

Parent Handbook

2017~2018



Elementary Grades K-5
Middle School Grades 6-8

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Registration forms can be emailed to: WPC_recreation@westfordma.gov

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Dear Westford Family and Friends,

Welcome to the Westford Partnership for Children (WPC) After School Enrichment Program! As the new Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation and WPC Program Director, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself.

I have worked in the town of Westford for the past 17 years, beginning my journey in 1999 as the School Age Program Director of the Roudenbush Community Center. I left my position with Roudenbush after the birth of my first child, but later returned to work for the town of Westford when I was hired as the WPC Site Director of the John A. Crisafulli Elementary School in 2005. In 2008, I took on the additional role as the Director of Westford Recreation's Kids Club Summer Program.

As we enter the thirteenth year of our elementary and the tenth full year of our middle school after school enrichment programs, I am excited to continue to offer our community more amazing programming. Implementing special activity selections and hiring professional educators within the field allows us to support the enrichment part of our program, which we continue to hold to a very high standard. In addition, allotting a portion of the afternoon for homework and recreational activities allows our participants to make their own choices, build trusting relationships with peers, and make good decisions during their time after school.

Westford Recreation takes great pride in our quality programming and feel exceptionally humbled to be able to offer flexibility while maintaining structure in a safe and nurturing environment for such a diverse population of our community's students. WPC's success would not be possible without the unwavering support of our collaborators, Westford Public Schools. We are extremely grateful for the relationships we have built within our school system and continue to foster those relationships with Recreation staff and WPS faculty communication. We also want to take a moment to thank the Westford community as whole for their continued support.

This handbook is full of helpful details and information. Please keep it in an accessible place for reference throughout the year. Occasionally, we will send out addendums as needed. Creating a program experience for your child that is nurturing, fun, and enriching is a priority for all of us. We welcome your feedback and look forward to working with you and your family.

Again, thank you for contributing to our success!

Sincerely,



Michelle Collett
Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation
Westford Partnership for Children Director
mcollett@westfordma.gov

WPC After School Enrichment Program Sites, Telephone Numbers, and Staff

WPC Site	Site Telephone #	Site Director	Site Director Email
Abbot School (Grades 3-5)	Site Cell: (978) 799-9259	Kim Petalas	KPetalas@westfordma.gov
Crisafulli School (Grades 3-5)	Landline: (978) 692-0248	Joe Cincotta	JCincotta@westfordma.gov
Day School (Grades 3-5)	Landline: (978) 392-7859 Site Cell: (978) 799-8989	Tamara DeMaio	TDeMaio@westfordma.gov
Miller School (Grades K-2)	Landline: (978) 692-2067	Donna Burnham	DBurnham@westfordma.gov
Nabnasset School (Grades K-2)	Landline: (978) 692-0799 Site Cell: (978) 799-9586	Sara Waterman	SWaterman@westfordma.gov
Robinson School (Grades K-2)	Landline: (978) 692-0913 Site Cell: (978) 799-1007	Linda Hillman Beth McKeeman	LHillman@westfordma.gov BMckeeman@westfordma.gov
Stony Brook Middle School (Grades 6-8)	Site Cell: (978) 265-2063	Merideth Lencsak	MLencsak@westfordma.gov

Westford Recreation reserves the right to make corrections and/or changes to policies and procedures listed in this handbook at any time.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND MISSION

Westford Partnership for Children (WPC) After School Enrichment Program was created in 2004 to provide a safe, constructive, stimulating, and fun environment for Westford elementary and middle school children during the high risk after school hours.

The WPC After School Enrichment Program for elementary school students offers homework assistance, science exploration, math enrichment, reading and storytelling, music and theater, arts and crafts, sports and games, civic engagement and involvement, as well as other activities to support and promote healthy social and emotional development for grades K-5. There is a separate curriculum for grades K-2 and 3-5. Our activities reinforce and enrich concepts and skills your child(ren) learn in school through simple tasks, as well as more complex, challenging interdisciplinary projects, and also play and gross motor development. Our program allows your child(ren) to learn about topics and interests they may not necessarily have time to explore during school hours.

Middle school students are welcome to join the WPC REC Club at the Stony Brook Middle School. Blanchard Middle School students will be bused to Stony Brook at 1:55 p.m., dismissal time. Each day, students will start with a snack and enjoy thirty minutes of “free time” before beginning homework at 2:30 p.m. Later, they may choose to continue homework, cheer on peers in sporting events, participate in cooking classes or arts and crafts activities, play indoor/outdoor sports, enjoy various games, watch a movie on the auditorium’s projector screen, or simply spend some time in the library. Students may catch the Stony Brook Middle School’s 3:00 p.m. late bus that runs Tuesday through Thursday, beginning mid-September when Stony Brook’s clubs start. The REC Club also has its own late bus that departs Stony Brook at 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday beginning in September, for an additional fee. Preregistration is required. PLEASE NOTE: REC Club 4:30 p.m. late bus will only run with sufficient enrollment.

