



*Camp Olmsted
Parent Handbook
2023*

Dear Parent,

Thank you for your interest in Camp Olmsted. This handbook is designed to give you the most up to date information about our camp program, our camp policies and walk you through our paperwork process.

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Overview of Camp Olmsted Program

Camp Olmsted is operated by the United Methodist City Society, which is a multi-service, community-based organization that manages a variety of programs including after-school, drug treatment centers, day camp programs and a retreat program. The United Methodist City Society has been in operation since 1838 and the programs supported are open to all regardless of religious affiliation.

Camp Olmsted, located in Cornwall-on-Hudson, New York, has been serving children from New York City's under-served neighborhoods for over 120 years. Our program serves boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 14 years old and often provides the first opportunity these children have to experience the world outside of New York City. During our program, campers enjoy swimming, hiking, art, performing arts, sports, baking, creativity center and ropes challenge course activities. These activities are designed to build self-esteem and enhance social skills.

Location

The Camp Olmsted property is located at the foot of Storm King Mountain and overlooks the Hudson River. It is about 1 and ½ hours outside of New York City and 15 minutes away from Bear Mountain, West Point Military Academy and Woodbury Commons Outlet Mall.

History

Camp Olmsted began in 1901 when Sarah and John Olmsted gave Five Points Mission a 21-acre parcel of land with a 3-story Victorian house on it. It was the desire of Five Points Mission to have a place in the summer to take immigrant mothers and their children, the people to whom they ministered in New York City. In the late 1960's the Methodist Camp Service began providing registration assistance for Olmsted. This association helped identify students from the targeted population of "inner city" children for camp.

Olmsted Today

Camp Olmsted offers both day camp and overnight summer camping programs, which are accredited by the American Camp Association and licensed by the Department of Health. Day and overnight campers participate in activities together. The program has the capacity to serve 400 children each summer.

The overnight camping program is divided into three twelve-day sessions which begin in June and end in early August. The cost per overnight camper is \$460 with a one-time \$35 registration fee. Since the mission of Olmsted is to serve children from local communities that would not otherwise have the opportunity to attend camp, this cost is a reduced rate from our actual service cost of \$1,800 per camper.

The day camp program, serving children from surrounding communities, is divided into six week-long sessions which begin in late June and end in early August. The cost per camper is \$160 or \$185 per week, depending on the week.

There is also a one-time \$35 registration fee. Due to the overnight camp schedule, the weeks of day camp alternate between sessions that are Monday - Friday and Monday - Thursday.

Olmsted Program Goals

We offer a Christian-centered program designed to address the educational, social, and spiritual needs of children. Our goal is to give campers the opportunity to grow emotionally and spiritually in an environment of Christian Fellowship.

It is our expectation that campers who participate in the program at Olmsted will be exposed to new activities and/or learn new skills, improve current skills, demonstrate improved social interactions (both on an individual and group basis), develop ways to express his/herself creatively and make new friends.

The Program Goals of the Summer Camp at Olmsted Center are as follows:

- Provide campers with an outdoor camping experience in a safe environment outside of NYC.
- Provide campers with the opportunity to express themselves artistically and creatively.
- Provide campers with the opportunity to utilize their reading, writing and communication skills (including computer skills).
- Provide campers with opportunities to build their self-esteem and confidence.
- Provide campers with the opportunity to work together as a group.
- Provide campers with the opportunity to meet new people in a diverse setting.
- Provide campers with the opportunity to learn a new skill.

Camp Staff / Staff Screening / Staff Orientation

The program is staffed by a total of 25 - 30 people that are hired on a seasonal basis. Staff includes a director, program administrators, a nurse, a cook, two lifeguards, ten to twelve counselors (who are in charge of camper groups) and activity leaders (who lead our special activities).

All staff persons are required to be over the age of 18 years and preference is given to those who have prior experience working with children. All staff candidates go through an interview process and are asked to provide references who can verify their skills and experience. As a final step in the hiring process, staff candidates are given background checks which rule out any possible cases of criminal activity and/or sexual abuse.

