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# Teatown Natural Science Summer Day Camp

## Parent Information

### CAMP PROGRAM

Full-day camp runs from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and half-day camp runs from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Each week has a natural science or environmental theme.

Groups explore different habitats (pond, field, marsh, stream, and woodland) and participate in activities, games, and crafts based on the theme of the week. Campers at Cliffdale Farm participate in typical Teatown activities along with field investigations, citizen science projects, and leadership development.

A typical day at Teatown begins with the campers gathering at their respective areas for an introduction to the day's activities. The counselors often have an object on the table to pique the groups' interest in the topic of the day. After a short gathering time, groups begin their daily exploration. Some groups (mostly older campers) may choose to spend the entire day out on the trails: these groups bring their lunch and any equipment necessary along with them. Younger groups typically plan for a short hike, games, a craft, or story each day to complement the weekly theme.

### CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Withdrawal from camp prior to June 18, 2025 results in a partial refund, less a 25% administrative charge based on the *total* camp fee, not on any deposit you may have paid. **No refund for any reason after June 18, 2025.** After that date, tuition will be applied towards Teatown's financial aid fund.

There are no exceptions made in the case of illness.

### COVID PROTOCOLS

Teatown is keeping campers and staff healthy by adhering to the following procedures:

- Camp staff provides handwashing opportunities throughout the day, especially before and after eating.
- If your camper tests positive, stay home. The camper may return if they have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and display no other symptoms. Take additional prevention strategies for the next five days to curb disease spread, such as taking more steps for cleaner air, enhancing hygiene practices, wearing a well-fitting mask, keeping a distance from others, and/or getting tested for respiratory viruses.
- Teatown Lake Reservation frequently reviews CDC, NYS, and DOH guidelines to determine when quarantines should be recommended to participants.

## EXTENDED CARE

We offer extended care both before and after the camp day. Children are supervised by camp staff and take part in simple activities, such as reading, drawing, and puzzles. The rates and times of extended care are:

- 7:45am – 8:45am: \$100/child weekly
- 3pm – 5pm: \$250/child weekly

## CAMP ARRIVAL

**Cliffdale campers – Nature Girls or Earth Stewards** (children entering grades 3 – 7) will gather on the stage behind the nature center. Please Park in the Nature Center lot adjacent to the building to drop off your camper at 8:45 am. Campers will be bussed to Cliffdale Farm promptly at 9:05 am and will return to the stage at the end of the day.

**Older campers – Bushmasters, Junior Naturalists, and Explorers** (children entering grades 3 – 9) should be dropped off and picked up in the gravel lot (across from the nature center) at 9:00 am (no earlier than 8:50 am). Counselors with signs will be there to receive them after Camp Directors check them in. Caregivers, please remain in the car with your child until the camper is checked in by staff. There is no need for adults to exit the car.

**Younger campers – Discoverers and Trekkers** (children entering grades pre-k – 2). Please park in the Nature Center lot adjacent to the building at 9:00 am and Camp Directors will direct you to your child's counselor. This lot is one way, so please follow the painted arrows on the pavement. Discoverer and Trekker groups will meet at picnic tables on the lawn behind the Nature Center. Make sure you see your camper connect with staff (counselor or Camp Director).

**Multiple campers** – Please drop off older campers first in the gravel lot and proceed to the Nature Center lot for younger campers. If you have a Cliffdale camper, please park in the main lot first for the 8:45 drop off, then proceed to the gravel lot and/or remain in the Nature Center lot as needed.

## CAMP DEPARTURE

**Afternoon pick-up** will begin at 2:50 pm in the same lot that you delivered your child to in the morning so as not to unnecessarily shorten their camp day. Please do not arrive any earlier than 2:50 pm. To ensure a smooth and safe pick up this summer, we ask that you submit your list of approved adults in advance of camp and notify us via email to [camp@teatown.org](mailto:camp@teatown.org) of any changes or additions.

**Older campers – Bushmasters, Junior Naturalists, and Explorers'** (children entering grades 3 – 9) caregivers will be receiving large brightly colored pick-up cards with the child's name, group, and session for you to display on your dashboard. Each camper will receive two, so they can be shared with other approved adults picking up your child. In the afternoon, please ARRIVE between 2:50 pm and 3 pm. The gravel lot is hot and sunny and we would like to keep campers cool. Teatown appreciates your adherence to our no idling policy. If you arrive early, please park your car in the lot.

**Younger campers – Discoverers and Trekkers'** (children entering grades pre-k – 2) caregivers will be receiving small brightly colored pick-up cards with the child's name, group, and session for you to show camp staff at pick up. Each camper will receive two, so they can be shared with other approved

adults picking up your child. A photo of the card will also suffice. Approved adults will be cross-referenced against your submitted list of approved adults, as needed.