Our staff maintains a dedicated, positive attitude toward learning and develop meaningful relationships with each child while promoting three critical concepts in our program: safety, positive youth development, and academic enrichment and support.

WPC is a collaboration with Westford Public Schools. WPC provides safe, structured programs with a range of supervised activities intentionally designed to encourage learning and development outside of the school day. There are many opportunities for creativity and choice within these structured activities and we strongly encourage socialization with peers and staff.

PROGRAM GOALS

- To meet the needs of our families in providing quality and affordable after school programs.
- To reduce conflict between parental responsibilities and work requirements/schedules by providing a reliable, high quality, school age program.
- To provide and maintain a well-trained, professional, competent staff.
- To provide activities and materials that help develop an understanding of and respect for our culturally diversified community.
- To promote self-esteem and emphasize positive values in the relationship children and adolescents have with each other and adults.
- To encourage creativity by providing a variety of experiences, materials, and learning activities.
- To provide a safe, accepting, nurturing, and inviting environment.
- To provide developmentally appropriate activities and offer a variety of recreational, instructional, educational, and physical programs.
- To provide opportunities that will encourage growth, socialization, and learning.
- To effectively communicate with parents/guardians concerning their child(ren)’s needs.
- To provide an environment that fosters good health and proper nutrition.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Days and Hours of Operation

WPC/REC Club After School Enrichment Program runs Monday through Friday. The program begins the first day of school and ends the last full day of school (there is no program on the last day of school, as it is an Early Release).

Daily operating hours of our K-8 programs are from school dismissal to 5:45 p.m., with a closing window from 5:45-6:00 p.m.

Location

WPC Elementary Grades K-5:

Our program runs at each K-5 elementary school. Your child(ren) will attend the after school program at the school they attend daily.

School (Program Site)	Program Central Location	WPC Phone Number at Site
Abbot School	Cafeteria	Site Cell: (978) 799-9259
Crisafulli School	Cafeteria	Landline: (978) 692-0248
Day School	Cafeteria	Landline: (978) 392-7859 Site Cell: (978) 799-8989
Miller School	Cafeteria	Landline: (978) 692-2067
Nabnasset School	Cafeteria	Landline: (978) 692-0799 Site Cell: (978) 799-9586
Robinson School	Room 1	Landline: (978) 692-0913 Site Cell: (978) 799-1007

REC Club Grades 6-8:

Middle school REC Club is held at Stony Brook Middle School. Blanchard students will be bused to Stony Brook upon dismissal.

School (Program Site)	Program Central Location	REC Club Phone Number
Stony Brook Middle School	Library	(978) 265-2063

Early Release Days

Beginning January 1, 2013, we started including Early Release days as regular registration days; For example, if your child attends Wednesdays and an Early Release day falls on a Wednesday, the same procedure and fee for an after-school day will apply (i.e., one block=\$12, two blocks=\$24, three blocks=\$36). There is no additional registration form required. The program will start at school dismissal (11:00 a.m. for middle school, 11:40 a.m. for grades 3-5, and 12:20 p.m. for K-2). There is no additional charge for the extra time: Consider it on us. Full-time participants: Early Release days are included in the \$1100/session payment. Your child will remain at their regularly scheduled K-8 school for the entirety of the program. PLEASE NOTE: Middle school REC Club participants will have the opportunity to attend various field trips on Early Release days for an additional fee, with sufficient enrollment.

You must provide your child with a lunch on Early Release days or you will incur a fee of \$10.

If your child(ren) are enrolled in the WPC program but are not registered for the day of an Early Release and you would like for them to attend, you will need to call the Recreation Department by noon, one business day prior.

Early Release fees must be paid via your credit/debit card on file (see *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form*).

If the Early Release falls on a day your child(ren) are registered and they will not be attending, you will need to call the Recreation Department by noon and report your child(ren) absent from the program. Failure to notify us of an absence will result in a \$10 finder's fee, per child (see page 8).

Special Programs

Our programs are not held on school holidays. However, Special Programs are available for a separate registration and fee on conference and Professional Development days (full days off), and during Winter (February) and Spring (April) Break. There are no WPC/REC Club Special Programs held during Holiday (December) Break.

WPC Special Programs are available for WPC/REC Club participants as well as for children who are not in the program. The policies identified in this handbook also apply to all WPC/REC Club Special Programs.

Please refer to the WPC registration forms for dates of Special Programs. Registration forms will be available at your child's WPC program site, at the Recreation Department, and on our website (www.westfordrec.com) at least two weeks prior to the program.

