



2026 STAFF HANDBOOK

Hammerhead

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CAMP PLAYLAND HISTORY

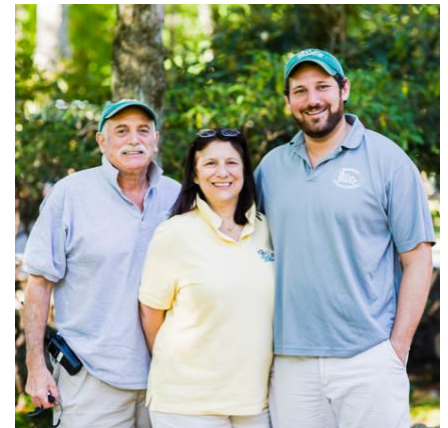


WHERE IT ALL STARTED

Walter and Pearl Bloom and Sy and Adele Breslow founded Camp Playland in 1957. Sixty-eight campers enrolled the first summer. The original facilities included a deep-water pool and Ballfield 1. Our policy has always been to improve Camp Playland every year.

In 1976, Dr. and Mrs. Breslow retired and Gary Bloom became his parents' partner. It was at this time the very successful winter program Playland Nursery School was started. In 2011 Steve Bloom joined his parents, Gary & Barbara, in a leadership role. Steve is now a third generation camp director and lives on campus year round with his family.

Today, Camp Playland enrolls over 600 campers daily and has a staff of over 275. We are proud of our 18-acre campus and the mutual respect we have developed with our neighbors. We hope to continue our fine reputation throughout Fairfield County.



We are celebrating



summers in 2026!

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE STAND FOR

CAMP PLAYLAND'S PHILOSOPHY

Camp Playland's philosophy has 3 components:

- ❖ Provide a healthy and **SAFE** environment for campers and staff
- ❖ Provide a **FUN-FILLED** (**warm, loving, nurturing**) and happy summer
- ❖ Teach new **SKILLS**, help campers grow and develop self-esteem as individuals and as part of a group



What it means to be: **“WARM, LOVING AND NURTURING”**

- ❖ Campers are people. Treat campers with respect.
- ❖ Campers need “to feel the LOVE”. Campers should know their counselors like them. Converse with campers at their level.
- ❖ Share yourself with all campers.
- ❖ Validate campers' feelings. Every child deserves a warm hello and a friendly connection every day.

CAMP PLAYLAND STAFF

A good staff makes a good camp! We have a GREAT staff!

Camp Playland is a place where campers and counselors feel physically and emotionally safe. We strive to create a unique environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging, learns life-long skills and forges lasting relationships. Everything that happens at Playland has one core ingredient: FUN! Good Friends + Fun Times = Great Memories! It all starts with our staff! Staff members are selected for their maturity, ability, experience and sincere love for children.

The Playland staff is the key ingredient for a successful summer. For you to be selected to work at Playland you have proven you are a mature, positive and energetic person, a role model and a mentor.

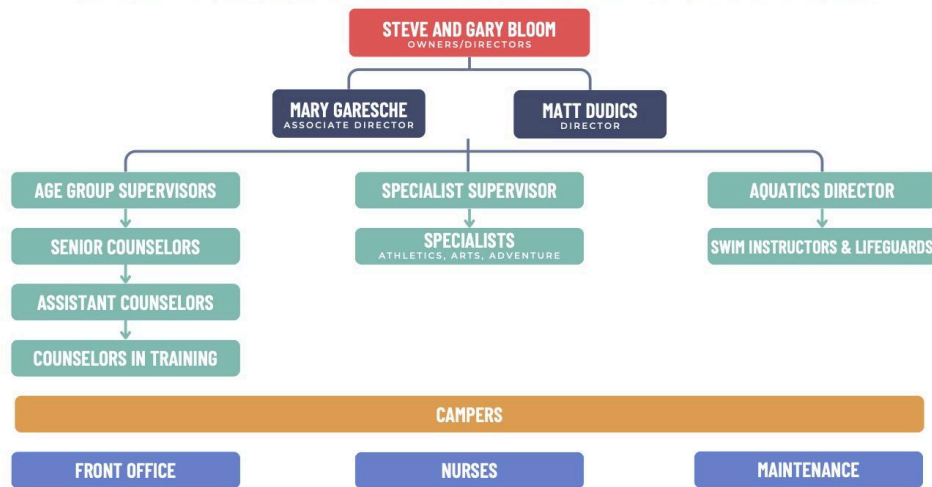
QUALITIES OF A GREAT COUNSELOR

- ❖ Energetic and enthusiastic
- ❖ Willing to learn
- ❖ Adaptable to the camp environment
- ❖ Friendly, helpful and positive
- ❖ Imaginative and resourceful
- ❖ Self confident
- ❖ Dependable, prompt, reliable
- ❖ Responsive to children's needs
- ❖ Strive to be a positive role model
- ❖ Put children's needs and welfare first

EXPECTATIONS OF OUR STAFF:

- ❖ Wear a smile to work
- ❖ Enjoy camp and your campers
- ❖ Work well with all campers
- ❖ Show initiative in camp activities
- ❖ Give positive reinforcement
- ❖ Accept feedback in a mature fashion
- ❖ Cooperate with fellow staff, work as a team
- ❖ Encourage campers
- ❖ Plan appropriate activities
- ❖ Ask for help
- ❖ Arrive to work on time

CAMP PLAYLAND LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE



RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

All staff members must work together to provide every camper with a positive summer. Playland campers are young and require a professional, nurturing and loving staff. *An exceptional counselor must lead and learn daily.* Counselors should have appropriate expectations for children and other staff members. Establish an environment which fosters success. Children must be safe, both physically and emotionally. Be certain to put the campers' best interests first. Counselors must arrive every day prepared to be good role models, exercise compassion and demonstrate empathy. The way a staff member speaks and relates to our campers and other staff members defines who we are and what we believe. We expect that you will be a positive role model and a constant good example for our campers. All campers deserve a professional, nurturing and loving staff.

