



Ensuring a successful camp experience for your child

## **2021 Parent Handbook**

Wildwood Outdoor Education Center

7095 W 399th St, La Cygne, KS 66040

phone: 913.757.4500 fax: 913.757.2624

[www.wildwoodctr.org](http://www.wildwoodctr.org)

THANK YOU for choosing Wildwood for your child this summer! Please review this handbook carefully to prepare both you and your child for a summer camp adventure with us.



## **Wildwood Values:**

Wildwood is where kids grow better outside. We celebrate **learning** and recognize that we are all constantly learning from each other and from nature.

We commit to **stewardship**, living thoughtfully on the land and in community with each other. We use resources wisely.

And, we are committed to equity and **diversity**. Wildwood campers and staff come from many geographic, racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds. We reduce barriers to participation so children have equal access to our programs. We create space that is safe for all. We intentionally design our program so all staff and campers can be their best and whole self at Wildwood.

Wildwood continues to proudly serve our mission of providing children with experiences of living and learning in the outdoors from our beautiful 150 acre camp facility composed of forests, meadows, streams and ponds. We have done so since our founding in 1980.

We thank you for sharing a part of your summer with us!

**Benefits from Camp** Parents love Wildwood because kids get outside and stay engaged in learning over the summer. Campers benefit from new friends and feelings of connectedness. They also get a boost in problem solving confidence and teamwork experience. Our goal is to give kids the tools they need for healthy habits and bright futures!

## Welcome Home!

We have missed paddling in the pond with you, and roasting s'mores. We are thrilled to be a part of your summer fun again this summer. Wildwood has few exciting additions to camp since campers last sang "Purple Stew" around a campfire.

- Air Conditioning in the cabins!
- Kayaks!
- New network of trails!
- Bigger Garden!
- Improvements to bathrooms!

Wildwood is also working with the local, state and federal health departments to ensure safety for the campers and staff while at camp. This means that camp programs will be run differently than before, much like most things have changed in our lives. As guidelines are constantly changing we are keeping families up to date on our COVID-19 plans through this dedicated web page:

<https://wildwoodctr.org/covid-19-information/>

Please check that web page frequently for all of our current plans to mitigate risk with COVID-19.

## Prior to Arrival at Camp

1. If you have this handbook, **your camper's completed registration form should already be on file** with Wildwood. If it is not, please visit <https://wildwoodctr.org/campers/> to register for your desired camp session.
2. **Full payment of your camper's tuition is expected two (2) weeks prior to your camper's arrival at camp.** Payments may be made online using the registration site or by cash, check, money order by contacting the office. Experiencing economic hardship? Please contact our office at 913-757-4500 to discuss scholarship and payment options.
3. A couple of weeks before the start of your camp week, **all families will receive a call from a Wildwood staff member** to go over updates and answer any questions. This is also the time to give us any changes to medication, updates on expectations due to COVID-19 protocols, and information that will be helpful for us to know about your camper.

**Camp Life** A session at Camp Wildwood increases kids' feelings of connection to others, affinity for nature, interest in exploration, problem solving confidence, teamwork and friendship skills!

All campers will create schedules with their cabin group by choosing which activities they would like to sign up for each day. Some of our most popular and unique activities include working as a team on the **adventure challenge course** (low ropes), engaging in **STEM exploration** activities, and building **bio-inspired designs** in the Makerspace. We also offer **swimming, fishing, basketball, archery, kayaking, art, reading, improv, survival hikes, campfires, gardening and field games**. The activities are endless, and the camp staff enjoy coming up with new activities throughout the summer.

**Bus transportation.** When registering your camper, you may choose bus transportation or parent drop-off/pickup. Unless we receive written instructions from the custodial parent, the drop-off and pick-up method may not be changed, and the person signing in at drop-off must also pick up the camper.