Email Blasts

Due to our increasing customer base: Program delays, cancellations, and Recreation updates will be communicated through email only. Please register to receive Recreation program updates, WPC Program registration forms, date reminders, and cancellations.

It's easy to subscribe: Go to: www.westfordma.gov - Click the "Notify Me®" icon on the homepage - Using "Notify Me®", type your email address in the box and select "Sign In" - Scroll down to "News Flash" and click the email icon next to "Recreation News"

REGISTRATION

Registering Your Child(ren)

The WPC elementary program, as well as the middle school REC Club, is broken down into five sessions, approximately two months each, throughout the school year.

You may register your child(ren) for the entire year, for one session, or for as many sessions as you need. Registration forms act as a schedule for the entire session. Session activities with limited availability will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

All forms and payments must be submitted to the Recreation Department. No forms/payments will be accepted by WPC sites/staff. Those who have a completed *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form* on file will be able to submit WPC registration forms and Special Program forms to the office via fax or email. **PLEASE NOTE:** Registration deadlines and late fees will still apply.

FORMS ARE DUE BY 4 P.M., ONE WEEK PRIOR TO YOUR START DATE; For example, if your child is starting on a Wednesday, forms are due by 4 p.m. the Wednesday prior. Any and all late forms and/or payments will incur a \$25 late fee. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Due to the nature of our program, no child will be able to start on the same day their registration forms are received by the Recreation Department. Any child(ren) that arrive at the program without being registered for that session will incur a fee of \$15/day attended until registration form and payment are received, in addition to the \$25 late fee and daily block fee(s). **PLEASE NOTE:** If your child(ren) show up at the program with registration form/payment in hand, your child(ren) are NOT considered registered. A child is registered only after registration form and payment are received, time stamped, and processed by the Parks and Recreation Department.

You must fill out a NEW REGISTRATION FORM with activity selections EACH SESSION (unless you have completed and submitted a *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form for Annual/Full-Year Enrollment*). **INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED.**

Registration for WPC programs can be for one to three blocks per day; For example, you may want to register your child(ren) for a minimum of one block for one day a week, throughout an entire session. Or, you may decide to schedule your child(ren) for a couple blocks each day of the week for an entire session. Alternatively, you may want to register your child(ren) for a full session, three blocks per day, five days per week. But, you must register your child(ren) for either an entire session or the remainder of an entire session, and for a minimum of one block, one day per week.

Annual Registration

Annual registration is an option for full-time, full-year participants (i.e. children who are registered Monday through Friday, from school dismissal to 5:45 p.m. for the ENTIRE SCHOOL YEAR).

Full-time program fee is based on the school year divided into ten equal monthly payments. If you wish to arrange for monthly payments of \$550 to automatically be paid via your debit/credit card for the duration of the 2017-2018 school year, you must complete the *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form for Annual/Full-Year Enrollment* and submit with your child(ren)'s registration form(s). Completing this form will eliminate the need for submitting a new form each session.

Activity selections can be made by you or your child(ren), with your permission, directly with the Site Director. For activities with limited enrollment and/or an additional fee, it is your responsibility to inform the Recreation Department that you would like your

child to participate. If a selected activity includes an additional fee, it will be charged to your card on file. Early Release days are included in the registration and fee, however, full-day Special Programs offered on conference and Professional Development days will still require a completed registration form and additional payment.

Withdrawal from Annual Registration can only take place at the end of a session and requires a 30-day advance written notice.

Documents Needed

The following documents are required to begin the WPC program, in addition to submitting a completed registration form with payment (*WPC Charge Card Authorization Form*).

Child Information Form: The *Child Information Form*, front and back, must be completed (including the attachment of a current child photograph) and submitted to the Recreation Department with registration before your child(ren) can attend the program. The form is located online at www.westfordrec.com and at the Recreation Department.

WPC Participation Form: Each child in GRADES K-5 (not necessary for middle school students) must have a *WPC Participation Form* filled out before they begin the program. *WPC Participation Forms* go directly to your child(ren)'s classroom teacher to make them aware of days your child(ren) will attend as well as arrangements in case of school closing due to inclement weather.

Withdrawing From/Switching Days

Please select your days and blocks carefully as we do not allow any withdrawal/switching of days once your child(ren) begin a session. Once a child has started the program, NO credit or refund will be given except for a medical reason, in which case, a doctor's note stating that the child cannot participate in the WPC/REC Club program is required.

Any cancellations/withdrawals made before your child(ren) start the program are entitled to a refund or credit, minus a \$25 administration fee.

Withdrawal from Annual Registration can only take place at the end of a session and requires a 30-day advance written notice.