DIRECTOR AND DIVISION LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ❖ Supervise the daily operations of camp.
- ❖ Help to instruct individual campers who need special guidance.
- ❖ Communicate positively with staff members.
- ❖ Communicate with parents.

SPECIALIST RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ❖ Plan a progression of skills to be taught throughout the summer.
- ❖ Create daily and weekly plans taking into account the age, interest and gender of the group.
- ❖ Work with Directors to order materials for their area.
- ❖ Assist with morning and afternoon arrival and dismissal procedures
- ❖ Use time wisely; be prepared with equipment and materials prior to each groups' arrival.
- ❖ Provide time during each period for every child to participate and be successful.
- ❖ Organize the group before introducing an activity.
- ❖ Always involve the group counselors in the lesson by giving specific tasks to each counselor.
- ❖ Help campers to participate *"The Right Way"*.
- ❖ Plan rainy day activities.
- ❖ Maintain and store equipment for the area. Leave the area organized and clean everyday.
- ❖ Help to implement special events.

SENIOR AND ASSISTANT GROUP COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

Senior Counselors greet campers and take attendance in the morning. Assistant Counselors and specialists supervise the different areas used during arrival, including the play areas. Even if you know a child will be late, they must be marked absent until they arrive. All late arrivals must be checked in with the office. Always know how many campers are present for the day and be certain to count heads as the group travels through camp. *When the group arrives and before it leaves an activity – count campers.*

- ❖ Develop a positive and appropriate counselor to camper relationship – enjoy each camper and make personal contact with them every day. *Every camper deserves validation!*
- ❖ Help campers place camp bags in cubbies and help campers keep track of their belongings.
- ❖ Organizing the group so campers travel from activity to activity safely.
- ❖ Support campers in socializing and making connections with campers and staff.
- ❖ When at activities, counselors must divide campers into teams. Allowing campers to “choose teams” becomes a popularity contest.
- ❖ Assist the specialist by actively teaching, participating, encouraging and including all campers in the planned activities.
- ❖ Senior Counselors should always be with the majority of the group. Assistant Counselors should escort campers to the bathroom, for water breaks and to the nurse.
- ❖ Interact positively and respectfully with other staff members. The Senior Counselor will provide direction and guidance for the assistants.
- ❖ Frequently communicate with the Directors and Supervisors.
- ❖ Have fun with the campers always at the campers’ level.

Group counselors and specialists should not make or receive phone calls from parents – the Director and/or division leader will assume that responsibility. All written communication to parents must be approved by the Director and prepared by the office.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND SPECIAL EVENTS

DAILY SCHEDULE

Staff must be at their work station ready to work by 9:00 am. “Flag Raising” is held at 9:40 am and “Flag Lowering” takes place at 3:40 pm. *Staff members who do not take the bus may not leave campus until all buses have departed, at approximately 4:10 pm.* Staff may not walk up the hill until all buses and cars have left. All campers follow a ten period day. This varies a bit depending on division. Below is a sample day:



BOBCATS 2026

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00-9:30 a.m.	Arrival and Free Play				
9:30 a.m.	Flag Raising				
Period 1 9:50-10:25 a.m.	Water World	Play Area 3	Tennis	Lego Mania	Playland Pride
Period 2 10:25-11:00 a.m.	Ninja Warrior	Swim L Pool	Woodworking	Swim L Pool	Basketball
Period 3 11:00-11:35 a.m.	Campfire Cooking	Swim L Pool	Wondertunes	Swim L Pool	Go Karts
Period 4 11:35 a.m.-12:10 p.m.	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Period 5 12:10-12:45 p.m.	Soccer (Field 2)	Mining	Arts & Crafts	Play Area 1	Treemendous
Period 6 12:45-1:20 p.m.	Dance	Yoga	Nature	Koala	Boating & Fishing
Period 7 1:20-1:55 p.m.	Play Area 2	Baseball (Field 1)	Play Area 1	Theater	Ropes & Mats
Period 8 1:55-2:30 p.m.	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack
Period 9 2:30-3:05 p.m.	Swim L Pool	Music	Swim L Pool	Archery	Swim L Pool
Period 10 3:05-3:40 p.m.	Swim L Pool	Games (Field 2)	Swim L Pool	Lanyard Land	Swim L Pool
3:40-4:00 p.m.	Flag Lowering and Dismissal				

CHOICE PERIODS AND ELECTIVES

Upper Camp groups entering grade 3 and older will participate in Choice Periods. Campers will be able to choose from a list of activities each day. Upper Camp and Senior Camp groups entering grade 4 and older will also participate in Electives. Campers will choose a new Elective each week and attend the same elective for the duration of the week. Group counselors will be assigned to help with these activities. Campers entering 3rd grade will be introduced to the elective program through the “Free Choice Friday” program.