Once hired, staff members are required to participate in a one-week orientation and training held at camp. During this week, the staff is given information on first aid practices/universal precautions, pool procedures, USDA procedures, and camp best practices. They also are given training on such topics as child development, conflict resolution, bullying prevention, child abuse prevention, and fire safety/emergency procedures.

Camp Olmsted Policies and Procedures

Camp Emergencies

The phrase “no news is good news” really does apply when it comes to camp! Olmsted staff will only contact a parent when there is a problem with a camper. Such problems may include but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate and/or unacceptable behavior (such as fighting, cursing, sexual contact and/or discussion).
- Camper seems upset and/or homesick.
- Camper accident, illness, injury, or self-harm.
- Emergency on the property (hurricane, fire, tornado, e.g.).

Camper Illness/Injury

In the case of camper illness or injury, the parent or guardian of the camper will be contacted as soon as possible by a senior staff person (the Camp Director, Camp Nurse, Camp Program Director, or Executive Director of City Society). Depending on the severity of the illness/injury, the camper will go to the nurse, urgent care, and/or hospital for appropriate medical attention. A staff person will accompany the child with a copy of the health form and medication/emergency consent form for the doctor’s review. Where applicable staff will also complete and submit accidents reports for our records.

Camp Olmsted has a full-time nurse on staff. Our facilities are a five-minute drive from the nearest full-service hospital (St. Luke’s Cornwall) and about 15 minutes from a walk-in diagnostic clinic which is staffed by doctors and nurse practitioners. Both facilities have a long-term relationship with Olmsted staff and experience working with our campers.

Parents may not be notified in the case of minor injuries or illnesses such as insect bites, cuts, scrapes, minor headaches, stomach aches, etc.

Cell Phones/Electronics/Other Devices

Campers are not permitted to have cell phones, electronic games, or electronic devices that access the internet, such as iPads, computers, and tablets. Should a camper bring such items to camp, the items will be stored in the office until camper returns home. Olmsted will not be responsible in the event of loss, theft, or damage of such items.

Do Not Bring

- **Money** - There is no need for campers to bring money to camp.
- **Valuables** – Please do not send campers with cell phones, electronic games/devices, jewelry, or expensive cameras. **Camp Olmsted will not be responsible for the loss, theft or destruction of any valuable items.**
- **Weapons / Drugs** - Parents are responsible for making sure that children do not bring any weapons, drugs or related paraphernalia into camp. Any camper found with weapons, drugs or related items will be sent home immediately and will forfeit all camp fees.

Email / Regular Mail

Campers are discouraged from sending and receiving emails. The time that campers are in the computer lab is for structured program activity time.

We know parents love to get mail from campers! Help your child get their letter to you by providing a self-addressed stamped envelope or postcards and a pen. Children also love to get mail, so please be sure to write to your child. Send mail to the following address:

(Child's Name)
c/o Camp Olmsted
114 Bay View Avenue
Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY 12520

You should also know that your child may not write home at all. If you don't hear from your child, it does not necessarily indicate a problem. In fact, it often means that your child is too busy to write. We encourage all our overnight campers to take time to write home!

Food

The Olmsted program provides three nutritious USDA approved meals and one snack per day for each camper. Please do not send your child with additional food or snacks to camp – food in cabins attracts insects and other pests. All food and/or snacks sent to the camp will be confiscated by staff.

Should your child have a special diet or require special food products, please let our staff know during the registration process and we will work with you to ensure that their dietary needs are being met.

Please note if your child has a limited diet, they will be strongly encouraged to expand their meal choices. Should our staff and/or nurse feel that your child's limited diet poses a danger to their health while they are at camp, we reserve the right to send your child home.

Phone Calls/Visits

It is requested that parents only call camp in the case of an emergency so as not to distract the campers and staff from the operation of the program. Campers spend their day enjoying program activities and are away from a phone. If your child is homesick or has any other issues, we will make sure that you have the opportunity to speak with your child.