**Bus stops:**

- Independence Center at the intersection of I-70 and I-470, Kansas City, MO: Parent drop off 7:45am Monday, Bus leaves at 8:00am; Parent pick up at 5:15pm Friday
- HyVee, 9400 E 350 Hwy, Raytown, MO: Parent drop off 8:30am Monday, Bus leaves at 8:45am; Parent pick up 4:45pm Friday
- HyVee, 6655 Martway, Mission, KS: Parent drop off 7:45am Monday, Bus leaves at 8:00am; Parent pick up 5:00pm Friday
- Scheels, 6503 W 135th St., Overland Park, KS: Parent drop off 8:30am Monday, Bus leaves at 8:45am; Parent pick up 4:15pm Friday

## **First Day of Camp - MONDAY**

**Bus Riders:** When arriving at the bus stop, please have all medication in a labeled ziploc bag separate from camper luggage. Please remain in your vehicles with your camper and their luggage. Parents will line up in their vehicles to drop off their camper and luggage. To reduce the risk of unnecessary exposure, please do not bring additional people for dropoff.

At the bus stop, a Wildwood staff member will approach the vehicle, take the camper's temperature, and conduct a short questionnaire. Please wear face masks while interacting with the camp staff. Once the camper is cleared for activities, staff will escort the camper to the bus. No parents will get out of their cars.

In an emergency parents will be called to inform them of any changes to bus stops or times. Parents are responsible for supervision of their child until they are signed in and on the bus and after they are signed out from the camp staff at the end of the week. Please share these bus safety rules with your child before riding the bus:

- Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus.
- Do not run or horseplay at your bus stop. Be careful when approaching the bus stop.
- Do not move toward the bus until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver signals that it is safe to walk towards the bus.
- Keep head and hands (entire body) inside the bus at all times.
- Assist in keeping the bus clean. There should be no eating or drinking on the bus.
- Campers may talk quietly. Remember that loud talking, laughing or unnecessary confusion could divert the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident.
- Leave belongings out of aisles and driver's compartment.
- Never tamper with the bus, the emergency door, emergency window exits, or any other equipment.
- Campers should remain in their seats, facing the front of the bus with both shoulders to the back of the seat. (This provides maximum safety in case of an accident or sudden stop.) Campers should never stand at any time while the bus is in motion.
- No smoking or possession of any type of tobacco products, lighters, or matches is allowed on the bus.
- In case of a road emergency, remain in the bus and follow the driver's directions.
- Campers are to follow all directives of the driver upon the first request.

**Parent drop off at camp:** If your camper is not riding the bus, please arrive at Wildwood for check in from **9:30am-10:30am**. Our address is 7095 W 399th St, La Cygne, KS 66040.

When arriving, please have all medication in a labeled ziploc bag separate from camper luggage. Please remain in your vehicles with your camper and their luggage. Parents will line up in their vehicles to drop off their camper and luggage. Please wear face masks while interacting with the camp staff.

A Wildwood staff member will approach the vehicle, take the camper's temperature, and conduct a short questionnaire. Once the camper is cleared for activities, staff will escort the camper to their cabin leader. No parents will get out of their cars. To reduce the risk of unnecessary exposure, please do not bring additional people for dropoff. Pets are not permitted on Wildwood property. Please leave them at home.

**All Campers:** If your child is unable to attend camp, **please contact us as soon as you are able**. After check in is completed, we will call the families of any campers who are absent to verify if they are coming for the session.

**Health Check.** Campers will receive a health check on their first day. We will check for any campers with a temperature over 100 degrees and for lice. If these are found on your camper we will contact you to determine next steps.

**T-Shirts** T-shirts purchased online will be given to the camper to take home on the last day of camp.

### **Closing day - FRIDAY**

Bus riders will return to the bus stop where they were picked up, according to the schedule on page 3. Please remain in your vehicle and a staff member will bring your camper and their luggage to you.

Picking up at camp: Pick up for non-bus riders is at **4:00pm- 5:00pm**. Please remain in your vehicle and line up as at check-in. A staff member will bring your camper and their luggage to you.

**Lodging** Campers stay in modern cabins that have bunk beds, showers and bathrooms. The cabins have electricity and air conditioning. Campers stay with other campers their age and several camp counselors.