NEW FOR 2026!

- ❖ *Nature & Mining Treehouse*
- ❖ *Playtopia Village Playground*
- ❖ *Pizza for lunch*
- ❖ *Broadway Belts / Melody Makers*
- ❖ Expanded CIT program.
- ❖ Free Choice Fridays for rising 3rd grade groups
- ❖ Expanded Electives Program

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events are planned every week. The Special Events Calendar for 2026 is posted on our website. All special activities will be explained in weekly staff notes. Our enthusiasm and participation as a staff make each special event successful.

SPECIAL FIRST DAY PROCEDURES

The first day of camp (Monday, June 22nd) and the first day of Session 2 (Monday, July 20th) are especially important. Greet every camper enthusiastically. Help alleviate fears. Go slowly. Be calm and reassuring. Campers need to learn your name as well as the names of specialists and other campers in the group. Specialists are encouraged to play a name game for the first few minutes of every period. Be certain to include all staff.

- ❖ Campers will arrive wearing name tags that they received on the bus or when they arrive at camp.
- ❖ Group counselors will have Camp Playland backpacks, “bag tags,” t-shirts and sweatshirts for campers who did not attend camper orientation.
- ❖ Show campers the bathrooms, water stations, group cubbies and changing areas in the shower house.
- ❖ Set aside time for campers to use the bathroom and get water – *every day* of the summer!
- ❖ First day of dismissal is busy. Be prepared to assist campers. Review camper dismissal assignments (bus numbers, etc.) before flag lowering.

CAMP GROUPS NAMES & GRADES

PRE-K Tigers, Bears, Bengals, Grizzlies, Cheetahs, Lions

Coed groups of 3 & 4 year olds

KINDERGARTEN Beavers, Chipmunks, Jaguars, Woodchucks, Porcupines, Otters

Coed groups of campers entering kindergarten

LOWER CAMP Roadrunners, Coyotes, Robins, Cardinals, Bobcats, Seagulls

Coed groups of campers entering 1st grade

MIDDLE CAMP Eagles, Broncos, Owls, Hawks, Blue Jays, Ravens

Single gender groups of campers entering 2nd grade

UPPER CAMP Badgers, Cougars, Leopards, Sandpipers, Navigators, Panthers, Trailblazers, Vikings, Explorers, Mustangs, All Stars

Single gender groups of campers entering 3rd through 6th grade

SENIOR CAMP Super Seniors and Super Seniors II

Coed groups of campers entering 7th & 8th grade

C.I.T. (Counselors in Training)

Playland alumni campers entering grades 9 & 10

DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

PARTICIPATION

Our goal is for every camper and counselor to participate at each activity and feel good about their participation. Counselors are expected to be with the group actively instructing, encouraging or simply participating at the campers' level. If a child sits out, one counselor should investigate "why". Sometimes the child may feel insecure with the activity, need to observe it first, need a specific "job" or need additional support. If a child needs additional support and/or attention, give it to them. The best way to get a child to participate is to be actively involved yourself and invite the child to join you. If a child still chooses to sit out, you should return to participating. Giving too much attention to a child who chooses to sit out might make it more fun to sit out. *When participating in all the activities at camp, counselors should be mentors and instructors, not competitors. Competing at the counselor's level is unacceptable. Counselors should not monopolize or manipulate children's play.* In team games, campers never choose teams. Dividing into teams is the staff's responsibility.

ARRIVAL & FLAG RAISING

Counselors must be at their assigned station no later than 9:00am. Campers arrive between 9:00am and 9:30am and report to a play space designated by the Division Leader. At approximately 9:30am campers and counselors will gather for flag raising. Senior counselors will complete an attendance form to give to their Division Leader. The office will call guardians of absent campers. Division Leaders take staff attendance.

Flag Raising will take place in front of the flag pole. Counselors must count their group at flag raising and when departing from and arriving at every activity. After Flag raising groups will be dismissed for Period 1.

FLAG LOWERING & DISMISSAL

Flag lowering begins in front of the flag pole at 3:40pm after Period 10. Campers should use the restroom and gather their belongings before going to the flag pole. Once on the field, counselors must count campers and confirm this number with Division Leaders.

Campers who are picked up by car will walk to the picnic pavilion. Most campers will ride buses and be dismissed to their bus counselors at designated cones. Dismissal to buses is deliberately slow. Campers may need guidance getting to their bus cones. After the first few days of camp, dismissal becomes easier.

All buses are loaded and the attendance is verified for every bus. Counselors may not drive or walk off campus until all buses have exited.

COUNSELOR TO CAMPER RATIO

We maintain a ratio of one counselor, age sixteen or older, to four children under the age of six. When campers are six years or older our ratio is one counselor, age sixteen or older, to six campers.

OFF CAMPUS TRIPS

Senior Campers are entering 7th & 8th grades and leave campus every Wednesday for a day trip. Trip protocols are given to Senior Camp counselors. Counselors bring a first aid backpack and cell phones on all trips. [C.I.T.s](#) will take an off-campus trip one time per session.

CAMPERS WITH SPECIAL SUPPORT

There are campers with identified special needs enrolled at Camp Playland. Some of our special needs campers require more support/supervision. These campers will come to camp with a “special support staff”. Support staff may be hired by the camp, the school system where the child attends or the child’s parents.