Adding Blocks/Days

Provided you have registered your child(ren) for the minimum enrollment of one block per week for the entire session, you may add blocks/days as the need arises. You must contact the Recreation Department no later than noon on the day you would like to add. Payment for additional blocks must be paid via your credit/debit card on file (see *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form*).

DISCOUNTS, TUITION, AND OTHER FEES

Full-Time Discounts and Sibling Discounts

Full-time participants, defined as those attending three blocks, five days a week from the start of the session are eligible for a reduced rate of \$1100/session or \$550/month.

Part-time participants are granted a 10% sibling discount for the second and each successive sibling registered for equal or lesser value. Sibling discount does not apply to added blocks/days or additional activity fees.

PLEASE NOTE: Full-time participants, as well as the siblings of full-time participants, are NOT eligible for a sibling discount.

Tuition for Session-by-Session Registration (Part-Time & Full-Time Enrollment)

Tuition is based on the cost of providing a program of high quality on a self-supporting basis without tax support. The entire tuition can be paid in full at time of registration, or you may pay in two equal installments: the first due at time of registration and the second due the first business day of the following month. Those paying in two installments MUST complete a *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form*. You are required to complete a registration form each session your child(ren) attend(s).

Tuition for Annual Registration (Full-Time/Full-Year Enrollment)

Full-time fee is based on the school year divided into ten equal monthly payments of \$550. If you wish to arrange for monthly payments of \$550 to automatically be paid via your debit/credit card, you must complete the *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form for Annual/Full-Year Enrollment* and submit with your child(ren)'s registration form(s). Completing the *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form for Annual/Full-Year Enrollment* will eliminate the need for submitting a new registration form each session.

Late/No Registration Fees

We appreciate timely registrations. Each session, we must receive your child(ren)'s enrollment forms no later than 4 p.m., one week prior to your child(ren)'s intended start date. Late forms will incur a \$25 late fee. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Due to the nature of our program, no child will be able to start on the same day their registration forms are received by the Recreation Department. If your child(ren) attend the program without being registered, you will incur a \$15 fee per day (in addition to block fees) attended until we receive the registration form and session payment, in addition to the \$25 late fee. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Additional Block Fees

The fee for added blocks is \$12 per block per day. Sibling discount does not apply for blocks added after registration. Payment for additional blocks must be paid via your credit/debit card on file (see *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form*).

Absences, Late Arrivals, and Finder's Fees

There are no refunds, credits, or substitution of days for your child(ren)'s planned or unplanned absence. Even if your child(ren) do not attend all registered days, you are still responsible for those daily fees.

Children who are absent from school (including school suspension) will not be allowed to attend or participate in WPC programs on the day(s) of their absence/suspension. Furthermore, children who leave school due to sickness and/or injury will not be allowed to participate in WPC programs that day.

If your child(ren) will be absent from or late to the program on a regularly scheduled day, you must notify the Recreation Department by noon that day, as that is when daily messages and information are relayed from our office to WPC staff. If you do not notify us by noon, you will be charged a \$10 finder's fee. After three occurrences, the fee will increase to \$15.

Westford Public Schools do not forward notes or messages reporting absences; It is critical that you alert the Recreation Department when your child(ren) will be absent or will arrive late to the program. Each site receives a daily list of children who are attending the program and must determine the whereabouts of each child. Staff may be unaware that your child(ren) have activities prior to our program (e.g., Chess Club, Yearbook, etc.), therefore, they do not know where or how to locate your child(ren). It is very worrisome, time consuming, and confusing if a child who is scheduled to be at the program does not show up or arrive on time.

Invoice Fees

All fees (i.e. late/no registration fees, additional block fees, finder's fees, Early Release lunch fees, and late pickup fees) must be paid via your credit/debit card on file (see *WPC Charge Card Authorization Form*) or you will be billed and incur a \$10 invoice fee. Any invoices not paid within 30 days of invoice date will be charged a \$10 late fee (i.e., 30 days late=\$10, 60 days=\$20, 90 days=\$30, etc.)

RECEIPTS, FLEXIBLE SPENDING, AND COMPANY REIMBURSEMENT FORMS

All receipts will be processed at the end of each session, only upon request. Receipts may take up to two weeks to process. Any receipt requests during income tax season require a minimum three weeks' notice to generate and process. Please plan accordingly. All receipts will be sent electronically via email. It is important to keep these receipts for your records, as duplicate receipt requests will also take two to three weeks to process and you will be charged an additional fee of \$1.00 per duplicated receipt.

If you require a Company Reimbursement Form signature, please bring the document directly to the Recreation Department.

DAILY PROCEDURES

Sign-In Procedure

Following the close of each school day, it is your child's responsibility to follow the school's dismissal procedure. Children not escorted to the program must present themselves immediately at the assigned "central location" (see page 5) for WPC program attendance. If your child has an in-school activity prior to attending the WPC program, please alert the Recreation Department. Otherwise, staff will not know where or how to locate your child and finder's fees will apply.

