



KALAMAZOO NATURE CENTER CAMP

WINTER/SPRING BREAK PARENT INFORMATION GUIDE

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Kalamazoo Nature Center’s Day Camp Program. Whether your child is attending camp for the first or fiftieth time, the information provided in this guide will help you and your child prepare for a fun-filled experience at camp. Please go over this guide together, so that you and your child have the same expectations for camp. If you have questions after reading this information, please contact me anytime. The camp staff and I are looking forward to learning, growing and having fun with your child!

See you soon,

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www.KNCCamp.org

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Our Mission:

The KNC Camp Program mission is to provide safe experiences that allow all children to grow into active and respectful community members through exploration of the natural world.

Our Philosophy:

Our goal is to empower children to make good choices for themselves and their communities and to help them grow into good-natured people - people who respect and care for nature and each other.

To guide us in this goal we use the **ACORNS** Philosophy:
Be:

Active – in your camp group, KNC and your community

Curious – ask questions, try new things, explore the world

Outside – get the physical and mental benefits of being out doors

Respectful – to yourself, to your neighbor, to nature

in **N**ature – nature education is the way that we learn our life lessons

Safe- all participants will always be physically and emotionally safe



Everyone Is Welcome!

We believe that all kids can participate in our program. We ask parents to be honest on the health forms about their child’s physical, mental, and emotional well-being and anything else our staff should know to help their child succeed in our program. The camp director may contact you to discuss how we can adapt camp to provide a safe and successful environment for all children.

How to get to KNC

From US-131:

Exit at D Avenue (Exit 44) and travel approximately 4 miles east on D Avenue to N. Westnedge.

Turn right on N. Westnedge and go approximately 1 mile, then turn left at the Kalamazoo Nature Center Sign.

From Interstate 94:

Exit at US 131 North (Exit 74) and follow the above directions.

From Downtown Kalamazoo:

Follow Park Street north through downtown Kalamazoo. Park Street will turn into Business Loop 131. Follow sign to the right directing you to N. Westnedge Ave. and the Kalamazoo Nature Center. Follow N. Westnedge approximately 3 miles and turn right at the Kalamazoo Nature Center sign, just past E Avenue.



Arrival at Camp/Transportation

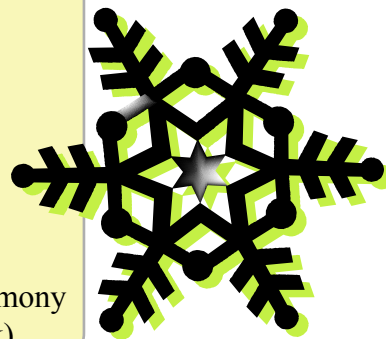
Winter Break Camps are held at the Interpretive Center, the main Nature Center Building. Follow the main drive to the parking lot. Enter the building via the ramp on the south end of the parking lot. Camp check-in is at the Front Desk. **Bus service is only available for Summer Camp Sessions at this time.** Plenty of visitor parking is available at the Interpretive Center.

Sprint Break Camps are held at the Interpretive Center for Junior Naturalists and at the Adventure House for Explorers and Wild Child Camps. The Adventure House is located on the right as you turn off of Westnedge Avenue. Camp check-in is at the small pavillion near the flag pole.

Camps at Shriener Park are located at the Schriener Park Pavillion, 850 W Osterhout Ave, Portage and run from 9 am – 4 pm. Camp check-in is in the Pavillion.

Daily Schedule:

- 8:45 - 9:00 am • Campers arrive at Camp
- 9:00 am • All camps begin their day
- 9:00 - 9:30 am • Opening Flagpole Ceremony
- 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 am • Program activities
- 12:00 pm • Junior Naturalist Half-Day camps end
- 12:00 - 1:00 pm • Lunch and quiet journaling
- 1:00 - 4:15 pm • Program activities
- 4:15 - 5:00 pm • Junk Report, Closing Flagpole Ceremony
- 5:00 pm • Campers leave KNC (4:00 for Schriener Park)



Camper Sign-In/Sign-Out

ALL campers MUST be signed in and out DAILY by a parent/adult guardian. Photo ID is required at the time of pick-up. Please have your license or photo ID ready to show to our staff whether we know you or not. There is space on the health form to list additional adults authorized to pick up your child. Anytime someone other than those designated will be picking up your camper(s), you must add those extra persons to your child(ren)'s registration form.

Please do not be offended if our staff asks for an ID. This procedure is to ensure the safety of your child. Whether or not we already know you, you must bring your ID to your child's counselor.