All staff should work to include these campers as much as possible. Whenever appropriate, the child should take instructions or corrections from the Senior Counselor and/or specialist working with the group. The special support staff’s job is to support the camper to ensure success and participation. If after the whole group instruction the camper needs additional explanation, the special support person will do so. If the activity is too difficult the support staff can help break down or simplify the task to be more attainable for the camper. Only as a last resort will the camper be taken to an alternative activity. If the camper’s behavior is prohibitive to their success at camp, it is imperative the Directors are made aware. The Directors and Camp Behaviorist will work closely with the parents, special support staff and counselors to facilitate success.

Special support staff should be viewed as part of the group and camp staff. They are expected to adhere to all of Camp Playland’s staff policies. When appropriate, special support staff should function as a counselor and support all campers, always giving first priority to their assignment. Special support staff members are not expected to take charge of the group.

SWIMMING

Groups swim once or twice a day. A positive swimming experience is crucial to a successful summer. Campers are encouraged to put on a bathing suit and be inside the fenced enclosure. No camper will be forced to swim. Work hard to alleviate anxiety for the reluctant camper. It may take time to get that camper to put on a swimsuit. Have patience; enlist the help of Division Leaders and pool staff. Never ignore the needs of the reluctant swimmer.

Pool Routine:

- ❖ Arrive to swim on time. If needed leave an activity early, so you will be on time.
- ❖ One counselor must lead the group into the shower house. Help campers find their designated changing area. One counselor should be at the end of the line and be the last to enter the shower house.
- ❖ Counselors and campers will change into bathing suits. Help campers place socks in shoes, then place shoes under the bench. Teach campers how to properly use the changing area. If you establish good routines on day one it will make your summer easier.
- ❖ Encourage campers to use the bathrooms before leaving the shower house.
- ❖ As campers are changed they should leave the shower house and go to their assigned pool.
- ❖ Counselors should continue helping the rest of the campers change. The Senior Counselor must be the last to leave the shower house. The Senior Counselor needs to ensure all campers have left before leaving the shower house. Senior Counselors should direct assistant counselors so every child is helped.
- ❖ Towels should be left in the shower house.
- ❖ Counselors are assigned to a pool station. When the campers are having free swim, counselors stand on the pool deck assisting lifeguards. Counselors do not go into the pool when campers are having free swim.
- ❖ During lessons, counselors will assist the swim instructors. Be prepared to get in and out of the pool. Be prepared to help campers.
- ❖ After swim class, campers will be dismissed to the shower house to change into a dry suit or clothing. **No one**

may wear a wet bathing suit around camp.

- ❖ Help campers change. This will become easier as the summer progresses. All counselors must help. Swim staff will help in the shower house, too.
- ❖ After changing, campers and counselors carry their socks, shoes and backpacks outside to the benches. Each group will be assigned a set of benches.
- ❖ Counselors will assist campers in putting on socks and shoes. Check campers bags for sunscreen and assist in applying it. Campers may not share sunscreen. **Please do not rush campers.**

A typical swim period is:

- ❖ Camper free swim
- ❖ Camper safety whistle – conducted by the lifeguards
- ❖ Camper safety check – sitting on side of pool
- ❖ Short lesson and practice
- ❖ Camper safety check – sitting on side of pool
- ❖ Camper free swim – all counselors out of pool to assist lifeguards
- ❖ Camper safety whistle
- ❖ Camper safety check – sitting on side of pool
- ❖ Campers dismissed to the shower house led by counselors



PLAY AREAS

Campers will be introduced to the different play areas at camp through their schedule rotation. If the play area is not used properly it may become dangerous. When your group uses a play area for the first time, review the playing options. Before the campers begin to play, the Senior Counselor must position staff for proper supervision. Triangulate the playground so counselors are positioned to maximize safety. Every child should be within the eyesight of a counselor. The Senior Counselor should have “Big Eyes” and view the group in its entirety. Assistant Counselors should escort children to the bathroom and/or nurse. **The Senior Counselor must always stay with the majority of the group.**

Running in the play area is prohibited as it can be unsafe. Except for the youngest campers, counselors may not push children on the swings or tire swing. Campers must use equipment only for its designated use (i.e. shovels are for digging only). The running water in all play areas is for play only, not drinking. All water should be turned off before the group leaves the play area.

There may be two groups scheduled to use Play Area 3 (“Curly Slide”, “Tremendous”) during each period. If staff cannot properly supervise all the areas, it is appropriate to “close” an area. “Tremendous” protocols are posted at the entrance. Please review these before each visit.

Playtopia is our new village playground for campers in the Pre-K Division, K Division and Lower Camp. Counselors must support campers in cleaning up toys and equipment before leaving Playtopia. If Play Area 2 is not scheduled while a group is at Playtopia, groups may use that playground too.

RAINY DAYS

Rainy days may require extra patience from everyone, but they can be special fun for campers because of the change in routine. If it rains suddenly during the day, bring your group to the nearest covered area. Organize your group and play quiet games until you hear that the rainy day schedule is implemented. *Be prepared to keep your group busy during a rain delay.* We will adhere to regular scheduling as much as possible. Because summer weather can change quickly, it is not unusual to flip back and forth from sunny to rainy day schedules. Wearing rain gear is helpful on rainy days – always have campers check their bags for rain gear.