If you do need to call the camp, our office hours are 9am – 5pm. Should you need to contact someone after office hours you should contact the emergency number on your confirmation letter. We prefer that you direct any non-urgent issues and questions to our main office staff at (212) 870-3098 during business hours/days.

Parents are strongly discouraged from visiting while camp is in session. Camp is the opportunity for your child to meet new people and gain new experiences without interruption. There will be a parent visiting day during session 2 for overnight camp on Saturday, July 15 – details will be sent in June!

Refunds

Partial refunds are available for cancellations made at least 14 business days in advance. Credit for attendance at another session (space permitting) will be awarded for cancellations made 5 business days before departure. **Any camper that is a “no show” on the date of departure will result in a forfeit of all fee payments.**

Please note the registration fee (\$35) is not refundable under any circumstances.

Scholarships

All scholarships are based on financial need. Parents requesting scholarships must present proof of income for all adults in the household before any type of scholarship award can be approved. Those parents who refuse to provide proof of income will not be considered for scholarships.

There is no deadline for scholarship applications - funds will be awarded to families on a first come, first served basis - so get your application in early!!

Staff Contacts

If you have any additional questions and/or concerns, feel free to e-mail or call us as indicated below.

For questions regarding your child or the camp program:

Ms. Darlene Calton, Camp Director / Camp Office, 9AM – 5PM (845) 534-7900
or darlenecaltonlmsted@gmail.com

For questions regarding registration, paperwork, payment, scholarships, and camp departures/camp return information:

Ms. Aisha Campbell, Director of Children’s Programs (212) 870-3098 or
acampbell@umcitysociety.org

After hours/emergency telephone line during camp season – text or call (646) 874-4707.

Unacceptable Behavior

We will not tolerate any behavior that is violent or threatening to other campers or camp staff. Any camper that is violent or creates a hostile environment for campers and/or camp staff will be sent home immediately. If your child is sent home for behavioral reasons, you are **not** entitled to a refund of any portion of the camp fee.

OLMSTED OVERNIGHT AND DAY CAMP DATES AND DEADLINES

OVERNIGHT SESSION DATES FOR SUMMER 2023

- Session 1: Monday, June 26th - Friday, July 7th
Session 2: Monday, July 10th - Friday, July 21st
Session 3: Monday, July 24th - Friday, August 4th

DAY CAMP DATES FOR SUMMER 2023

- Week 1: Monday, June 26th - Friday, June 30th
Week 2: Monday, July 3rd - Thursday, July 6th
Week 3: Monday, July 10th - Friday, July 14th
Week 4: Monday, July 17th - Thursday, July 20th
Week 5: Monday, July 24th - Friday, July 28th
Week 6: Monday, July 31st - Thursday, August 3rd

PAPERWORK AND PAYMENT DEADLINES FOR SUMMER 2023

All paperwork, electronic documents and payments are due two weeks before each session starts. We will NOT accept documents and payments on the day of departure.

Any camper with outstanding forms or payment after the deadline, will be removed from the session.

Overnight Camp Registration and Payment Deadlines

- SESSION 1 Deadline: Monday, June 12th
SESSION 2 Deadline: Monday, June 26th
SESSION 3 Deadline: Monday, July 10th

Day Camp Registration and Payment Deadlines

- WEEK 1 & 2 Deadline: Monday, June 12th
WEEK 3 & 4 Deadline: Monday, June 26th
WEEK 5 & 6 Deadline: Monday, July 10th

Camper Arrival / Orientation / Screening

Arrival/Orientation

- When overnight campers arrive on the bus, they are greeted by Olmsted staff. The camp director will lead all day and overnight campers and staff to the dining hall or pavilion for orientation about the camp program, the activities at camp, their group/counselor assignment, and staff introductions.
- Campers will also be taught the basic camp rules and regulations for Camp Olmsted:
 1. **Hands Up!**: Whenever there is an announcement and/or we need to get your attention one of the camp leaders will call “Hands Up!” which means that everyone should stop what they are doing and listen quietly.
 2. **Stay with your group**: When moving from one activity to another make sure that you stay with your group. Your counselor should know where you are at all times.
 3. **No fighting**: If one camper has a problem with another camper they will be encouraged to talk to the counselor or another staff person about the issue/disagreement.
 4. **No cursing**: Cursing demonstrates a lack of vocabulary. Campers are encouraged to find other words to express their frustration and/or dissatisfaction.
 5. **Respect**: campers should show respect for themselves, other staff and campers, and the property of Olmsted.

