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Welcome to Summer Discovery Camp!

Camp Director: TBD || **Contact:** Gailmarie Green, ggreen@metroymcas.org

Camp Cell Phone #: 862.400.6019

Camp Site Location: St. Joseph's Catholic Church

240 Franklin Ave, Maplewood, NJ 07040

We are thrilled you will be joining our camp family! Our team has been hard at work preparing for a summer of great activities, trips, experiments, projects and more. We can't wait for the first day, when our campers come through the doors and dive into all the great things we have planned. Throughout the summer, your child will be engaged in activities infused with our core values of Caring, Respect, Honesty, and Responsibility. We truly believe that camp enriches a child's life immensely and hope to create a nurturing, engaging atmosphere.

The following information is a basic guide to help you know what to expect this summer at Summer Discovery. For more, detailed information, please view our Camp Handbook, located on the website.

How will my child benefit from attending Summer Discovery this summer?

You can be confident that your child will be safe and have tons of fun while attending Summer Discovery this summer. Beyond that, we want to help your child gain positive developmental growth over the summer as well. As a result of our efforts, we hope that you will see growth in your child in the following 9 areas.

1. Social Skills
2. Independence
3. Teamwork
4. Confidence
5. Curiosity
6. Responsibility
7. Appreciation for Nature
8. Problem-Solving Confidence
9. Summer Learning Loss Prevention

At Summer Discovery, we are going to be focusing heavily on teamwork, curiosity, and appreciation for nature above all else. We will be incorporating specific strategies and activities that will allow us to focus on gaining positive growth in those areas. Our curriculum covers many aspects of the world around us. Campers will utilize their curiosity and be challenged to critically think during our 3R's (Reading) program. During this time, campers will read short stories, have discussions about the environment and learn many new words and definitions.

Before the First Day

- **Talk with your children about Camp.** Having pleasant, positive conversations about what will happen at camp, as well as going over the daily schedule/theme for the week and talking about friends that they will see while at camp before the week begins will help your child feel more comfortable and will hopefully excite them for camp!
- **Be sure to leave plenty of time** on the first day to get ready and to eat breakfast.
- **Have a plan.** Your child may become upset when you drop them off. We have found from experience that it is best for you to have a routine with your child for drop off. Tell your child that you will be back to pick them up - or tell them who will be picking them up that day. If you are struggling, please let our staff know and we will gently help your child get involved in an activity and the tears will soon disappear.
- **Having a routine and knowing what to expect** allows your child to have less anxiety about their camp day, and starts your day off right too!

NUT-SAFE FACILITY



Keep in mind that we are a **NUT-SAFE FACILITY**. Please make sure your child comes to camp without any nuts, nut products or peanut butter items. Staff will check the ingredients and remove any items that may contain nuts. These items will be returned at pick-up, but we appreciate any effort to eliminate these. Any item that "may contain" peanuts or tree-nuts will not be permitted.

LOST AND FOUND

Clearly label with your child's full name any clothing and possessions that your child brings to camp. "Found" items that have campers' names on them are usually returned the same day or the next day. If you are ever in need, our staff will help you look for a lost item.

CAMP T-SHIRT

Campers will be given their camp T-shirt (included in the cost) on their first trip day. Additional shirts can be purchased at the YMCA office for \$6.00. **On trip days, campers are required to wear their YMCA camp T-shirt.**



CAMP CHECKLIST

☐ **BACKPACK** The following items should be in your camper's backpack.

☐ **Lunch**

- ★ Labeled with name (especially on trip days)
- ★ Non-spoilable food and drink (there is **no refrigeration** available for food)
- ★ **No** gum or nuts of any kind

☐ **Labeled water bottle** (water fountain available at camp site for refills)

☐ **Towel** (2 Days a week) ****Specific Days TBD, this will be communicated as soon as we have confirmation.**

- ★ We will engage in water play 2 days a week. Each camper should bring their own clean towel on those days.

☐ **Change of clothes** (2 days for after water play)

☐ **Bag for wet bathing towels and suits** (2 days for after water play)

☐ **Swim suit** (2 days for after water play)

☐ **Underwear Spare** (2 days for after water play)

☐ **Sunscreen** **** This is often a forgotten item, but incredibly important! ****

☐ **NO ELECTRONICS.** We understand that some campers have phones and watches to communicate with parents when necessary. We ask that these items are kept away and if campers need to contact parents for any reason, they should let a camp staff member know.

☐ **SNEAKERS**

- ★ We will be constantly on the move- walking between activities, playing games, running and jumping! For their safety, they need to have sneakers to be able to participate in all of these activities. **Dressy shoes, open toed shoes, sandals and flip flops will NOT be permitted.**

☐ **HATS/SUNGLASSES**

- ★ A hat is a great way to keep the sun out of your eyes and help keep you cool while outside. We ask that these items are not worn indoors.

☐ **PERSONAL READING MATERIAL**

☐ **AN OPEN MIND**

- ★ Summer Discovery is a diverse community with campers from different grades, walks of life, schools and families. Each camper has their own academic skills and challenges which allows for our community to be an environment where campers learn not only from the staff, but each other as well. Any type of bullying, verbal or physical, will not be tolerated and we celebrate diversity.



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WHERE DO I DROP OFF?

CAMPSITE LOCATION: The campsite for Summer Discovery Camp is St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, 240 Franklin Ave, Maplewood, NJ 07040. To allow for a staggered drop-off for all children and staff prior to entry, we will be following the schedule below to minimize wait times.