LUNCH, WATER AND SNACKS

Lunch, catered by FLIK Catering, is provided to campers and counselors every day. A menu can be found on the camp website. Everyone is encouraged to eat a well-rounded lunch. Cold water is provided at lunch. A morning snack is provided for Upper Camp campers and counselors and an afternoon snack is provided daily for all.

Counselors sit with and interact with their assigned group throughout lunch. Counselors should space out amongst the campers. Support campers through the lunch line, opening water and preparing food. If a camper is not eating please let a division leader know.

Campers and counselors may not carry coffee, soda or other food items around the campground. Chewing gum is not allowed for campers and counselors. Water stations are situated throughout camp and campers are encouraged to visit them throughout the day. Campers and counselors must stay well hydrated.

*Camp Playland is a peanut/nut and sesame sensitive environment. Campers and counselors should **NOT** bring peanut butter or other peanut/nut products to camp. Because nut products may be hidden in foods, campers may not share foods brought from home.*

ALLERGIES

Prior to the first day of camp, you will be made aware of medical alerts for campers in your group. Please pay close attention to all allergies, including insect allergies (bees, etc.). Food allergies (some life threatening) are becoming more prevalent. *Never allow campers to share food! Strictly monitor the diet of campers with food allergies.* If you are uncertain whether a camper is allowed to eat a certain food, check with the Directors or a Division Leader. Counselors and campers should never bring candy, gum or other food treats. Food is only eaten at lunch and snack.

All medications brought to camp are stored in the nurses' Office and dispensed by the nurse.

EPIPEN PROTOCOL

1. All EpiPens™ to be kept at Camp Playland will be stored in the nurses' office in a locked cabinet. "Authorization for Administration of Medicines" form will be completed by the parent, doctor and camp.
2. In the case a parent requests the EpiPen™ stay with the camper at all times, the parent will send in a second set of EpiPens™ with additional paperwork indicating the request signed by the parent, doctor and camp.
3. The second set will be kept in a designated and labeled "fanny pack." A walkie talkie will also be in the fanny pack. The fanny pack will be kept in the locked cabinet in the nurses' office outside of camp hours. Upon arrival, the designated

Senior Counselor will retrieve the fanny pack from the nurses' office and will **keep it on their person** at all times during the camp day. At the end of the day the fanny pack will be returned to the nurses' office to be locked away overnight.

4. In the event it is determined the camper is having an anaphylactic reaction a Division Leader will be notified by walkie talkie as will the camp nurse. If it is deemed necessary by the Senior Counselor, the Epipen™ will be administered. 911 will be called as will the parents.

CAMPER USE OF BATHROOMS

Bathrooms are located throughout campus. Young children should be brought to the bathrooms at least twice daily. Young campers should be escorted to the bathroom by a counselor, but staff members should never enter a closed bathroom with a camper. Wait outside. If a camper needs help in the bathroom, enlist the aid of a Division Leader. If a very young child (Pre-K & K) needs help, be sure the door to the bathroom is left open and have a second staff person within eyesight of the bathroom. Anyone who assists a child in a bathroom must keep the door open and have a second pair of counselor eyes nearby. This is for your protection and will avoid any accusations of staff misconduct. Older campers can use the bathrooms independently. When in doubt enlist the aid of the Director or a Division Leader.

Staff must monitor bathrooms closely and report any inappropriate behavior. A counselor must maintain visual contact with the bathroom area when campers are utilizing the facilities. Only one camper may occupy a bathroom stall at a time. If a counselor notices that a bathroom is not clean, they should tell a Division Leader or Director immediately.

If a camper needs a change of clothes, please ask the Director or a Division Leader for help. Spare clothing is available in the Nurses' Office, Pool, and Pre-K building. If a child has a bathroom accident, it is important a Division Leader is told so they may communicate with the child's parents.

STAFF AREA/BATHROOMS

Staff may use any bathroom around campus. Private bathrooms and conference rooms are available in the office. If a staff member *must* make a phone call, cell phones may be used in this area.

TRANSPORTATION

Camp Playland proudly provides door-to-door transportation throughout Fairfield County and surrounding towns. Safe, reliable transportation is an essential part of the Camp Playland experience. All vehicles are operated by licensed, professional drivers.

Most campers travel to and from camp by bus or van, while some families choose to provide their own transportation. Every bus or van is assigned at least one Camp Playland counselor to act as a "Bus Counselor."

Bus Counselors play a vital role in each camper's day. Please refer to the "Bus Counselor Handbook" for additional information.

PARENT TRANSPORTATION

Some campers are transported to and from camp by parents. They will be received by staff and brought to their designated areas. In the afternoon they will be dismissed from the picnic pavilion. Camp Playland offers supervised early drop off starting at 8:00 am and late pick up until 5:30 pm.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Establish simple and necessary rules for campers that will enable them to enjoy a safe summer. Be consistent and clear with expectations. State your desired outcome in a positive way. For example, rather than telling the group “No running,” tell them to walk.

Always correct campers individually and privately. Correcting a camper in front of peers will cause embarrassment. PRACTICE PATIENCE; correcting poor behavior takes time and effort on the part of all staff members. It is our job to anticipate potential problems and structure for success. Guide campers to engage in “Peer Problem Solving” techniques, where they negotiate and compromise with friends.