**Cabin mate request policy** We will attempt to accommodate cabin mate requests but they are not guaranteed. Campers may request one cabin mate; cabin mates must request each other and be within two years of age of all campers in their cabin in order to keep cabin activities age appropriate. If you did not state your cabin mate request on your registration form, please call us at least two weeks prior to your camper's check in day.

**Food Service** Wildwood meals are served by camp staff and include lots of healthy, kid friendly food and plenty of options. Food options are always available for kids who are vegetarian, lactose intolerant or who have food allergies. Please let us know about all special dietary needs on your child's health history form. Camp may not be able to accommodate strict Kosher or other extreme diets.

### **Lost and Found Policy**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Wildwood is limiting items held in lost and found after each camp session ends. We want to be mindful of safe storage space and how to prevent exposure of staff and campers from potentially contaminated items, week to week.

As such, camp will only hold the following specific list of items:

- a. Jackets / Sweatshirts
- b. Sleeping Bags, Blankets, Pillows
- c. Prescription glasses, durable medical equipment, prescription medication
- d. Shoes (not water shoes or sandals)
- e. Backpacks

Camp will keep these items for no longer than 30 days from the end of the session. After this time, these items will be donated or thrown away. Please note that these items will be held at the discretion of camp staff. Items that are soiled, damaged, or otherwise deemed not able to be safely stored will be disposed of.

Daily cabin cleanup helps campers maintain their belongings and helps staff identify misplaced items during the camp session. **We highly encourage parents to label all items with their camper's name** to help our staff identify items during the camp session. Many items look similar and it can be confusing for both staff and campers.

As a reminder, please do not send your camper with anything that is highly valuable or irreplaceable. Things like jewelry or favorite stuffed animals can be easily lost or damaged. Electronics, including phones, are not permitted at camp. **Phones may not be used at camp and will be confiscated** and returned to families at the end of the session. Camp is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items – including confiscated phones.

After the camp session ends, if one of the listed items is missing, please contact Wildwood at the following address to arrange a pickup of your items: [laura@wildwoodctr.org](mailto:laura@wildwoodctr.org)

**Swimming Skills Checks** Wildwood welcomes campers with all swimming abilities and recognizes that each camper will arrive at camp with a different level of skill. Throughout the week Wildwood will offer opportunities for campers to practice and develop their abilities as swimmers. Swim checks will be scheduled on the first full day and each camper will participate in a swim check with their cabin group.

**Care Packages/ Mail** Mail is delivered by rural carrier to and from Wildwood Monday through Saturday. Please plan on **at least 3 business days** for your letter to arrive at Wildwood (you probably should mail your letter before your child leaves home!) Campers look forward to receiving mail at camp, so we encourage you to write to your child often. We will also encourage your child to write you back! Mail is distributed each afternoon. To write your child via US mail, please use the following format:

Your child's name  
Wildwood Outdoor Education Center  
7095 W. 399th St.  
La Cygne, KS 66040

Because we serve such wonderful food here at Wildwood, your child will probably be way too full to enjoy any additional candies or snacks. We don't allow snacks or any food in our cabins anyway as they attract critters like raccoons and mice! If you do want to send a "care package", include only non-food items.

**Email** If you'd like to email your camper while they are at Wildwood please send it to: [camper@wildwoodctr.org](mailto:camper@wildwoodctr.org). Put your camper's name in the subject line of the email. Emails are printed at least once a day by 6:30pm; if sending after 6:30pm your child will receive it the next day. To keep our printing costs down, please do not add photos or colored pictures to the emails. **Campers will not have access to a computer to respond to your message.**

**Visitors/ Telephone Calls** Our Wildwood Summer Camp program is designed to foster independence and personal growth. An integral part in achieving this in our campers is the extended experience away from home. In order to keep our facility as safe as possible, unannounced visitors are not allowed onto camp property. Parent visits are discouraged as they tend to disrupt the activity schedule, pull staff away from their duties working with the campers, and cause the campers to think "something must be wrong because my parents are here." We encourage correspondence between parents and campers through letters, postcards and email. Our staff is available to answer phone calls from parents while their child is at camp. If you call, expect to speak with a staff member who will check in with your camper's group leader; one of those individuals will return your call with an update on how your child is doing. Asking to speak directly to your camper can instill feelings of homesickness that weren't there before the call. That feeling can spread to other campers and disrupt what was a happy, calm cabin group! Be assured, we will contact you immediately if there is any cause for concern about your child's well-being.