Our curbside drop-off schedule will be the following:

8:00-8:30am- Summer Discovery 1

8:30-9:00am- Summer Discovery 2

- ★ Core Camp Program Hours (i.e. structured, scheduled hours) are from 9am – 3:00pm. Campers may be dropped off as early as 7:30am.
- ★ Campers who are permitted to walk to camp and sign themselves in should arrive during the 8:30-9:00am time slot.
- ★ If your time slot for drop-off does not work for you, please contact the Camp Director to arrange an earlier time.
- ★ We ask that adults dropping off during curbside drop-off remain in the car to help with the flow. A staff member will assist your camper with leaving the car and checking in.
- ★ If you need to speak with a Coordinator at drop-off for any reason that may take longer than a quick check-in, please legally park your car to avoid traffic build-up.

WHERE DO I PICK UP?

CAMPSITE LOCATION: The campsite for Summer Discovery Camp is St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, 240 Franklin Ave, Maplewood, NJ 07040. To allow for a staggered pick-up for all children, we will be following the schedule below to minimize wait times.

Our curbside pick-up schedule will be the following:

3:00-3:30pm- Summer Discovery 1

3:30-4:00pm- Summer Discovery 2

- ★ Core Camp Program Hours are from 9am – 3:00pm.
- ★ Campers who are permitted to walk home from camp and sign themselves out will be able to sign themselves out starting at 3:30pm. If you would like to request that these campers stay until a specific time, please let us know.
- ★ If your time slot for pick-up does not work for you, please contact the Camp Director to arrange an alternative time.
- ★ If you need to speak with a Coordinator at pick-up for any reason that may take longer than a quick check-in, please legally park your car to avoid traffic build-up.
- ★ If you are picking up campers in both Summer Discovery 1 and Summer Discovery 2, please let us know which time slot you would prefer and we will ensure those campers are ready at the same time.



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Aftercare runs from 3:30–6:00pm. To pick-up aftercare campers, please park legally.

COMMUNICATION

- ★ **Electronic:** During the summer, we will be communicating with you through Pulse and Mailchimp communications. This will be our main source of communication with you so [please let us know](#) if there are any changes in your contact information. If you'd like to add an additional email to our Mailchimp list, please contact kcestar@metroymcas.org. We will also be sending regular updates every week during the summer.
- ★ **BAND:** For photos and general fun announcements, we are using BAND! Our band invite link will be sent soon.
- ★ **In Person:** Please feel free to request to speak to your child's coordinator at any time with questions or concerns. Our team will be working very hard to make every child happy. Please understand that drop-off and pick-up can be a bit hectic and busy for us. If you feel that you need to have a longer conversation with a coordinator– kindly ask them to call you during the afternoon or next morning when they have a chance, or schedule time to speak in person that is during a better time.
- ★ **PULSE:** Our summer camp programs use Pulse, a management system where you'll input essential camper information (emergency contacts, health details, etc.). You'll receive an invitation via email to create your account. This information must be completed before your child's first day at camp.

Extreme Weather Update

On extreme heat or rainy days, drop-off and pick-up remains the same. On heavy rain days, we do not perform curbside– your camper and staff will remain inside. For drop-off on heavy rain days, you will need to park legally and walk them to the door for sign-in. For pick-up, you will park legally and come to the door. The weather can often change quickly in the summer, so we ask that unless we communicate a change in swim, please come prepared on water play days. We try to make the best decision close to the time as we want to get in as many water days as possible!

Weather Monitoring: We track conditions daily using Weather.com and the guidelines in Weather Watch. Families will be notified promptly if plans need to shift.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Leave electronics, toys, and stuffed animals at home. Phones and smartwatches must remain off and are not to be used during camp. If a camper needs to contact a parent, they will ask a staff member.



DAILY ACTIVITIES

(These are examples of activities campers might have each day)

- ★ **Water Play** (2 days a week)
- ★ **STEM**
- ★ **Outdoor Play**
- ★ **3Rs** (see below)
- ★ **Math Games** (curated games that make math fun)
- ★ **Freeplay**
- ★ **Thematic Art**
- ★ **Large Group Activities**
- ★ **Weekly Trips**

Specialist-Led Activities

Many of the camper group activities will be led by an activity specialist. The counselors of each grade-level group will attend their specials at assigned times. The specialists will guide the campers, with the assistance of their counselors, through a variety of activities in that specialty area. Topics explored in each special will be reviewed in weekly updates.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE:

this is just a sample daily schedule for an example, specific blocks and times may change

7:30-8:30am Morning Care

8:30am-9:30am Drop-off

9:30am-10:15am Morning Block 1 (Example- Art, STEM, 3Rs)

10:15-10:45am Morning Snack (provided by parents)

10:45am-11:45am Morning Block 2 (Example- Outside Play)

11:45pm-12:45pm Handwashing, LUNCH, Handwashing

12:45pm-1:45pm Afternoon Block 1 (Example- Art, STEM, 3Rs)



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1:45pm-2:45pm Afternoon Block 2 (Example- Freeplay)

2:45pm-3:00pm Transition: get ready for curbside, head to aftercare

3:00pm END OF REGULAR CAMP DAY/Curbside Pick-Up Begins

3:30pm-6:00pm Aftercare (Aftercare campers will be provided snack)

3Rs

Our 3Rs program is an integral part of Summer Discovery. 3Rs is a reading program where our campers read theme-related books (or non-fiction articles, for the older campers) aloud and identify key vocabulary words. Campers then participate in word searches, crosswords and other interactive activities to explore the content of the book/article and definitions. The idea is that they are learning new words and critically thinking about words with multiple meanings.

We are so ready for the summer and can't wait to meet all our campers! Please don't hesitate to call us with any further questions or comments you may have now or in the future about camp. We are always open to your suggestions and ideas.

Email: ggreen@metroymcas.org

Welcome Center: (973)762-4145

