



Dear Parent/ Guardian,

Welcome to Explorers Day Camp 2026! On behalf of our camp staff and the Town of Canton, we would like to extend a warm welcome and thank you for choosing Explorers Day Camp for your child's summer experience. We are very excited that your child is joining us for a fun filled season.

Explorers Day Camp has been designed to provide children entering grades 1-8 the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities while developing social skills with peers. We have trained staff members that are passionate about their jobs while ensuring a safe yet exciting atmosphere for children. Our camp runs for 8 weeks (June 22-August 14). Each week has its own theme, entertainers, and activities. For the summer of 2026, we will have weekly entertainers or activities visiting the camp site.

The Parent Handbook has been created to provide you with more detailed information about Explorers Day Camp and the rules and guidelines understood by our staff and parents/guardians. Included in this packet, you will find information on:

- Explorer's Day Camp Operations
- Rules of Conduct and Policies/Procedures
- Pick-Up and Attendance in Other Programs

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact office staff at the Parks & Recreation Office (860)693-5808, or email Claire Boughton, our Recreation & Senior Services Supervisor, at: cboughton@townofcantonct.org.

Thank you in advance,
Canton Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services
40 Dyer Ave
Canton, CT 06019



Communication

The best way to stay in contact with our staff and receive updates on the program is through the Remind Education App! You can download this on your smartphone or access it on a computer (www.remind.com). Once you have created an account, you will need Explorer Day Camp's class code ([@expcamp26](#)) to join the class and receive updates. This form of communication will have you in touch with the Recreation & Senior Services Supervisor and allow you to be informed of any updates such as weather-related location changes.

All parents/guardians will be informed of changes via email as well, however the Remind Education App will be the first way communications are sent out. Email communications will be sent to the email address listed on your child's general form under 'Primary Email Address'.

You may also contact the Recreation & Senior Services Supervisor, Claire Boughton, with any questions by calling the Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services Office at (860)693-5808, or e-mail at: cboughton@townofcantonct.org.

Enrollment

Enrollment is open to any child entering grades 1-8. All payments can be made online at cantonrec.org or by Canton Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services Office staff in person at our office (40 Dyer Ave, Canton CT 06019) or over the phone (860-693-5808).

Payment plans are automatically available at checkout for weekly registrations until Friday, April 17th. Payment plans are also available for the full summer bundle. Please call the office at (860)693-5808 to set up full summer bundle payment plans. For all payment plans, the balance must be paid in full by the first day of camp (June 22, 2026).

Explorers Day Camp has a strict maximum of 60 campers per week. If a week you are interested in is full, please join the waitlist. Once a week of camp is full, that week will be removed from the full summer bundle as well and the bundle price will be adjusted accordingly.

The registration deadline for each week of camp will be 12:00pm on the Wednesday before the start of the week you are signing up for, unless maximums are reached prior. All registration deadlines are listed on the Explorers Day Camp program page above the description of each week.

Canton Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services Refund Policy

Canton Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services reserves the right to cancel programs for insufficient enrollment numbers. In the event we cancel a program, you will receive a full refund. All programs and activities will follow the Town of Canton holiday schedule, unless

otherwise noted (for example, no camp will be run on July 3rd). Refunds may be issued if you request a cancellation a minimum of 1 week prior to the beginning of the program. A \$10 cancellation fee will be deducted from each program you are cancelling out of. Refunds requested less than a week before a program begins are not guaranteed and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Refunds will not be issued after a program has already started.

Refunds may be issued in the following ways:

1. An account credit can be placed on your Parks & Recreation household account. Account credits may be applied to any future program, activity or membership. Credits never expire.
2. Depending on when the transaction was made, we may be able to refund to the credit card used for the original payment.
3. A check can be mailed to your house (please allow 3-4 weeks for processing).

Pro-Rates & Scholarships

We are not able to accommodate discounted or pro-rated fees outside of our Early Bird Discount that is available until April 17th. If you need financial assistance with a program, you can complete a scholarship application and submit it to Tonoa Jackson at tjackson@townofcantonct.org or drop it off in the Community Services Office on the lower level of the Canton Community Center. In addition, Canton Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services partners with The Kids of Summer Foundation to provide scholarships for summer camp. All scholarship opportunities can be found at cantonrec.org under 'Scholarship Opportunities'.

Late Pick-Up Fee

Explorers Day Camp has a strict pick-up time of 4:00pm for all participants, with the exception of participants enrolled in PM Care (4:00pm-5:30pm). If you are 15+ minutes late to pick your child up from Explorers Day Camp, you will be charged an additional \$15 for every 15 minutes you are late. Parents/guardians will be given one warning before being charged for any additional late pick-ups.

Schedule

Explorers Day Camp will be held Monday-Friday, 9:00am-4:00pm at Mills Pond Park (14 East Hill Road, Canton CT 06019). The rain location is at the Canton Community Center (40 Dyer Ave, Canton CT 06019). Explorers Day Camp's schedule varies day-to-day and certain activities are weather dependent. Plans and activities are based on the themed week.