Camper Screening

After overnight campers have eaten lunch and are checked into their assigned cabins groups, they are instructed to change into their bathing suits for a head-to-toe screening by the nurse.

During this screening the nurse checks each camper’s overall health and wellness by examining the head, throat, skin, and feet for evidence of fever, rashes, cuts, sores, ulcers, head lice, ringworm, athletes’ foot ,and exposure to any communicable diseases (within the last 10 days). **Any camper found to have a condition that compromises or could pose a risk to the health and wellness of any other campers will need to leave the camp program immediately.**

CAMP OLMSTED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

By registering your child for camp, you agree that your child is physically and developmentally capable to participate fully in all of these activities and the Olmsted Program. Each activity is approximately 45 – 60 minutes long.

Computer Lab / Creativity Center

In the Creativity Center campers read, draw, write, use computers, learn digital photography, or play games under the direction of the activity leader.

Hobby Hut

At hobby hut campers are led through age-appropriate arts and crafts projects by the activity leader.

Kiddie's Kitchen

Campers prepare special treats for their after-dinner snack, incorporating nutrition (through preparation of healthy snacks) and math (using measurements).

Mountain Hike / River Hike

Campers make trips up scenic Storm King Mountain and along the Hudson River. Accompanying staff includes a first aid trained staff member with a cell phone or walkie/talkie to maintain communication with the main office at camp in case of emergency.

Pool

Campers enjoy instructional and supervised swim periods. All campers are given the opportunity to swim twice a day (weather permitting) during instructional swim and free swim.

Instructional Swim: During instructional swim lifeguards will teach campers how to swim and be safe in the water. During this time campers may also learn different games that can be played in the water.

Free Swim: Free swim allows campers to have fun in the pool interacting with friends and peers and putting into practice what they learn during instructional swim.

Recreation

Various sports, games, and fun! During recreation the campers engage in different sports and games led by an activity leader.

Ropes Course

Campers participate in ropes course activities (high ropes, low ropes, and tower climb). The high ropes course consists of a collection of cables that are extended between trees about 30 feet in the air. The low ropes course also consists of cables, as well as planks, rope, tires etc. and focuses on team-building activities. Staff consists of certified climbing instructors with an emphasis on safety and fun.

Chapel Service

Olmsted is a Methodist Camp, therefore grace at meals and chapel service are a vital part of the camp program. Twice a week the overnight campers have chapel service (Sunday morning and Wednesday evening). The chapel services will be led by clergy volunteers, the program director, or lay people from the church.

Overview of Olmsted Forms



This guide is intended to help you with camp registration forms. All forms must be completed accurately to provide the best possible service to you and your camper. Failure to complete any of the forms will prevent your child from attending Camp Olmsted.



REGISTRATION FORM

Every camper needs to have a registration form. Under “Family Data” make sure to put the name of the person that the camper lives with and a close friend/relative. Remember to check the box next to the name of the person the camper lives with. Emergency contacts, Public Assistance Info and Health Insurance Data are all very important. Take the time to fill the information in accurately. For food allergies don’t write what the camper doesn’t like – we need to know what foods the camper will have a reaction to if they eat that food item and what, if any, medication is required for food allergy reactions!!