Beginning at the start of the program, a staff member will greet and sign in each child. Sign-in serves as a transfer of responsibility of your child(ren) from the school to us.

Sign-Out Procedure

Following the end of your child's day, you must come into the building to sign them out (does not apply to middle school students). Your signature serves as a transfer of responsibility of your child from us to you. The first time you pick up your child, we will ask you or anyone authorized but unknown to us who is picking up your child, for photo identification.

Children may only be picked up from the program by adults authorized on the *Child Information Form*. If you want to authorize a different person to pick up your child(ren), please provide their WPC Site Director or the Recreation Department with a signed and dated note. In the event of a last-minute change, you can fax (978-392-4471) or email (WPC_recreation@westfordma.gov) names and contact information with a parent/guardian signature. All faxes/emails must be received no later than 3:45 p.m. NO VERBAL AUTHORIZATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Due to increased security measures at each of our schools, parents/guardians or designees will need to follow the procedures listed below at pickup:

- **Abbot:** Come to the back door by the playground and knock on the cafeteria window. A staff member will answer the door.
- **Crisafulli:** Knock on the cafeteria door to the left of the main entrance. A staff member will answer the door.
- **Day:** Knock on the cafeteria windows to the left of the main entrance. If staff is in the cafeteria, someone will answer the door. Should no one answer, please ring the buzzer at the front door.
- **Miller:** Knock on the cafeteria door behind the front kindergarten playground. A staff member will answer the door.
- **Nabnasset:** Proceed around the back of the school and knock on the cafeteria door. A staff member will answer the door.
- **Robinson:** Pull in to the bus pickup area around the left of the building if looking at the main entrance. Knock on the first door on the right: Room 3. A staff member will answer the door.
- ***Stony Brook:** Call the site cell upon arrival: (978) 265-2063. A staff member will let you in, or if you have consented that your child(ren) may sign themselves out, they will do so and be sent out the front of the building.

*Middle school REC Club participants are allowed to sign themselves out at pickup with prior parent/guardian permission and electronic signature.

Middle School Late Bus

REC Club participants may take the Stony Brook Middle School's late bus at 3:00 p.m. which runs Tuesday through Thursday ONLY, when school clubs are running, but must have a school bus pass. Drop-off locations are posted on Stony Brook's website.

REC Club participants may also take the REC Club Late Bus, Monday through Friday at 4:30 p.m., for an additional fee and registration. PLEASE NOTE: The REC Club Late Bus will only run with sufficient enrollment.

Late Pickup Policy

We expect you to arrive promptly at the end of your child(ren)'s scheduled day. If you do not pick your child(ren) up at the end of their last scheduled block, the Site Director will place your child(ren) in the next block and you will be billed the full block fee of \$12 per block, per child.

All WPC After School Enrichment Programs close promptly at 6:00 p.m. daily. If you do not pick up your child(ren) by 6:00 p.m. we will follow these steps:

1. If your child has not been picked up by closing time (6:00 p.m.), a telephone call will be made to the parent(s)/guardian(s). If no one can be reached in a ten-minute period, we will proceed to the next step.
2. A phone call will be made to those listed as authorized to pick up your child(ren) on your *Child Information Form*. The first person contacted will be asked to pick up your child(ren). If there is no response, steps 1 and 2 will be repeated at 6:20 p.m. and again at 6:30 p.m.
3. If contact has not been made with parent(s)/guardian(s) or designees by 6:30 p.m., the staff member in charge will call the Westford Police Department and a report of action will be placed in the child(ren)'s file(s). It is at the staff's discretion to remain at the site or drop your child(ren) off at the Police Department.

You will be asked to sign the *Late Pickup Acknowledgement Form* every time that you are late past 6:00 p.m. in picking up your child(ren). There will be a charge of \$1.00 per child for every minute after 6:00 p.m. that you are late in picking up. After three occurrences, the fee will increase to \$2.00 per minute and you will be asked to schedule a meeting with the WPC Director to discuss continued enrollment. NO EXCEPTIONS. This fee must be paid via your credit/debit card on file (see WPC Charge Card Authorization Form).

It is your duty as a parent to budget your time accordingly to ensure your child(ren) are picked up at their scheduled time. We are compassionate about parents'/guardians' needs and understand that most of our parents'/guardians are "working parents" and may be held up in one way or another (e.g., traffic, train schedule, etc.) from time-to-time. However, WPC staff has other obligations and commitments outside of WPC and we feel that you should be respectful of their time, just as they are of yours. If you cannot be on time to pick up your child(ren), other arrangements should be made. CHILDREN WILL NEVER BE LEFT UNATTENDED.