**Cliffdale campers – Earth Stewards and Nature Girls’** (children entering grades 3 – 7) caregivers will be receiving small brightly colored pick-up cards with the child’s name, group, and session for you to show camp staff at pick up. Each camper will receive two, so they can be shared with other approved adults picking up your child. A photo of the card will also suffice. Approved adults will be cross-referenced against your submitted list of approved adults, as needed.

## **CAR SAFETY**

When entering and exiting the lots, please remember to use your blinkers to help keep campers and our parking assistants safe.

## **GROUP AREAS**

All groups will have assigned meeting areas on the lawn behind the Nature Center or on the gravel lot lawn.

In the event of severe inclement weather, groups will move to the following indoor areas:

- Half-day Discoverers and Trekkers (children entering grades pre-k – K) and Full-day Discoverers and Trekkers (children entering grades K – 2) meet in the Owl’s Nest, which is accessed directly from the main parking lot.
- Bushmasters (children entering grades 3 – 4) meet in the Carriage House.
- Junior Naturalists (children entering grades 5 – 7) and Earth Stewards (children entering grades 3 – 7) meet in the Science Center.
- Explorers (children entering grades 8 – 9) meet in the Discovery Room in the Nature Center.
- Cliffdale Nature Girls and Earth Stewards (children entering grades 3 – 7) meet inside the Cliffdale Farm shelter on Teatown Road.

## **STAFFING**

Teatown exceeds the ratio required by New York State law for Day camps, which is one counselor/twelve campers (1:12), to offer the best possible camp experience. Our ratios are as follows:

- Discoverers and Trekkers: two counselors/ten campers (1:5 ratio)
- Bushmasters, Cliffdale Nature Girls, Earth Stewards, and Junior Naturalists: one counselor/eight campers (1:8 ratio)
- Explorers: two counselors/twelve campers (1:6)

Our staff includes Hiking and Activity Leaders (18 years old and up); Junior Counselors (16 years old and up); and Counselors-in-Training (CITs) (15 years old with previous camp experience). Tipping counselors is at the parents’ discretion.

All staff participate in a mandatory training week. Topics covered in training include:

- COVID-19 Protocols
- Group Dynamics
- Emergency Procedures

- First Aid
- Teaching Techniques
- Animal Handling
- Fire Safety
- Lightning Safety
- Lost Camper Procedure
- Child Abuse

## **CAMPER'S ATTIRE**

We're outside with your children rain or shine, so please be sure to dress for the weather. Please see our guidelines to help your camper dress for success.

- Footwear
  - Hiking/work boots or old sneakers work best. Rainboots are fine, but tend to be heavy and lack support. If you send a child in rainboots, consider sending an extra pair of shoes they can change into.
  - No sandals, please.
  - Socks should be worn every day. They help eliminate blisters! Send extra socks: children may get their feet wet.
  - Two pairs of sneakers/boots are recommended for the camp season: one to wear, one for the next day – this allows for drying time!
- Clothing
  - Lightweight and light-colored clothing works best to keep campers cool during the hot summer.
  - Shorts are acceptable, but keep in mind that most groups travel off trails, and ticks and scratches are a possibility.
  - Groups do explore/hike in the rain: rain jackets and/or pants are strongly recommended! No umbrellas.
  - Label any extra clothing with the camper's name and place in a daypack or plastic shoebox.
  - Lightweight hats are good for keeping the sun off the camper's face and neck.

## **ANIMAL POLICY**

Teatown has an extensive live animal collection. All children are encouraged (but not required) to touch and handle our non-native ambassador animals.

No pets/animals from home are allowed at camp without the permission of the Camp Director. Visiting animals must be brought to camp in a secure container.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

- Medical staff
  - Teatown has a doctor-on-call to answer questions and provide health care information to camp staff.
  - Health Directors and Hiking and Activity Leaders are certified in CPR and First Aid.
  - A full-time EMT on summer camp staff acts as the camp nurse.
  - Four staff are certified as Health Directors.
- Lyme
  - All camper's shoes and socks are sprayed with an appropriate insect/tick repellent before going out each day. For more thorough coverage, we suggest that you spray your

child's clothing with an appropriate insect/tick repellent **before coming to camp**. Thorough tick checks should be done at home every evening.