All staff members should give verbal direction, model proper participation and behavior and correct when necessary. ***Assistant staff members should never discipline a camper.*** If a child needs additional direction or correction assistant staff members should defer to the Senior Counselor. If a child is rude to a staff member – a simple statement from the counselor should be “I do not like that”. Walk away from the camper and inform your Senior Counselor and/or your group’s Division Leader.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline means guidance and should not be punitive. Never punish a camper by denying them a favorite activity or snack. Discipline at camp means discussing concerns with the camper, teaching the camper to participate “*The Right Way*” and redirecting campers when appropriate. Anticipating discipline issues is a good teaching technique. Engaging campers in appropriate activities and participating at the camper’s level will prevent many disciplinary problems. Yelling is not acceptable at Camp Playland for discipline or group management. If necessary, the use of a stern voice, with appropriate facial expression, is much more effective and acceptable. Never allow one camper to negatively impact the good time of another camper or the entire group. Some campers require extra attention and nurturing. It is encouraged to concentrate more attention on that camper to enhance the overall success of the group.

***Above all, don't allow a situation to get out of control.
Long before the critical stage, enlist help from the Directors or a Division Leader.***

TEASING/SARCASM

Counselors may never engage in teasing or taunting of campers or fellow staff members. All staff must maintain a professional relationship with campers. Campers are young children and young children are very literal. Using a nickname may seem innocent to you, but can be misinterpreted by campers. Do not engage in teasing behavior with other staff members either. Whether or not you intend to involve campers in staff relations, they will become involved. You must maintain professional relationships with fellow staff members at all times while on campus.

TECHNIQUES TO ENCOURAGE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

Division leaders, directors and the camp behaviorist will support counselors in creating and implementing strategies for all camper needs.

- ❖ Make rules clear and tell campers what you expect from them
- ❖ Set good examples for respect, cooperation and teamwork
- ❖ Provide opportunities for success
- ❖ Give constant praise and recognize good behavior
- ❖ Maintain routines as much as possible
- ❖ Support fellow staff members
- ❖ Make each child feel special
- ❖ Understand what is happening before you intervene
- ❖ Intervene early and before camper loses control
- ❖ Ask for help and support when you need it
- ❖ Speak effectively:
 - At the child's eye level
 - Change voice and tone to reflect your request
 - Use clear, direct and unemotional commands
 - Don't ask – tell



SOCIAL CRUELTY (BULLYING)

Camp Playland has a zero tolerance for the insidious societal problem of “Social Cruelty”, better known as bullying. **“Bullying is when one or more people exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick or put down another person. Bullying happens when one person or a group of people try to exert power or control over other people.”**

Camp Playland promotes proper social relationships amongst campers and amongst staff members. We believe in “peer problem solving” where individuals negotiate and compromise for the benefit of all. Bullying in any form is unacceptable and we work to have a community where all are accepted and can have fun.

All staff members at Camp Playland must follow these procedures:

1. Create a physically and emotionally safe environment for your campers and for each other. Be sure campers and co-workers know you will not tolerate cruelty towards others. **A counselor experiencing bullying should communicate with a Division Leader.**
2. If a camper reports an incidence of bullying, embrace that child and validate their feelings. That child may feel hurt, sad and angry.
3. The “bully” must be told clearly that bullying will not be tolerated. The staff person must be careful not to “bully” the person accused of “bullying”. A simple, firm statement of what is not acceptable is sufficient.
4. If the incident is not resolved or repeats itself a Division Leader should be informed to evaluate and correct the problem.
5. The Division Leader will communicate with parents.

Campers and staff must know that teasing, exclusion, bullying, rumoring, ganging up will not be tolerated. **Campers and staff members must feel safe and protected at Camp Playland.**

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS (EAPs)

During an emergency group counselors will remain with their group and maintain an accurate count of campers at all times. The Director and Division Leaders will make phone calls and implement any required emergency plans. *Please read carefully as we do not practice EAPs with campers.*

SAFETY

Accidents are best prevented when activities are well supervised. Think ahead to problem areas and anticipate how to prevent accidents.

If a camper is ill or injured, they must see the nurse. Never ignore a camper's complaints; don't belittle a child's concerns or try to diagnose an illness. An Assistant Counselor should escort campers to the nurse. If a camper is seriously injured and should not be moved, find someone with a walkie talkie in order to get the nurse or a Division Leader. In the event of an injury, remember your emotions and actions impact your campers. Remain calm and reassuring.

LOST CAMPER POLICY

You must count campers after every transition. If a camper is missing, notify the Director or the nearest Division Leader. The Director or Division Leader will notify the other Division Leaders via walkie talkie. An immediate canvassing of the camp will take place starting out from the four corners in. The pool and pond staff will be notified to check their areas. If after a thorough search the missing camper is not found the police and the camper's parents will be notified immediately. If you find a camper separated from a group, notify the Director or a Division Leader who will return the camper to the appropriate group.

NEVER release a camper to anyone without the express permission of the Director or a Division Leader. The Director and Division Leaders will not release a camper without first clearing it with the office.

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH CAMPERS

Counselors and campers may engage in appropriate contact, such as hand holding. Campers should never sit on a counselor's lap, instead have a camper sit next to you. This is for your protection. To prevent accidents and injuries, counselors should never pick up campers. A counselor may get down to the camper's level for a hug or nurturing gesture.