Snack & Lunch

Please send your child to camp with a packed lunch, reusable water bottle, ice pack (if needed for packed lunch) and at least one snack. Snacks and lunches are collected and organized into group bins at the start of the day. These bins remain at the pavilion until snack or lunch time.

We do not refrigerate snacks or lunches. We do not microwave snacks or lunches.

Snack Shack (Mills Pond Pool Front Desk)

At Explorers Day Camp, we only allow children to use Snack Dollars to buy food and beverages from the Mills Pond Pool Front Desk (Snack Shack). This protocol allows us to eliminate the risks that come with campers bringing physical money to camp. Snack Dollars are purchased by visiting cantonrec.org, selecting the 'Snack \$' icon at the top of the homepage, selecting the amount of Snack Dollars you would like to purchase and then checking out. Snack Dollars will then appear on your household account in the form of an account credit.

- **Purchasing food from the Snack Shack is optional and not required.**
- **The Snack Shack provides an assortment of beverages and snacks for camp and the community. These options include a variety of sodas, chips, cookies, sweets and ice creams. Camp staff will not limit or restrict what is bought by campers at Snack Shack unless a request is made in advance by the parent/guardian.**
- **The Snack Shack does not sell lunches or large meals.**

Weather Related Polices

In the case of extreme heat, thunderstorms, rain or other weather-related advisories (ex. air quality) camp may be held inside at the Canton Community Center. Location change decisions can be made at any point during the day and may require campers to walk from Mills Pond Park to the Canton Community Center or vice versa.

Any location changes will be announced through the Remind Education App and via email (see 'Communication' section).

We are only as accurate as the forecast and we do not make weather-related camp decisions lightly. Our goal is to keep campers outside for as much time as possible, however we will always prioritize camper safety.

Sunscreen

Please provide your child with sunscreen that has their name printed on the bottle. Spray sunscreen is preferred. Camp staff will not apply lotion sunscreen to your child, however can assist with spraying sunscreen. If your child has any medical requirements based around sunscreen application or being in the sun for extended periods of time, please make sure this is listed on their General Form and then email cboughton@townofcantonct.org in advance to create a specialized plan for the summer.

Camp Swim & Mills Pond Pool

Explorers Day Camp has a designated time to swim and use the splash pad every day, weather dependent. This 'camp swim' is built into the schedule and is a time where all campers must be on the pool deck. Campers are not required to swim during camp swim and alternative games and crafts will be provided.

Explorers Day Camp abides by all Mills Pond Pool facility rules during camp swim.

Only lifejackets that are U.S. Coastguard approved can be worn in the pool. Campers must have a member of camp staff in the water with them at all times while wearing a lifejacket during camp swim. While camp staff is encouraged to swim with the campers during camp swim, it is not a requirement and therefore not guaranteed.

General Form Updates

If a camper attended Explorers Day Camp last summer, families will not be prompted to complete a new General Form for their child when registering for camp. All General Forms from last summer are still active on household accounts and will be used this summer. Please make sure to check your child(ren)'s General Form prior to their first week of camp and update any pertinent information that has changed from last year (Authorized Pick Ups, emergency contacts, medical information, etc.) Please note, if this is your child's first-time attending Explorers Day Camp, you will be prompted to complete a General Form.

Publicity

When completing or updating your child's General Form at registration, you will be asked to indicate if you give permission for photos/videos to be taken of your child that may be used for promotional materials (see General Form). Whichever decision you indicate on the General Form will be respected by camp staff and administration.

Lost and Found

Lost and found is collected by camp staff at the end of each day and placed in the brown Lost and Found' bin. The bin will be emptied by camp staff at the end of each week and any un-claimed items will be thrown out. To assure you do not have items thrown out, please check that your child has all their belongings at the end of the day or check the lost and found bin.

Electronics Policy

Explorers Day Camp is an electronics free camp. Campers are welcome to keep cell phones in their backpacks throughout the day, however cell phones will not be allowed out during camp hours unless it needs to be used for an emergency. We ask that you do not send your child to camp with other electronics, such as but not limited to iPads or tablets, Nintendo Switches, digital cameras, smart watches, etc. Camp staff are not responsible for camper's personal items, including cell phones and other electronics.

Rules of Conduct

The Rules of Conduct are guidelines that are set and followed to ensure the safety of each child and staff member, as well as the safety of camp as a whole. These are put in place to protect the rights of both the individual and the group and to provide a positive atmosphere for growth. These rules are to make sure:

1. Children and staff safety is always maintained.
2. Only appropriate and respectful language is used at camp.
3. Mills Pond Park/Pool property, Canton Community Center property and camp equipment is treated with respect.
4. All campers follow safety rules and/or directions from the staff.
5. A peaceful atmosphere is maintained.

At 9:15am every morning, Explorers Day Camp has a morning meeting to go over rules, safety policies and the scheduled activities for the day with campers. It is important to have your child arrive on time to camp for morning meeting and the activities that come after.

Discipline Policy

Camp staff shall not use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment under any circumstances. No child shall be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety and health of the child, or others.