OLMSTED CENTER MEDICATION FORM

Sometimes campers get sick or have an accident that requires us to take them to a doctor. Camp Olmsted’s Health Director needs as much information on your child as possible. Any medication that your camper is taking (prescription or over the counter medication) should be included on this form. Parents should only enter the campers’ name; date of birth; any known allergies; and any Standard Over the Counter Medication the child may be taking. If your child is on prescription medication **the doctor** must fill in the Prescription Medications section AND **sign and stamp this form**. Don’t forget to list emergency contacts! You should list yourself and anyone else we can contact in the event we are unable to reach you. Clearly enter contact information for yourself and at least 2 other people. This form should include work, home, and cell numbers.



INCOME ELIGIBILITY FORM

This form provides information about families who qualify for free lunch at school so the camp can be reimbursed for the meals that we serve to those campers. You only need to fill out one form for your entire household. List all children that are currently attending school. Don’t forget their grade/teacher and school. Most importantly you absolutely must enter the required information in section 4. Enter EVERYONE’S name that lives in your household along with the current income/pay period for each person. Include how often this amount is received. Don’t forget to sign the bottom and include the last four digits of your social security number. If you have a SNAP or TANF case number, please enter it in the space provided, then skip to part 4 of the form. Those of you with a budget letter should provide a copy of that as well. If you know you aren’t qualified for free lunch, please write N/A in section and sign the form.



MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS VACCINATION FORM

We are required by law to inform you of the dangers of meningitis. Your child doesn't have to be vaccinated but talk to your doctor first. Then put a checkmark in the box next to the decision you agreed on with your child's doctor. Don't forget to sign the bottom and put your camper's name on the form. This form is required for both day and overnight campers.



HEALTH HISTORY & EXAMINATION FORM

Under no circumstances will we allow a camper to come to camp without a physical! No excuses! Parents please don't forget to sign the box on the bottom of the front page. The custodial parent/guardian name must be on this form, along with their address and phone number. A second parent or emergency contact person's info must also be present. **This form MUST be taken to your child's doctor for them to complete. Don't let that doctor get away without their signature and stamp!** We do NOT accept health forms that are more than 12 months old.



CAMPER RELEASE FORM

We care about the safety of your children. To make sure your child goes home with an authorized adult, make sure to complete this form and list everyone that has your permission to pick your child up from camp. Make sure to provide their first and last name along with their phone number.

Summer Camp Program - Do's and Don'ts for Parents

Do's

- ✓ Get your documents in on time - we will not accept any documents or payments on the day of departure.
- ✓ Give camp staff accurate contact information (i.e. phone numbers, emergency contact information).
- ✓ Clearly label your child's clothing and other items. Sharpie's work well. Camp Olmsted will not be responsible for lost, stolen or broken items.
- ✓ Remember to pack your child's medication in a separate bag that is easy to access during check-in. Zip-locs work well. Medication must be labeled and in the **original** container.
- ✓ Talk to your child about the "camp experience" and what it means to be away from home.
- ✓ Write to your child and/or send packages – campers love to get mail!
- ✓ Be on time for camper departure (Mondays at 8:00am) and camper pick-up (Fridays no later than 10:30am).
- ✓ Send your child to camp with at least 15 days' worth of clothing (see packing list on website).
- ✓ Please ask questions during the registration process.
- ✓ Make payments by money order or online payment (we do NOT accept checks).
- ✓ If you have an issue or concern about your child's stay at Camp Olmsted, please address it to camp management sooner (immediately) rather than later at (646) 874-4707.
- ✓ Be patient – we are all working very hard to provide the best experience possible for your child.

Don'ts

- Don't send your child to camp with new clothes, jewelry, cell phones, electronic games, iPads/tablets, or money – **Camp Olmsted will NOT be responsible if these items are lost, stolen or damaged.**
- Don't call the camp for information on your application or the status of your scholarship (call the main office @ (212) 870- 3098).
- Don't send a sick or contagious child to camp (this includes but is not limited to COVID-19, fever, colds, flu, rashes, ringworm, lice, etc.).
- Don't send your child to camp with food/candy - we give campers enough "treats" at camp and must be mindful of allergies. This includes camper packages.
- Don't send your child to camp if they really doesn't want to go or is not ready to go (they will usually find a way to get sent home).