**Updates from Campers** We will update our Facebook page (Wildwood Outdoor Education Center) throughout the week to keep parents up to date on camp activities.

**Severe Weather Procedures** Our camp staff is well trained on procedures for severe weather. With training through frequent drills, the staff is directed to focus their attention on keeping kids calm and safe. Many times, calls to the camp during severe weather situations are routed to the camp's voicemail as the staff are with campers. The leadership team will return your calls as soon as possible when they are safely able to do so.

Wildwood has a storm shelter in the central part of the camp and in the cabins across the pond. There is a nearby emergency siren that serves our camp and the local community.

**Camp is for the Camper** All programs at Wildwood offer opportunities to learn and have fun. It is our sincere desire to offer a day full of nature study, outdoor skills, recreation, art while also recognizing the special interests of each of our campers. Our staff bring a variety of skills and talents to share with every camper and every camper will participate in structured cabin activities.

We know that you put great trust in us in order to help your child grow and learn with us at Wildwood and because of this we place immense value on creating the safest camp environment possible. We intensively screen each of our employees and provide each of our employees with extensive training on topics including: child safety, first aid/CPR, childhood development, healthy forms of communication and much more.

**Feelings of Missing Home** Feelings of missing home are very common in children attending summer camp, especially if it is their first time away from home. Leaving home is an integral part of fostering independence in youth so we suggest parents talk with their campers about missing home and the feelings that they may have when they get to camp. We aim to build a sense of community at Wildwood, and while we know we can't replace your home we want the next best thing to be right here! We do NOT suggest making "deals" with your camper if they are feeling anxious about going to camp for the first time (i.e. please do not tell your child "I'll pick you up early if you just try to go!"). This shows campers you don't expect them to succeed.

**Feelings of Missing Your Child** This is normal, too! Parents sending their child away for the first time often miss their children more than they expect. Avoid the temptation to call and check in on your child – although it's OK to do that. Camp staff are vigilant about health care, behavior and homesickness with children, and we will let you know if anything is wrong.

**Connected Response** At Wildwood each camper is placed with a camp group with a camp leader. That Camp Leader will work towards building a connection and mutual trust with each camper in their group. When a camper is overwhelmed, or having a tough time at camp the camp leader will use connected-reponses to help that camper. That can include, providing a quiet space to sit together, talking with, teaching coping methods, and working towards a solution together to better support the camper. It can also include calling and talking with a family member to help the camp staff better understand and provide care for the camper.

**Ensuring a successful camp experience** Is your camper still a little unsure about leaving home for a week and enrolling in summer camp? Please call our office to talk about it. We have staff on site year-round to discuss the positive camp experiences Wildwood provides!

**Healthcare Prescriptions/ over the counter medications** All prescriptions and over the counter medication brought into camp **MUST be in the original container**. This includes all prescription medications, inhalers, vitamins, creams, lotions, aspirins, etc.

- All medication will be turned in to the Health Manager during check-in. The Health Manager will dispense medication at proper times and in the proper amounts.
- If the dosage information on the medication container is not correct, please have written orders signed by the prescribing physician authorizing the revised dosage instruction.

- Please put all medications in a ziploc bag with your child's full name. Because our Health Manager will store all medications in a secure location we ask that you not pack medication or forms in your camper's luggage.
- Parents are encouraged to visit with the camp professional staff about any individual health or medical matter concerning your camper.
- Campers with inhalers or epipens are encouraged to bring a backup of each. Inhalers or epipens will stay with the camper's group at all times and the backup will be kept in the health center.

**Living Outdoors** In recent years Lyme Disease and West Nile Virus have received considerable attention and it is important for Wildwood to inform parents that ticks and mosquitoes are native to the Wildwood environment. Wildwood adheres to recommendations by the Kansas Department of Health & Environment and the Center for Disease Control regarding effective methods of deterring bites (and therefore risk of infection), from mosquitoes and ticks. Parents are recommended to provide insect repellent containing at least 10% DEET and to encourage your child to use insect repellent daily. In the event that a tick is removed from your child by Wildwood staff you will be notified in writing when your child returns home.