Redirecting Behavior & Camper Behavioral Forms

Individual children will receive guidance to redirect behavior. The handling of each situation depends on the developmental level of the child and the specifics of the incident. Camp staff will make every effort to redirect the child's behavior. In order to achieve this, Explorers Day

Camp has a three-point system that will be in place during the camp day. At point one; the child will be spoken to about his/her behavior and ways they can correct it. At point two; the child will be pulled aside again and asked what they think they did wrong and how to correct it. At point three; the child will be asked to sit out for five minutes from the activity they are doing. Removal of a child from the group for disciplinary or health reasons shall be to a location where visual staff supervision will be maintained. Then the child will have an opportunity to regain control and discuss the problem with a staff member. Any continued behavior after the third correctional point will result in a camper behavior form being filled out. These forms need to be signed by the staff, the parent/guardian, a camp supervisor and the Director of Canton Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services.

Camp Suspensions & Expulsions

When multiple behavior forms have been filled out for related behaviors, it may result in a one or more-day suspension from Explorers Day Camp for that child.

If a child's behavior results in threatening another child and/or physical contact with another child, staff member or person- parents will be contacted immediately, a behavioral form will be filled out and a suspension will be given, the length of which will be determined by the Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services Department's Office Administration. If a child's behavior results in physical harm to themselves, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and an incident form will be filled out. If threatening behavior and/or physical contact continues past a suspension, the child may be expelled from Explorers Day Camp.

In the case of a suspension or expulsion, parents will receive a written notice and be spoken with in-person/over the phone about the removal of their child from camp. No refunds are offered in the case of suspension or expulsion from the program.

Canton Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services reserves the right to suspend or expel a child from camp at any point depending on the severity of the behavior.

Parent/Guardian Collaboration

Our goal is for all our campers to have a fun, safe and successful time at Explorers Day Camp and we believe strongly in collaborating with parents/guardians to make sure that happens. Parents/guardians should feel free to consult with the Explorers Day Camp Supervisor and the Recreation & Senior Services Supervisor about their child's behavior at any time. Any behavioral forms that have accumulated during the camp day will be presented to the designated parent/guardian at camper pick-up.

Please Note: We encourage parent/guardian collaboration at any point during a child's time at camp, not only if behavioral problems arise. If your child struggles with behavior in certain settings, we recommend reaching out to the Recreation & Senior Services Supervisor prior to the start of camp to discuss tips and tricks that can be shared with the camp staff to ensure your child has a successful time.

Parent/Guardian & Staff Conduct

All parents/guardians and camp staff will uphold the same behavioral expectations that are placed on the campers.

Group Assortment & Group Requests

Explorers Day Camp is split into 3 groups with a maximum of 20 campers per group. Groups will be divided by age/grade to the best of our ability for the majority of the summer with the exception of the Color Wars and Camp Olympics weeks.

If you would like to make a group request for your child(ren), please email cboughton@townofcantonct.org no later than 12:00pm on the Wednesday prior to the week your child is attending.

Please Note: Group requests are not guaranteed.

Arrival to Explorers Day Camp

A member of the camp supervisory staff will be present in front of the pavilion closest to the pool house to sign your child(ren) in at the start of the day. **You cannot drop your child off earlier than 9:00am, even if you see staff in the area. Staff use the time before camp starts to finalize plans for the day and gather materials needed for crafts and activities.**

When your child is signed in, they will be asked to place their lunchbox in their groups lunch bin and their snack in their groups snack bin. They will then be escorted up to their group by a member of the camp staff.

Pick-Up and IDs

When completing or updating your child's General Form, you will be asked to provide the names of anyone who is authorized to pick your child up from camp (Authorized Pick-Ups), including your own. You will also be asked to create a security question and answer.

Anyone who is picking up a child from camp must sign out with a member of the camp supervisory staff first. The camp supervisory staff will **need to see a form of ID from the person**

picking up every time. Once the ID has been checked and confirmed with the child's Authorized Pick-Ups, the supervisory staff will walkie up to the group counselors and have the child sent down to the pavilion.

In the case of a forgotten ID, the security question will be asked. Please make sure your security question and answer are ones known only by the Authorized Pick-Ups.

If you need to add or remove someone from your child's Authorized Pick-Ups list, please email cboughton@townofcantonct.org or call the Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services Office at (860)693-5808.

Attendance for Other Programs

If your child is enrolled in another program such as a specialty camp, you are responsible for notifying the Canton Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services Office. We do not provide transportation if the program is not located where camp is held for that day. **The only program staff will bring your child to and from is swim lessons located at Mills Pond Park (excluding days where camp is at the Canton Community Center due to weather).**

Please note, swim lessons are not included in camp. Swim lesson registration is separate from camp pricing and lessons must be signed up for separately. If you are interested in enrolling your child in swim lessons, please visit cantonrec.org. We ask that you communicate any swim lesson registrations with the Parks, Recreation, Senior & Community Services Office prior to the start of the camp week so that we can make staff aware.