OUR PROGRAM AND YOUR CHILD(REN)

Introduction

We strive to provide the most comfortable yet stimulating program that we can offer. However, there are a few things which we would like you to know about our program and your child(ren).

Outdoor and Other Play

We believe that play is a critical component in the healthy development of your child(ren). Therefore, we encourage and support playtime in our program. We enforce the same rules and procedures for equipment use that are enforced by the schools. Children who attend our programs will be brought outside (at the discretion of the Site Director) on a daily basis, weather permitting. Please be sure that your child(ren) have adequate and weather appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear to maintain good health during outdoor play in all suitable weather conditions, including normal winter temperatures. Please do not ask us to keep a child inside because of an allergy, cold, or other illness. A child who is too sick to go outside is usually too sick to be in a social situation with other children. In order to keep staffing levels at a safe number, we are unable to offer indoor supervision for children who prefer to remain inside. We follow school guidelines in determining when it is appropriate to go outside.

Clothing

WPC follows the Westford Public Schools' dress code as stated in student handbooks. Parents are responsible for sending children in adequate clothing and footwear to maintain good health during outdoor play in all suitable weather conditions. Please label your child(ren)'s clothing and personal belongings. All lost, unlabeled items will be placed in the school's Lost and Found boxes.

Snacks

Each day, children are provided with a snack to be consumed at the designated snack time. If your child has a food allergy or requires a specific diet, please alert us in writing and send appropriate food for their snack. Because some of our participants suffer from life-threatening food allergies, we ask that you do not send your child to the program with their own snacks unless medically necessary.

Personal Electronic Device Ban

We require that WPC/REC Club participants do not bring personal electronic devices, such as an iPod, tablet, Game Boy, or cell phone to the program. These expensive items can be damaged or lost, and our staff cannot ensure the safety of such equipment. Westford Recreation is not responsible for any stolen, damaged, or lost devices.

Homework Agreement

WPC believes that we can support your family and your child's school success by providing a homework block. This block of time is to be used for homework, studying, projects, problem solving, and reading.

Important points to remember regarding homework:

- WPC staff provides homework assistance and is not responsible for finishing homework with your child if they do not finish during their scheduled homework time.
- WPC staff will not look through your child's bag or belongings to check for homework assignments. If your child states that they do not have homework, they will be asked to do something quiet or join another activity until homework block is over.
- Parents should always check homework for accuracy and completion.

Accidents and Emergencies

While we strive to provide the safest environment possible for your child(ren), accidents will happen. WPC staff is trained in First Aid and CPR procedures and will provide basic care. In an emergency, a staff member will call the emergency number 911 and then contact parents/guardians. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, one of the emergency contacts listed on your *Child Information Form* will be notified.

We will make sure that your child receives the necessary emergency treatment, including treatment by paramedics. Your signature on the *Child Information Form* grants authorization for emergency treatment for your child. If your child needs to be taken to the nearest medical care facility by ambulance, one qualified staff member will accompany your child to the hospital.

Illness

Any child(ren) with any of the following will not be allowed to participate in our program:

- Fever (101°F oral or 100°F under the arm)
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Head lice
- Illness which prevents your child(ren) from participating in regular program activities.
- Illness which requires greater care than normal.
- Fever accompanied with change in behavior.
- Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of possible severe illness.
- Rash, unless determined to be non-communicable by a physician.
- Infectious conjunctivitis (pink eye), until 24 hours after treatment is started.
- Impetigo (contagious skin infection), until 24 hours after treatment is started.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment is started.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment is started.
- Chicken pox (Varicella), until at least six days after onset.
- Whooping cough (Pertussis), until five days of antibiotic treatment has been completed.
- Mumps, until nine days after onset of gland swelling.
- Measles, until four days after disappearance of rash.
- Hepatitis A, rubella, and herpes simplex.
- Other symptoms which may indicate the contraction of a serious, communicable disease.

If your child becomes ill while in our care, we will call parents/guardians and you or a designee will be required to take your child home immediately. If your child is sent home because of illness, they must be free of any aforementioned symptoms for at least 24 hours before returning to the program. NO credit or refund will be given for the day your child is sent home from the program. In the event of a prolonged illness/medical reason, a credit will only be given with a doctor's note stating that the child cannot participate in the program. We are required to report any known or suspected case of communicable disease to the local health authorities. We will also notify the school as well as families of children who became exposed to the communicable disease. Please notify us if your child should become infected with a communicable disease or condition. It is possible that they may have infected others, so it is important that you notify us so that we can inform other families as well as the school. Your child's names will not be revealed.

Medication

Medication can only be administered by the school nurse during regular school hours. WPC/REC Club staff cannot administer medication unless necessary in an emergency.

