



# PARENT HANDBOOK

[seaadventuresmarinecamp.com](http://seaadventuresmarinecamp.com)

# Inside This Handbook

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
Contact Information	
<b>Before Camp</b>	<b>3-14</b>
Required Camp Forms Information	3
Directions to Sea Adventures Marine Camp	4
Check-in and Pick-up	5
Preparing Your Child	6
FAQs	7-10
Camp Rules	12
Daily Packing List	13
General Camp Itinerary	14
<b>During Camp</b>	<b>15</b>
Partnering with Your Child's Counselors	
Lost and Found	
Foul Weather Plans	
<b>After Camp</b>	<b>16</b>
Questions to Ask Your Camper	
Stay Connected and Feedback	

# Introduction

## Contact Information

Sea Adventures Marine Camp  
Cornell Cooperative Extension  
3690 Cedar Beach Rd  
Southold, NY 11971  
631-852-8662 (fax)

631-852-8660 (Office)  
seaadventuresmarinecamp.com  
[ct584@cornell.edu](mailto:ct584@cornell.edu) (Camp Director, Christine Tordahl)  
[db695@cornell.edu](mailto:db695@cornell.edu) (Registration, Darci Bielenda)

## Before Camp

### Required Camp Forms

The Department of Health requires us to possess a complete health profile on every camper. Our insurance requires us to possess a signed Acknowledgement of Risk form for every camper. Please be sure to complete all forms in their entirety.

**PLEASE NOTE: Camp forms, along with a copy of the your child's most recent immunizations, must be uploaded to your parent portal account NO LATER THAN 2 WEEKS BEFORE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY. Your child will not be allowed to attend camp without the completed required forms.**

#### Required Camp Forms Checklist:

- ☼ General Camper Information
- ☼ Medical Information
- ☼ Acknowledgement of Risk
- ☼ Publicity Release
- ☼ Copy of Most Recent Immunization Record

# **Directions to Sea Adventures Marine Camp**

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County  
At the Suffolk County Marine Environmental Learning Center (SCMELC)

**3690 Cedar Beach Rd.  
Southold, NY 11971**

## **From Western Long Island**

1. L.I.E. to exit 73 (final exit), continue on County Road 58 to State Road 25 east.
2. Continue on 25 east through the towns of Aquebogue, Jamesport, Laurel, Mattituck and Cutchogue.
3. After passing through Cutchogue go a few miles and be on the lookout for the Southold Town Police Station which will be on your left.
4. Approximately one mile further east on Route 25 you will make a sharp right turn (Main Bayview) just as you pass the Empire service station on your right.
5. Continue on Main Bayview for approx. three (3) miles to where the road curves to left and becomes Cedar Beach Road. Follow to the end.
6. At an all-way stop sign, go straight ahead to the bay (you will see the water at the end of the road).
7. Turn right into our parking lot! *Welcome to Sea Adventures Marine Camp!*

## **From South Fork:**

1. Montauk Highway to State Road 24 toward Riverhead.
2. State Road 24 to County Road 105 north.
3. County Road 105 north to State Road 25 East.
4. Continue with directions above from *Step 2 as shown above.*

## **CHECK-IN/ PICK-UP Information:**

- ⚙ **Daily DROP-OFF/CHECK-IN: promptly at 9AM** at Suffolk County Marine Environmental Learning Center (SCMELC) and again **promptly at 2PM**
- ⚙ **If you are running late, you must call Camp Director as soon as possible: 631-852-8660.** If you arrive late and have notified the Camp Director, you will have to walk your child into SCMELC and check-in with the Camp Director.
- ⚙ **If your child is not coming to camp that day, please call the Camp Director to alert of absence: 631-852-8660.**
- ⚙ **Daily PICK-UP/SIGN OUT: 2PM.** Please note that we **DO NOT** offer extended care services.
- ⚙ **EVERY DAY YOU MUST SIGN-OUT your child with their Head Counselor and Camp Director. Do not leave without doing so. If a different person is picking up your child, we must have written permission from you.**
- ⚙ Being on time to daily drop-off is not only important to daily scheduling, but is considerate of the time it can take out of our camper's and staff's day. Being on time to pick-up is also an important consideration of our staff's time. We recommend leaving extra time on your first day to camp to ensure you arrive to our location on time. Being early on the first day will allow extra time for any questions you may have before we begin our scheduled activities.