- Rabies
  - Campers and staff are instructed to avoid potential rabies-carrying animals (dead or alive) while hiking.
- Air Quality
  - We will monitor the Air Quality Index (AQI) conditions throughout the summer and follow [best practices](#) as outlined by the CDC, the EPA, and [airnow.gov](#). We consult the following resources to get a good understanding of current conditions: [AirNow Fire and Smoke Map](#), [AirNow Current Air Quality](#), [IQAir Map](#), and the [NYS DEC AQI Forecast](#).
  - If the AQI enters the 100-150 range, the most sensitive campers and youngest children will shift to indoor passive activities and everyone else will participate in gentle outdoor activities with frequent rest breaks.
  - If the AQI enters the 150-200 range, all campers will shift to indoor passive activities. If these conditions are predicted to persist, we may consider cancelling camp, as we are not equipped for prolonged time spent indoors.
  - If the AQI rises above 200 or is predicted to do so, we will cancel camp and notify families via email as soon as forecasting allows.
- Medical Forms
  - All campers are required to have a current health history and immunization record (including COVID-19 vaccines), signed by the camper's physician, **before** attending camp. No campers will be allowed to attend camp without these records.
  - We strongly encourage COVID-19 vaccines for those who are eligible, but do not require them for participants. Please provide a record of your child's COVID-19 vaccine status.
- Illness
  - You should not send your child to camp if they have a fever, skin rash, or any other visible sign of contagious illness. If your child becomes ill or needs medical attention, we will notify you, followed by the emergency contacts that you have provided if you cannot be reached. For your child's safety, you should be able to pick them up within one hour of receiving a call.
- Campers with Disabilities and Medications
  - We welcome children with physical, developmental, communication, emotional, behavioral, and learning variations. At this time, we have limited capacity to accommodate paraprofessionals or one-on-one aides at camp. If your child requires special accommodations, please email [camp@teatown.org](mailto:camp@teatown.org) or call 914-762-2912 x128 to begin a dialogue about camp and our fit for your child.
  - Camp counselors cannot distribute medication or take responsibility for a child's medication schedule. For children who require medication, it must be administered with oversight by our EMT or by the child themselves.
  - If your child requires medications while at camp, we must have the medication in the original container with doctors' orders (i.e. administration and dosage). This includes Epi-pens.
  - All Directors and Hiking and Activity Leaders are trained in Epi-Pen use.
- Toilet Training
  - Campers must be able to use the facilities unassisted. That includes being able to remove clothing, sit on the toilet, wipe themselves using an appropriate amount of toilet paper, put clothing back on, flush the toilet, and wash and dry hands.
  - Your child should be largely accident-free. We offer frequent opportunities to use the facilities for our youngest campers, but know the urge can be sudden. Your child should feel comfortable asking to go as needed.

## LUNCH & SNACKS

- Please pack a snack. Snack is not provided, though we will have a limited supply of pretzels or similar available should a child forget their own.
- Snacks brought to camp by parents for a group to share may not contain peanut products and must be okayed by a Camp Director.
- All full-day campers should bring an ample, nutritious, non-perishable lunch and drink every day. All lunch bags and containers should have the camper's name legibly marked on the exterior. Many groups spend the entire day in the field, so lunch bags should have adequate "cool packs" to ensure that the lunch is kept fresh.
- Water bottles marked with the camper's name are required for all campers.

## **WHAT TO LEAVE HOME**

We want camp to be a place where children come to connect with friends, counselors, and nature. Help us keep the focus on outdoor fun.

- We ask that cell phones, hand-held electronic games, and music players or speakers be left at home.
- For your child's safety and as well as the safety of other campers, pocketknives are **not** allowed in camp.
- Apply sunscreen and insect repellent at home. Please do not send children to camp with these items, as they often get "shared" unintentionally with other campers.

One thing is guaranteed: your camper will come home tired, happy, often wet, and sometimes muddy! Be prepared!

## **DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE**

Camp staff create clear behavior expectations at the beginning of every session. Our staff practices positive reinforcement and offers age-appropriate reminders and guidance to help children reflect on how their behavior does or does not meet expectations.

In the event that a child cannot meet behavioral expectations, we will notify parents by phone or at the end of the camp day so that we can work together to create behavioral goals and a plan to achieve them. If your child engages in behavior that creates an unsafe learning environment for themselves or other campers or staff, they will be dismissed from camp without a refund.

### **General Rules**

Children are expected to:

- Cooperate with staff and follow directions at all times.
- Respect the property of Teatown, staff, and other campers.
- Approach all living things (wildlife, animal ambassadors, plants) with care and caution.
- Stay with their group and in designated group spaces.
- Avoid inappropriate physical contact with other campers and staff.
- Refrain from any behavior that creates an unsafe learning environment for themselves or any other camper or staff member.

## **COMMENTS, CONCERNS, AND COMPLAINTS**

We welcome them! Whether positive or critical and constructive, we want to hear your thoughts. Please contact us at [camp@teatown.org](mailto:camp@teatown.org) or by phone at 914-762-2912 x128. Please leave a voicemail if we are away from our desks.

## **STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?**

The best way to reach us is through our email address, [camp@teatown.org](mailto:camp@teatown.org). You may also call us at 914-762-2912 x128.