staff **cannot transport injured individuals** in WDSRA or personal vehicles.

Typical 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 – Ensure all items your camper brings to camp are clearly labeled. This helps us return misplaced or forgotten items to their owner.

Leave Valuables at Home – Avoid sending items that could be lost, stolen, or damaged. While staff will assist campers with their belongings, WDSRA is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Dress for Success – Campers should wear closed-toed shoes and comfortable clothing each day. Since activities include outdoor play and arts & crafts, "play clothes" that can get dirty are recommended. Sending an extra set of clothes is encouraged. A camp shirt will be provided and **must be worn on field trip days**.

Review the Camp Schedule – Each week, the full-time staff supervising your camp will email the schedule for the following week. Please review it with your camper to help them prepare for swim days, outings, and field trips.

Dietary Needs – Families may need to send food or make accommodations for their camper as needed. If the camp visits a restaurant, it is the **family's responsibility** to preview the menu and communicate the participant's order to the Head Instructor upon arrival. WDSRA will only provide an alternative meal option when food is being prepared at camp.

Daily Camp Checklist

✓ **Backpack** – Pack all daily essentials, including lunch, a water bottle, and sunscreen. On swim days, include a bathing suit and towel. Be sure to label all belongings.



✓ **Lunch & Snacks** – Send a sack lunch each day. Campers **will not** have access to microwaves. Packing a healthy snack is also recommended.

✓ **Water Bottle** – Bring a refillable water bottle to stay hydrated throughout the day.

✓ **Sunscreen** – Campers must bring **waterproof spray sunscreen** daily, even on non-swim days, as outdoor activities are frequent. Staff **do not apply lotion sunscreen**, so spray sunscreen that does not require rubbing is preferred. If your child needs a specific sunscreen that is not in spray form, please complete the **sunscreen waiver**.

✓ **Camper T-shirt** (*on field trip days*) Wear camper t-shirt to camp.

✓ **Swim Gear** (*on swim days*) – Pack a bathing suit, towel, goggles (optional), and a plastic bag for wet clothes. If necessary, send a **life jacket**. **Swim diapers/pool pants are required** for 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 notify both the school district and the WDSRA camp supervisor if your participant will be absent.
- During the first week of **Extended School Year (ESY)**, bus routes are being finalized, and occasional drop-off errors may occur. If a camper does not arrive at camp as expected, WDSRA staff will contact the **bus company** or **home** to check their status.
- For any transportation-related questions, please contact your **school district** directly.

Field Trips & Swimming

- Camps will participate in **community field trips** and swim outings.
- When possible, WDSRA vehicles will be used. These vehicles will be driven by **trained WDSRA staff**.
- Some camps may utilize an **outside transportation company**.
- If your child requires a **safety seat or harness**, it is the **family's responsibility** to provide these items and train camp staff on their proper use.



Late Pick-Up Policy

To respect the time of participants and staff, WDSRA enforces a **late pick-up policy**:

- **First Offense:** Written warning.
- **Subsequent Offenses:** A **\$10 fee** will be charged **for every 15-minute interval** past the scheduled pick-up time.
- Please double-check pick-up times and arrive promptly.

Communication

Weekly Schedules/Calendar

- A detailed **weekly schedule** will be emailed to parents/guardians every **Thursday** before the upcoming camp week.
- If you have any questions regarding the schedule, please contact your **camp supervisors**.

Reporting Absences/Messages

- If your camper will be absent, please call the **WDSRA office before camp begins**.
- To reach your child or camp staff during camp hours, contact the **WDSRA office at (630) 681-0962** (Monday-Friday, **9 AM - 4 PM**).

Communication with Parents

- Staff will make every effort to **communicate with parents daily**.
- Camp staff will complete a **"Notes Home" form** as a brief overview of your child's day.
- Parents are encouraged to share **important updates** before camp starts (e.g., lack of sleep, anxiety about an upcoming event).
- If you do **not** drop off your child personally, consider using a **communication notebook** to exchange notes with camp staff. If you choose this method, please inform the camp team in advance.

WDSRA Summer Day Camp Contact Information:

Emily Ackerman, Program Manager

emilya@wdsra.com

630-681-0962 ext. 559



A.J. Avolio, Athletics Supervisor- Friday Field Trips
554

aja@wdsra.com

630-681-0962 ext.

Brooke LaRocco, Program Supervisor- District 200

brookel@wdsra.com

630-681-0962 ext. 563

Elise Phillipp, Program Supervisor- District 204

elisep@wdsra.com

630-681-0962 ext. 569

Megan Maulding, Program Supervisor-
District 203, District 87/CASE

meganm@wdsra.com

630-681-0962 ext. 562