## Preparing Your Child

Children will most likely miss something about home while at camp, especially on their first day. Homesick feelings are normal and there are many things parents/guardians can do to help prevent strong homesickness and help your child successfully transition to camp. Here's a list of encouraging things to discuss with your child that we have found helpful:

- ☼ *“Try new things.”* Camp has a lot of stuff you can't do at home or school...it's a place to discover a whole new thing you're good at or enjoy.
- ☼ *“Be patient with yourself.”* It may take time getting into a new routine and meeting new people.
- ☼ *“Help out.”* At camp it's typical that your child will be asked to clean-up, set-up, help out, etc. Explain to your child that they're going to be a part of a group. You expect them to cooperate and help out however they can.
- ☼ *“Ask for help if you have a problem or need something.”* Talk to your child about what to do if they have a problem (i.e. someone not being nice, etc.)...talk to their counselor. Even go to the Camp Director.
- ☼ *“Remember your strengths.”* What are you good at? Trying new things? Making Friends? Doing crafts? Learning new things? Supporting others?
- ☼ *“Practice being grateful.”* There are a lot of people at camp who work very hard to make sure that your child will have a great experience at camp. Remind your child to express gratitude and to treat others as they would like to be treated.

# **FAQ's**

## **What should my child wear to camp every day?**

It's inevitable for kids to get dirty at camp. We suggest your child not wear anything you wouldn't want stained. We recommend sending campers with a change of clothing and socks in case they get wet. A bathing suit should also be packed or can be worn to camp, if they bring a change of clothing. We are not a swimming camp, but we have many fun ways to stay cool!

## **What kind of food and drink should I pack?**

Please pack a SNACK and LUNCH in an INSULATED lunch bag. Your child will also need plenty of water. Please pack a large LABELED and INSULATED **water bottle**. Plastic water bottles can get warm, get misplaced and become unidentifiable. We can refill water bottles throughout the day. Speak to your child about the importance of drinking plenty of water on hot days. **Please try not to pack any food items containing nuts as we often get campers with severe nut allergies.**

## **Can my child bring a cell phone?**

We strongly suggest that campers leave cell phones at home. Cell phones, like many other modern technologies, are expensive possessions that can easily be lost or damaged during camp. Additionally, camp is an exciting opportunity for children to build a sense of independence and we encourage them to focus on their camp experience.

## **What does my child need on the Long Island Aquarium trip? *(Shark Week only)***

Campers should wear their Sea Adventures Camp T-shirt on the day of the trip, this helps staff identify their campers more quickly while at the aquarium. Campers are allowed to bring money for the gift shop. Please pack a lunch and water, your camper may also want to bring a hat and sunscreen. Please have your campers wear sneakers. There is no need for your towel or extra clothes. Please keep in mind that your camper will be responsible for, and will be carrying, the items they pack with them today. It is best to keep their bag light and to only bring necessary items.

## **What does my child need on the Riverhead Foundation Rescue Center?**

*(Marine Biology 101 Week only)*

Campers should wear their Sea Adventures Camp T-shirt on the day of the trip, this helps staff identify their campers more quickly while at the Riverhead Foundation's Rescue Center. Please pack a lunch and water. Your camper may also want to bring a hat and sunscreen. Please have your campers wear sneakers. Please keep in mind

that your camper will be responsible for, and will be carrying, the items they pack with them today. It is best to keep their bag light and to only bring necessary items. There is no need for money, as there is *no gift shop at the Rescue Center*.

### **What does my child need on the Atlantis Explorer Boat trip?**

*(Advanced Adventures Week only)*

Campers should wear their Sea Adventures Camp T-shirt on the day of the trip, this helps staff identify their campers more quickly while on the trip. Please pack a lunch and water. Your camper may also want to bring a hat and sunscreen. Please have your campers wear water shoes and it is advisable that they wear their bathing suit under their outfit OR clothes that are OK to get wet! Please keep in mind that your camper will be responsible for, and will be carrying, the items they pack with them today. It is best to keep their bag light and to only bring necessary items. There is no need for money, as there is *no gift shop on the Explorer Boat*.

### **What does my child need for the fishing excursion?**

*(Advanced Adventures Week only)*

Please pack as you regularly would on this day, your camper will need nothing special to attend this special program with the NYS DEC as all materials (including fishing gear) will be provided. Please be advised **that campers are NOT permitted to bring their own fishing gear for this program**. Any fishing gear that is brought to camp, will be immediately returned to the parent to be taken home. Thank you!