**Insurance/ Illness Information** In the event of a serious illness or accident, parents and/or guardians will be notified at once. In the event of a serious illness or accident requiring medical attention we will contact family to determine if EMS is needed to transport your camper to AdventHealth South at 7820 W. 165th Street, Overland Park, KS. If it is not an emergency, we will contact the family to determine if they wish to come pick up their camper.

Each morning campers and staff will receive a temperature check and will be asked about any new symptoms. Campers and staff will also be educated on early communication if they start feeling sick. If a camper starts to feel ill, they will immediately report to the Health Supervisor. Based on their symptoms, our medical professionals will determine if the camper needs to be isolated or not. Our goal will be to remove campers or staff with COVID-19 symptoms from camp as soon as possible, rather than to isolate them for long periods of time. We will not perform or take campers for testing due to turn-around time for results. Parents will be notified if there was a confirmed COVID-19 case at camp, and the CDC will be involved in contact tracing.

Any medical expenses incurred due to illnesses or injuries at camp are the responsibility of the camper family. Wildwood carries sickness and accident insurance on campers that may

cover some out of pocket expenses for covered accidents and illnesses that happen at camp. This is secondary to family insurance. The family's insurance is primary and must be applied first. Remaining out-of-pocket costs may then be submitted to Wildwood's insurance plan for possible payment up to the limit of the Wildwood coverage (currently \$3,000).

**Refund Policies** The total of your camp fee is due two weeks prior to opening day of your camper's session.

- Transfers from one camp session to another are allowed but depend on availability. We ask that you please make your transfer requests at least three weeks prior to your camper's session.
- If you cancel your session 2 weeks or less before the start date of camp or do not show up for camp, you forfeit your deposit as well as any other payments made to Wildwood.
- Cancellations due to illness will be refunded in full. Submit your request in writing with a note from your child's physician.

**Who to call?**

With questions about registration, fees and payment, cancellations or refunds:

Office Manager, 9137574500 or [cindy@wildwoodctr.org](mailto:cindy@wildwoodctr.org)

With questions about staff, camp programs, individual camper needs, or activities:

Camp Director, 9137574500 or [Laura@wildwoodctr.org](mailto:Laura@wildwoodctr.org)

**Suggested Packing List for Summer Camp at Wildwood** Please note: We do not provide laundry services to our campers unless it is an emergency. We suggest marking items off as you pack them and sending this list with your camper.

*We encourage you to mark all of your items with your camper's initials. Packing can be done in a duffel bag, trash bag, sturdy box, etc.*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> sleeping bag or twin size sheets and a blanket | <input type="checkbox"/> toothbrush/ toothpaste  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pillow   | <input type="checkbox"/> soap/ shampoo   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shirts for each day                            | <input type="checkbox"/> deodorant/ toiletries   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shorts for each day                            | <input type="checkbox"/> flashlight (and batteries)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 pair of closed toe shoes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> bug spray   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 pair of long pants                           | <input type="checkbox"/> sunscreen   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a light jacket or sweatshirt                   | <input type="checkbox"/> water bottle  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> socks and underwear for each day               | <input type="checkbox"/> sunglasses/hat  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pajamas  | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 Face masks ( we will have face masks available at camp as well) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> raincoat/ poncho                               |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> swimsuit                                       | <b>OPTIONAL:</b> white t-shirt or something to tie dye                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 bath/ beach towel(s)                       |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> laundry bag/ old pillowcase                    |  |

If you are having difficulty providing any items for your camper, please contact us. We can help!

**PLEASE do not bring:** Cell phones, electronics, books or magazines containing adult content, money, candy, food or drinks, gum, knives/ weapons, fireworks, personal sports equipment, jewelry/ valuables, irreplaceable items, alcohol, tobacco, or drugs. Campers who bring drugs, weapons, alcohol or tobacco will be immediately dismissed without refund. Other prohibited items will be kept in the office until the end of the session.