CAMP INJURY/SEVERE ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

1. In the event of a severe accident at camp, immediately notify the Nurse and a Director/Division Leader. If the camper is unconscious, the Nurse or Director will call 911 immediately.
2. The Nurse will administer first aid. Do not move the injured person unless they are in immediate danger.
3. Division Leader or Senior Counselor should instruct other staff members to remove other campers from the immediate scene. The Nurse and a Director or Division Leader should remain at the scene with the person.
4. If the camper is conscious, the Nurse will decide if an ambulance is necessary. If an ambulance is called, the person will be brought to the bottom of the hill if possible. If the camper is brought to a hospital by EMS for treatment, a Director, Nurse, or Division Leader will accompany the person in the ambulance. If feasible, a copy of the person's

health records will be given to the EMS and a Director, Nurse, or Division Leader will contact the camper's parents.
5. If necessary Nurses or Director will complete and submit an incident report for the state.

SEVERE WEATHER PLAN

In the case of severe weather (thunder storms, hurricane, tornado or high winds) division leaders will notify counselors to bring the group to the nearest enclosed building – the office, downstairs below the office, the Pre-K building, the Arts & Crafts room, the Kindergarten building. Be certain to take an accurate headcount and remain inside until further notice.

In case of other emergencies (fire, earthquake, or a nearby but not on campus emergency situation) counselors will remain with their group. Be certain to count heads and account for every camper. Sit with campers and await further direction from the Director or a Division Leader.

On very hot days, division leaders will share up to date protocols with group counselors. Activities will slow down and take place in the shade. Camp has many mist systems and fans around campus. Please ensure campers and counselors remain hydrated. Groups will have access to A/C buildings for breaks whenever needed.

CAMPUS SECURITY /VIOLENT CRIME ACTION PLAN

The only entrance/exit to the Playland campus is monitored by security/visitor check-in. There are security cameras located around the Playland campus. In case of an emergency, the New Canaan Police Department will be contacted by calling 911. Parents will be notified via text or email by Camp Directors. If the Camp Playland facility needs to be evacuated, counselors will walk campers, in an orderly manner, to West Elementary School located on Ponus Ridge, opposite Camp Playland.

If there is an act of violent crime on campus, an alert will go out on all walkie talkies, **“ACTIVE SHOOTER.”** Counselors will lead campers to the nearest wooded area to hide. Leave all personal belongings behind. Including specialists, Camp Playland has a 1:2 counselor to camper ratio. Campers with special needs will remain with their support staff. All staff will support campers in this scenario. Continue hiding until you receive instructions from a camp Director or police officer.

GENERAL STAFF PROTOCOLS

CONDUCT

How staff conduct their personal relationships is personal. Personal relationships should not interfere with job responsibilities. Your personal conduct outside of camp should not affect your work. Staff are expected to be well rested and energetic so you can care for the campers to the best of your abilities. Staff are expected to set a good example for campers when responding to authority and being respectful to others.

The use of alcohol or drugs (including marijuana) on camp property. working under the influence or suspected to be working under the influence of drugs and alcohol is prohibited and is grounds for immediate termination.

DRESS

Campers and counselors should dress comfortably. Sneakers or sturdy shoes with backs should be worn. Counselors may not wear sandals or Crocs. Every counselor will receive complimentary Playland t-shirts and tank tops. Do not cut or alter t-shirts. Staff members are required to wear a Camp Playland t-shirt every day.

Swimsuits must be worn at the pool. One piece bathing suits, swim shorts and swim shirts are all acceptable. Staff members should wear a shirt when not at the pool area. As a role model and representative of our camp, counselor attire should be neat and appropriate for working with young children.

PHONES/ELECTRONICS

USE OF CELL PHONES IS PROHIBITED ON THE PLAYLAND CAMPUS. Texting, emailing, talking on the phone, taking photos, using the internet and all social media apps while working with campers is grounds for termination. ***Directors, division leaders, and the media team have special permission to use camp issued cell phones to communicate with parents. Additionally, bus counselors may need to communicate with the camp while traveling on bus routes.***

If a staff member must make a phone call, please use the camp office. If a person needs to call you they can call 203-966-2937 and leave a message with the office. We will deliver the message to you.

INTERNET SOCIAL NETWORKING AND BLOGGING

Camp Playland respects the rights of employees to use social networks and blogs as a medium of self-expression. If a Playland employee chooses to identify themselves as an employee of our camp on a social networking site, email, text or blog (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc...) some readers of such websites or blogs may view the employee as a representative or spokesperson of our camp. In light of that possibility, Camp Playland requires, as a condition of employment at our camp, that employees observe the following guidelines when referring to the camp, its programs or activities, its campers, and/or other employees, in a blog or on a website.

PLEASE REVIEW CAREFULLY:

- 1. Camp Playland is on Facebook/Instagram. If you chose to follow Camp Playland, please look carefully at your privacy settings. Current campers and their parents as well as prospective families will visit our pages. Please limit access to your personal information.***
2. Employees must be respectful in all communications or blogs related to or referencing the camp, its campers and/or other employees.
3. Employees must not use obscenities, profanity or vulgar language.
4. Employees must not use blogs or personal websites to disparage the camp, campers or other employees of the camp.
5. Employees must not use blogs or personal websites to harass, bully, or intimidate other employees or campers.
 - ❖ Behaviors that constitute harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, color, or disability; sexually suggestive, humiliating, or demeaning comments; and threats to stalk, haze, or physically injure another employee or camper.
6. Employees must not use blogs or personal websites to discuss engaging in conduct that is prohibited by camp policies, including, but not limited to, the use of alcohol and drugs, sexual behavior, sexual harassment and bullying.