What to bring to camp

- Day pack to carry supplies
- 1 qt water bottle
- Please dress your child appropriately for the weather, we will be enjoying the seasons outdoors!
 - Warm hat, mittens, scarf
 - Closed-toe shoes or boots
 - Rain gear/Snow Suit
 - Sweatshirt/sweater
 - Spare clothes: socks, pants, undergarments
- A non-aerosol bug repellent
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher), apply before camp
- Medications marked with the camper's name-make sure all are listed on attached health form.
- Packed lunch and snacks: (Full-Day Camps Only)
 - In reusable containers (help us teach sound environmental practices)
 - No refrigeration required
 - We will notify you if anyone in your camper's group has severe food allergies.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING:

- Cell phones (or secret backup cell phones!)
- Digital cameras
- Laptops
- Hand-held computer games
- Trading cards
- iPods or music players
- Any other items that either distract from our nature activities or could be destroyed, lost, or stolen
- Any of the above items discovered will be taken to our office and returned to the parent at the end of the day.

Camp Behavior Policy Please review this with your child.

- The Nature Center Camp staff strive to make camp safe, fun, friendly, respectful, and educational for all campers at all times.
- In turn, campers are expected to treat the staff and each other with respect, keep their hands to themselves and do their best to have a positive attitude. Safety is the #1 concern at camp.
- If a child's behavior is disruptive to the program or to the experience of others, appropriate actions will be taken.
- Disruptive behavior is defined as a behavior that adversely affects the activities of a camp group. This can include, but are not limited to, bullying, threatening words or actions that are intended to provoke fear, repeated refusal to work cohesively with the group, and destruction of property.
- Behavior Action Steps
 1. Discussion of the disruptive behavior with the camper, staff person involved, and the camp director.
 2. Parents will assist in problem-solving a positive solution.
 3. After a parent-camper conference, a behavior agreement will be drafted by the camp director and signed by all parties.
 4. The camper will be dismissed if the disruptive behavior is repeated after the behavior agreement is in effect.
- **If a child's behavior is aggressive or violent (hitting, kicking, biting and using any object as a weapon) toward either staff or other campers, the child will be sent home immediately.**
- No refund will be given when a child is sent home because of behavior reasons.
- The dismissed child will not be allowed back for the rest of that week of camp but may try to be successful later in the summer.
- We want all children to be successful at camp and learn from their mistakes so they can become active, positive members of their camp group.

Refund and Cancellation Policy

We are not able to give refunds for cancellations within two weeks (10 business days) of the camp's start date. A \$50 processing fee will be charged for any cancellation prior to two weeks before a camp's start date. If you are canceling a one-day session such as "My First Nature Camp" prior to two weeks before the camp's start date, a \$10 processing fee for each day cancelled will be charged. There is no fee for switching to another available camp of the same price in the current camp season. If prices differ, you will need to pay the difference or we will refund or credit you the difference.

Emergencies/Illness at Camp

Should there be any emergency involving your child, or if your child becomes ill while at camp, we will contact you immediately. If you cannot be reached, we will call the individuals you have designated as alternate emergency contacts. Please make sure all information provided is accurate. If you have a family emergency at home and need to pick your child up early, please call the Camp Director's Cell Phone at (269) 491-7641.

Lost and Found

We ask that all personal belongings be marked with the camper's name. At the end of each day we will make an effort to match lost items with their owners. All items not claimed at the end of the session will be given to a local charity. Please do not bring items of great value to camp. KNC is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Nature Center Gift Shop

We will not be visiting the gift shop as part of our normal activities, if you wish to purchase camp souvenirs, the gift shop is open all year during KNC's normal business hours, 9 am - 5 pm.

Camp Policy for Campers and the Internet

We view e-mail, IM and social networking sites, like Facebook.com and MySpace.com, as positive ways for campers to express themselves and keep in touch with friends. Campers have the right to exchange e-mails or IMs with other campers and invite other campers to be on their "friends" list in any way that they and their parents see fit.

When it comes to exchanging contact with anyone on our staff, however, parents must take full responsibility for that. This includes giving or getting an e-mail or IM address, cell phone number, social networking profile, weblog or any other Internet contact. Staff are instructed not to exchange contact information with the campers. If campers would like to send an email or letter to their counselor after camp, they may send it to the Nature Center, we will facilitate the communication. We believe that the relationships between campers and their counselors are important, however once they leave camp, we can't take responsibility for what happens between them—only their parents can.

Please view the expanded version of our internet and technology policy and tips for kids using the internet on the Parent Page of our website, www.KNCCamp.org



Thank you for reviewing this Information Guide!
We look forward to seeing you and your child soon
at the Kalamazoo Nature Center!