### **Can my child still attend Advanced Adventures if we haven't attended Sea Adventures previously?**

Yes!! Just please be advised that we are, by nature, a **very educational and science based camp**. We like to recommend (for the Advanced Adventures sessions especially) that children attending our camp have an interest and passion for marine biology, environmental science, nature study, conservation, etc. If your camper is not interested in science, this may not be the ideal camp choice for them! Please reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns.

### **Do you accommodate special needs?**

If your child requires any sort of special accommodation (i.e. medication dispensation, physical adaptation, verbal or otherwise), please contact the camp office as soon as possible. We do our best to make accommodations when given a reasonable amount of notice and if the accommodation is within our scope of practice.

### **What kind of child is this camp geared towards?**

All types! We try to maintain a good balance of activities throughout the day between crafts, educational programs and more active components such as outdoor games, nature walks, etc. All of our activities are hands-on and interactive to keep children with varied interests and skills engaged as well as excited.

**Is there a multi-child discount?** No. As a not-for-profit organization we cover camp operation costs by the funds we bring in through camp fees. With the amount of families that send more than one child to camp, we would not be able to continue offering camp at the current price.

### **Are there scholarship spots for families in need?**

In the past we have been given generous donations from local entities that are to be used for scholarships for families in need. You will have to contact the Camp Director to inquire. If we have scholarship spots available, you will need to complete an application with The Family Service League of Long Island who are able to evaluate financial need.

### **What if my child does not turn 6 until the end of summer?**

Age requirements are set by the New York State Department of Health who conduct a preseason inspection as well as impromptu random inspections of our camp. Age requirements are set to protect the children. Inspectors check all paperwork, including immunizations. If we have campers younger than 6, inspectors can shut our camp down.

**How do I get on the wait list if a session is full?** Please login to the parent portal to be added to our waitlists! Please be aware that we cannot guarantee your acceptance into the program if the session you are interested in has already sold out.

### **I have concerns about beach safety:**

Some camp activities are conducted on the beach outside of SCMELC. Cedar Beach a very small and calm beach. **Although we are not a swimming camp**, campers participate in fun beach learning activities, such as: seining, fishing, beach games and scavenger hunts. Emphasis is not placed on swimming but rather the educational marine biology related group activities and games.

### **What are some environmental considerations?**

**Ticks:** Campers are often led on guided walks through the property. We have not had a problem with ticks in the past, but it is always a possibility. Camp staff does a basic

check with campers after our walks. However, we highly suggest doing a thorough scan at home, especially of your child's scalp. Campers may bring bug spray and will be prompted to apply it before we begin any activity that will require bug spray.

**Poison Ivy:** Our trails may contain poison ivy. We educate campers prior to our walks so that they are able to identify poison ivy. Our staff does a great job making campers aware of its locations, keeping them at a safe distance. There is a possibility that campers may come into contact with the oils accidentally. We recommended that hands are washed with dish soap and cold water after removing and putting on shoes and clothing worn during the nature walk. IvyBlock can also be used (available at Walgreens). It is FDA approved and can be applied before camp or before our walks to repel the oils.

**Bug Bites:** Please pack bug spray with your child every day. DEET products offer the best protection against mosquito bites, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises. DEET, "does not present a health concern to the general population," the EPA has found. DEET is approved for use on children of any age. Staff will prompt campers to apply bug spray prior to an activity that will require caution.

**Sun Burn:** Keep in mind that many of our activities will be conducted outside. We recommend applying sunscreen before coming to camp every day. Staff will also prompt campers to reapply before we go outside. All sunscreen and bug spray bottles should be labeled with your camper's name.

**Can a younger child be placed in an older group with a friend or family member and vice versa?** It is possible to place older children into younger groups – but only if we are able to accommodate this switch, depending on safety ratios and registration capacity limits. **We always place the older child into the younger child's group and we do not permit younger children to be placed into an older group.** Please keep in mind that our camp is very small and we do several activities all together so even if children are in separate groups, they will only be separated occasionally during the day. When requesting children of different ages to be together, consideration should be made of the possibility of the older child being "bored" with activities and lessons that have been tailored for the younger children.

**Can I make sure that my child is placed in the same group as their friend/relative?**

Such requests can be made during the online registration process. If you have any concerns or questions, you may call or email ahead of time. Also, please note that

even though your campers may be in separate “groups”, there are still plenty of activities that allow both groups to interact throughout the day. We have found that the separation can be a good opportunity for siblings to develop independence from one another and allow them to better develop new friends!