If your child has an EpiPen® Auto-Injector, other device used to administer epinephrine, or an albuterol inhaler, you MUST PROVIDE ONE STRICTLY FOR OUR USE, as we do not have access to the school nurse's office. The EpiPen® or inhaler must be clearly labeled with your child's name and have a shelf life which extends the use of the device to the end of the current school year.

Topical non-prescription applications such as sunscreen or insect repellent can be used, but are not provided by WPC. If you wish to send your child with such topical applications, all containers must be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name.

Rules, Behavior Management, and Discipline

WPC staff is trained to use positive behavior management techniques. In all situations, we communicate with the child's parents/guardians. If it is not possible to resolve the issue, we may determine that early dismissal from the program is necessary.

We believe in a positive approach to managing children's behavior through the use of redirection and dialogue. Our goal is to assist in developing self-control and engage children in socially acceptable behaviors. Adults will model, coach, and encourage guidance techniques of discipline that are fair, consistent, and respectful of children. This is based on the understanding of individual needs and behavior of children at varying developmental levels. Simple and understandable rules are established so expectations and limitations for children are clearly defined. Acceptable guidance techniques of our staff include:

- Focusing on and reinforcing positive behavior using encouragement and words of praise.
- Anticipation of problem-triggering situations.
- Soliciting cooperation.
- Involving children in setting of rules and in discussion on how to handle inappropriate behavior.
- Provide alternatives to undesirable behavior.
- Remove the child from stressful situations.
- Allowing children a chance to regroup and regain control in a quiet and relaxed area.
- Limit the child's participation in any action that triggers unacceptable behaviors.

Site directors may remove a child from an activity if necessary. Parents/guardians will be contacted as the need arises. If children are physically or emotionally harming themselves or others, or are a threat to the safety of themselves or others, parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

Bullying

Refer to Westford Public Schools Bullying Policy and Massachusetts General Laws regarding bullying. Bullying is most commonly defined as an individual being exposed repeatedly over time, to intentional injury or discomfort inflicted by one or more individuals. Bullying will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension or termination for students and termination for employees. All allegations of bullying will be promptly and reasonably investigated.

Harassment

Refer to Westford Public Schools Harassment Policy and Massachusetts General Laws regarding harassment. All contact and communication will be free from all forms of harassment due to race, gender, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, and physical or emotional challenges.

Procedure for Inappropriate and/or Unacceptable Behavior

If a child is not cooperating or following the rules, we will first try to redirect the behavior through adult intervention and guidance techniques. We will attempt to provide options and choices for a child to help bring about positive change. If the issue is of a serious nature, you will be called for immediate pickup of your child.

1. If a child is unable to gain control, the child will be given a warning that they will have to take time away from the group.
2. If a child does not respond to the warning or if the behavior requires immediate adult intervention and/or consequences, the child will be removed from the group. The child will indicate when they are ready to return to the group after talking with an adult. An incident report will be issued and the parents/guardians will be required to sign the report to acknowledge receipt. Parents/guardians are encouraged to request a meeting with the WPC Director and Site Director at any time.

Suspension and Termination

AFTER THREE INCIDENT REPORTS HAVE BEEN RECORDED, YOUR CHILD WILL BE SUSPENDED/TERMINATED FROM THE PROGRAM. NO REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN.

WPC will suspend/terminate any child from the program for inappropriate and/or unacceptable behavior. The following are examples of inappropriate and/or unacceptable behavior:

- Behavior that leads to physical or emotional harm of others and/or assault to another child, staff member, or adult.
- Disruptive behavior requiring adult intervention and causing consistent disruption of daily schedule and/or events.
- Fighting
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Threat or physical harm
- Throwing of objects (e.g., snowballs, rocks, sand, scissors, etc.)
- Possession of weapons, mock weapons, or any article or instrument that may be used as a weapon.
- Inappropriate actions (language and/or behavior)
- Disrespect (language and/or behavior)
- Insubordination: Flagrant opposition to authority (language and/or behavior)
- Deliberate destruction, damage to, or defacement of space including building, furniture, books and/or materials.
- Theft/stealing
- Leaving the group or walking out of the program.
- Smoking or possession of cigarettes, lighters, or matches.
- False alarm or bomb threat.

PLEASE NOTE: Depending on the circumstance, it is at the discretion of the Site Director and WPC Director to decide the length of suspension period, a termination decision, and/or if a child needs to be picked up immediately. The above is NOT a complete list of every type of possible misconduct. In the event that a child engages in misconduct that does not fall within any of the above categories, the Site Director and/or WPC Director will issue an appropriate consequence.

If your child's behavior does not warrant a suspension from the program, we may issue a "loss of privilege" – a consequence during program hours. This could be a restriction such as withholding the privilege of participating in a special or favorite activity.

PLEASE NOTE:

- No child will ever be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, physical or verbal abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment.
- No child will be denied food as a form of punishment.