7. Employees must not post pictures of campers or other employees on a website or in any type of internet communication without obtaining written permission. *The only pictures of campers to be posted are those taken by the photographer and posted on our official website and Facebook/Instagram page.*
8. The use of our copyrighted Camp Playland name or logo is not allowed without written permission.

An employee found to be in violation of any portion of this Social Networking and Blogging Policy will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, a negative job reference or not being asked to return in future summers.

SMOKING/VAPING

Camp Playland is a no smoking/vaping facility. There is no area where smoking/vaping is permitted on campus.

GOLF CARTS

Golf carts are to be used only by directors, division leaders and nurses and must be driven with extreme caution. Campers always have the right of way. When golf carts are not in use, keys must be taken out of ignition.

ABSENCES FROM WORK

Consistent attendance is expected by all staff members. In the event of an unexpected absence due to illness, please notify the camp as early as possible. There are no paid days off.

TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

The staff parking lot is monitored by cameras. Counselors not riding camp buses must be at their assigned area by 9:00 am. Earlier is better. At dismissal, the buses must be off camp property before staff members go to their cars. On a typical day all staff will be dismissed by 4:10 pm.

VISITORS

The campus is closed to visitors during the camp day. All staff wear Camp Playland t-shirts and visitors must check in with security upon arrival. Visitors are given a “visitor” sticker. If you notice an unidentified adult on campus, please alert a director or division leader immediately.

STAFF MEETINGS

Division Leaders and the Program Director will meet with counselors and specialists during the camp day when necessary.

EVALUATIONS/JOB PERFORMANCE

Division Leaders, the Program Director and Directors will evaluate staff and provide feedback throughout the summer. The Directors are eager to hear suggestions and ideas. Please share information frequently with Directors or Division Leaders. Towards the end of the summer you will be e-mailed an evaluation survey to complete. It is important that you are happy. Happy counselors mean happy campers.

PAY DAY

Staff are paid four times during the summer; Friday July 3rd, Friday July 17th, Friday July 31st and Friday August 14th. Attendance bonuses are included in the 2nd and final paychecks. Bus counselor stipends are included in the final paycheck. **Direct deposit is strongly encouraged.** If you would like to arrange for direct deposit, the form can be found in the online staff portal. Camp Playland has a no tipping policy. Do not expect tips from parents.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, STATUTES AND REGULATIONS FOR YOUTH CAMP LICENSING

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

If a staff person suspects that a camper or fellow staff member has suffered abuse or neglect, the Director or a Division Leader must be informed. This information will be documented in the nurses' log and reviewed by the nurse and the Director. Suspected child abuse or neglect will be reported to the DCF Child Abuse Hotline as soon as practicable but not later than 12 hours after the mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected or placed in imminent risk of serious harm; 1-800-842-2288.

After an oral report is filed, the Director will follow regulations as outlined in the Statutes and Regulations for Youth Camp Licensing. Definitions of child abuse are in the state regulations. The regulations are on file in the camp office.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The Owner/Directors of Playland Day Camp and Nursery School have embraced Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In keeping with this policy, no conduct toward any employee which may be viewed as harassing, discriminatory, intimidating, offensive, violent, abusive, or otherwise improper will be tolerated. The management of Playland Day Camp and Nursery School reserves the right to discipline any employee who violates the spirit of this federal law. Disciplinary action may include job termination.

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is sometimes described as unsolicited advances. It may range from inappropriate sexual suggestions to coerced sexual relations. Harassment is viewed as a situation in which an individual in a position to control, influence, or affect another's employment, compensation, promotion, or job assignments uses that power to coerce a person into sexual contact or relations or punishes the refusal. The harasser may be the victims' employer, supervisor, co-worker, or employee. Sexual harassment may also include:

- ❖ *Unsolicited verbal sexual comments*
- ❖ *Subtle pressure for sexual activity*
- ❖ *Sexist remarks about a person's body or sexual activities*
- ❖ *Patting, pinching, or unnecessary touching;*
- ❖ *Demanding sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats involving one's employment, compensation, promotion or job assignment*
- ❖ *Physical assault*

- ❖ *Displaying or passing around posters, pictures, screen saver, e-mail, or other printed materials in the workplace which might be sexual or otherwise offensive to other employees*
- ❖ *Making jokes, insults, or comments in the presence of others who may find it offensive*

The sexual harassment policy includes all eight of the above statements that occur between non supervisory employees as well as those who are employed as staff in this program.

COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All complaints must be reported to Directors. Any complaint or report of harassment is serious and will be acted upon promptly. As Directors of this program we accept full responsibility to maintain a harassment free work environment. To that end, we will:

- *Investigate the complaint with objectivity and fairness.*
- *Request written statements as well as a verbal accounting of the allegation.*
- *Conduct interviews with the complainant as well as any witnesses.*
- *Attempt to maintain confidentiality as is practical.*
- *Interview the alleged offender individually as well as with the complainant if deemed appropriate.*

Immediately following our investigation, if it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to impose an appropriate resolution to the incident.