### **Can we visit/early dismiss our child?**

We believe camp provides an opportunity for youth to acquire self-reliance, and confidence through achievement in a new environment. We ask that parents/guardians refrain from visiting campers during the camp day, unless there is an emergency. Any person visiting the camp, for any reason, must contact the Camp Director prior. If family plans require you to pick up your child early, contact the Camp Director in advance to make the necessary pick-up arrangements.

### **Can I contact you if I am worried about how my child is doing?**

It is important for the safety of all campers that our phone line remain available for incoming and outgoing calls. For this reason, we ask that you refrain from calling camp unless you need to change his/her pick-up time or there is an emergency requiring your child’s immediate attention. If your child has any issues, we will contact you.

**What payment methods can we use?** Payment is made in full during the online registration process via credit card. **AMERICAN EXPRESS IS NOT ACCEPTED.**

### **What is the refund policy?**

Camp fees are non-refundable, with the following exception: Medical refund requests must be made by **email** to: [db695@cornell.edu](mailto:db695@cornell.edu) and must include a doctor’s note within **5 days of the illness that prevented your child from attending camp** (less a \$25 processing fee). There will be no pro-rating or reduction of fees based on missed days due to illness. Consideration for medical refund requests and extenuating circumstances will be reviewed at the discretion of the CCE Marine Program Director. We reserve the right to suspend or remove a child from camp due to dangerous or extremely disruptive behavior. Refunds will not be given wherein this decision is necessary.

**What is the cancellation policy?** Requests for a non-transferable refund of 50% may be given **30 days** prior to your registered camp session. This request must be made by email containing the date and time.

# Camp Rules

We ask that you review the camp rules with your child before coming to camp. We have 3 simple rules to create a healthy and happy community:

1. Be Safe
2. Be Respectful
3. Have Fun!

Being safe and respectful means different things to different people. Here are some consequences for specific violations of these rules:

## **A CAMPER WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE CAMP FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

- ⊗ Providing false identification, including falsification of camper's age;
- ⊗ Possession and/or use of cigarettes, cigars and other tobacco products, and controlled substances;
- ⊗ Possession and/or use of matches, lighters, candles, and other combustibles;
- ⊗ Possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages;
- ⊗ Possession and/or use of a dangerous device, including but not limited to: pocket knife, folding knife, slingshot, firearm, paintball gun;
- ⊗ Leaving camp property; running away; being in restricted camp areas without permission;
- ⊗ Sexual, racial, religious or any other form of harassment;
- ⊗ Theft, vandalism; damaging, destroying or defacing personal or camp property;
- ⊗ Fighting, bullying, threatening and other forms of violence and aggressive behavior;

## **A PARENT/GAURDIAN WILL BE PHONED & CAMPER MAY BE ASKED TO LEAVE CAMP FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

- ⊗ Non-compliant behavior; failure to comply with camp rules and the reasonable direction of camp staff or failure to adjust to camp routines;
- ⊗ Non-participation (refusing to participate in programs and activities);
- ⊗ Disruptive behavior;
- ⊗ Profanity, obscene gestures, indecent conduct;

In the event that a camper is asked to leave camp, the appropriate staff will notify the parents/guardians immediately. The parent **MUST** provide transportation home for the child. Our goal is to ensure that no camper is injured or adversely affected by the actions of another camper. We will therefore apply camp rules fairly and consistently. Refunds will not be offered to campers who are sent home for violating camp rules.

# Daily Packing List

## Items to bring to camp everyday:

- ☼ INSULATED and LABELED water bottle (plastic bottles can be mixed up/lost);
- ☼ Snack and lunch in an insulated bag (we do not have a refrigerator);
- ☼ Towel and bathing suit (we have fun ways to stay cool);
- ☼ Sunscreen (applied before camp as well);
- ☼ Shoes that can get wet (preferably not flip flops);
- ☼ Bug Spray (preferably containing DEET; See FAQ: page 9).

## We recommend that campers also bring:

- ☼ Hat and sunglasses;
- ☼ Sneakers and socks
- ☼ Extra change of clothing and a bag to put wet bathing suit in.

## We recommend that campers DO NOT bring:

- ☼ Cell phone;
- ☼ Expensive items such as a camera;
- ☼ Games;
- ☼ Sentimentally valued items or jewelry.