- No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, not using the toilet, or any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
- Corporal punishment will NEVER be used, including spanking.

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

Non-Discrimination

We do not discriminate by any means protected by law, including race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability. We will provide reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities. However, we may restrict admission of children if we would need to hire another staff member specifically for the purpose of caring for your child.

Please inform us if:

- Your child is on a special education plan (IEP) during the school year. Please make us aware of this and provide us with a copy of the plan. It is very helpful for our staff to know what methods and strategies the school is using. In order to access this valuable information, you must complete the "Release of Information" section on the back of the *Child Information Form*.
- There are changes occurring in your child's life that may affect their attitude or behavior during program hours.

Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse/Neglect

All staff members of WPC/REC Club are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. As such, we are required by law to report any suspected incidents of possible child abuse and neglect.

Children exhibiting suspicious bruises, abrasions, burns, or other physical marks will be reported to the Department of Social Services.

In addition, we are required to report to the appropriate authorities any suspicion of any action or situation which may endanger the life of a child in our care, including alcohol intoxication or drug influence. Children will not be released to parents/guardians or designees who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Police will be called immediately.

Parent Involvement and Participation

Parents/guardians are always welcome to visit our program. We also welcome you and other family members to share your interests, talents, and occupations with the children in our program.

For the safety and security of all children, we require that parents/guardians visiting the program make arrangements with the Site Director in advance. Parents/guardians who will be visiting for an extended period of time or on a regular basis will be required to pass a CORI check.

Parent Behavior Policy

WPC expects that all adults in contact with the staff, program, families, administrators, children, and board members act respectfully and appropriately at all times. Behavior which is abusive, disruptive, or uncooperative will not be tolerated. Such inappropriate behavior is grounds for review by the Site Director and WPC Director. Inappropriate behavior includes parents/guardians or designees arriving on the premise under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

In the event of inappropriate conduct, we will follow these procedures:

- The individual involved will be asked to attend a meeting in a timely manner to address the immediate concerns.
- Documentation of the inappropriate conduct and the subsequent meeting will be placed on file.
- When warranted, considerations to suspend, terminate, or decline re-enrollment of the family in the program.
- Families will be informed, in writing, of the decisions made by the WPC Director.

If we feel your child(ren)'s safety is being compromised in any way, we will help seek alternative transportation. We may also call the appropriate authorities, if necessary. This decision will be made to ensure the safety and well-being of program children, families, staff, and administrators.

Court Orders, Custody Agreements, and Restraining Orders

Occasionally, Recreation programs are put into a difficult position by parents/guardians who are involved in a custody dispute. In the event that there is any of the above, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify the Site Director and WPC Director. Difficulties of this type must be discussed with the directors so that we can clarify our procedures and limitations. The parent/guardian MUST bring a legible photo copy of the court order in its entirety. Legally, without said documentation, we MUST release the child(ren) to any parent/guardian that is picking up. In the absence of a court order, the program cannot deny a parent/guardian access to his or her child(ren). We cannot take word of mouth or written notes from parents/guardians stating any of the above.

Even with a court order, our ability to deny access is limited to promptly notifying the custodial parent/guardian and the proper police authority should unsanctioned contact be attempted or occur at the program. Staff members will be instructed not to place themselves in jeopardy to mediate a family dispute or to attempt to enforce a court order. If an unsanctioned parent/guardian chooses to leave the program with the child(ren) with a court order in force, the custodial parent/guardian will be required to sign a waiver acknowledging the program's inability to physically obstruct a hostile effort to take the child(ren) from the program.

Weather Cancellations

We do not provide programs when schools are closed due to inclement weather or other conditions beyond the control of Westford Parks and Recreation. There are NO refunds, credits, or substitution of days/blocks based in inclement weather/school closings.

If school is dismissed early due to the weather or for any other unforeseen emergency, children in the WPC/REC Club program will be released at the same time as the rest of the children in their school. Please make arrangements in advance so that your child and your child's teacher know where your child will go and how they will be transported. Please make sure you have filled out the *WPC Participation Form* and have given it to your child's teacher(s).

If a weather alert is issued during WPC program hours, you will be notified and expected to pick up your child as quickly as possible. If you are delayed, please notify their WPC Site Director and arrange for an authorized designee to pick up your child.

The WPC/REC Club program WILL RUN on days when there is a delayed school opening.

Announcements about school closings or delayed openings can be found on:

Radio stations: WBZ-1030, WCAP-980 and WRKO-680

Television stations: WBZ- Channel 4, WCVB- Channel 5, and Westford Cable Access Television- Channel 8

On our website: www.westfordrec.com

EMAIL: Sign up for our email list to receive instant program updates, changes, cancellations, etc. (see page 6)