# General Camp Itinerary

We like to keep the topics a surprise! Every year we update and rotate curriculum so returning campers have a new experience. All activities will be based on a different marine science topic. Campers will be separated into the following age groups: 6-8, 9-11 or 11-13 years old. Each group will follow their designated itinerary separately, with learning level appropriate material and activities. Groups will periodically combine during activities which do not require separation (i.e. lunch, snack, seining, art projects, guest speakers, etc.).

PLEASE NOTE: **Schedules are subject to change.** Some of the outdoor activities are weather/tide dependent and therefore the itinerary is subject to change on days when the weather is bad or questionable. Special guests/events are also subject to change pending guest availability.

## General Itinerary

### **9:00: Check-in at SCMELC**

9:15-9:30: Camper Orientation/Animal of the Day

9:30-10:15: Educational Lesson of the Day

### **10:15-10:30: Morning snack**

10:30-11:15: Art+Science Integration Project

11:15-12:00: Outdoor Game/Activity

### **12:00-12:30: Lunch**

12:45-1:15: Science Lab of the Day

1:15-1:45: Outdoor Educational Theme Activity

### **1:45-2:00: Camper round-up and dismissal**

## Rescue Center Excursion *(Marine Bio 101 only)*

### **9:00: Check-in at SCMELC**

9:15-9:35: Trip Orientation/Animal of the Day

### **9:35-9:50: Morning Snack**

9:50: Board Bus & Depart SCMELC

10:30: Arrive at Riv. Foundation Rescue Center

10:30-11:30: Guided Tours

### **11:30-12:30: Lunch**

12:30 Board bus & depart Rescue Center

1:10: Arrive at SCMELC

1:15-1:45: Excursion Review Activity

### **1:45-2:00: Camper round-up and dismissal**

## LI Aquarium Excursion *(Shark Week only)*

### **9:00: Check-in at SCMELC**

9:10-9:20: Trip Orientation & Prep Campers

9:20: Board bus & depart SCMELC

10:00: Arrive at LI Aquarium

10:00-11:30: Guided exhibit tours

### **11:30-12:00: Lunch**

12:00-1:10: Guided exhibit tours

1:10: Board bus & depart LI Aquarium

1:45: Arrive at SCMELC

### **1:45-2:00: Dismissal**

# During Camp

## **Partnering with Your Child's Counselors**

Developing a relationship with your camper's counselors can lead to a better camp experience for your child. Not only that, but your child will interact with his or her counselors differently than you or their teachers, so there's an opportunity to gain insight into your child's personal development. There are 2 simple questions we encourage you to think about and be prepared to discuss with your child's counselors:

1. What are my hopes for my child?
2. What are my fears for my child?

Those two simple questions will give our counselors valuable guidance in how they can support your child. We encourage you to take the time to speak with your child's counselors or the Camp Director. Rest assured, our staff are here to support the development of your unique child.

## **Lost and Found**

Please label your child's items, especially water bottles and towels. If your child does lose something, we keep found items in a central location and try our best to reunite them with their owners throughout the day. Parents/guardians may look through Lost and Found during arrival or dismissal.

## **Foul Weather Policy**

Camp will be held rain or shine. During thunderstorms or heavy rain, we will move inside the camp building until the storm passes. Indoors we will continue lessons, play games, do crafts and other activities.

In case of extreme/ severe weather or events forecasted for the immediate future (hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.) camp will be cancelled and parents will be notified as soon as the decision is made. If a weather event, such as flooding, worsens throughout the day, parents will be asked to pick up their children early before they may prevent safe travel.

# After Camp

## Questions to Ask Your Camper

Asking your child questions about their camp experience can help them to understand the experience better than if they were left alone. We've provided a list of directed questions to support parents' support their children. We hope this will create a discussion that allows families to analyze their camper(s)' experiences.

- ☼ *What new things have you learned about yourself?*
- ☼ *Have you learned any skills that you want to continue to develop?*
- ☼ *Was there anything that pushed you outside your comfort zone?*
- ☼ *Is there anything you would do differently?*
- ☼ *Describe an incident or activity at camp that had a special meaning for you.*
- ☼ *If you could change one thing about camp, what would it be?*
- ☼ *What is your favorite memory from camp?*
- ☼ *How can experiences at camp be applied to life and school?*
- ☼ *How did you like the campers and leaders?*
- ☼ *What can you teach me that you learned at camp?*
- ☼ *Finish the sentence, "If I come back to Sea Adventures Marine Camp, I will..."*

## Stay Connected!

Encourage your camper to write to us or their Sea Adventures Marine Camp friends. You can also stay in touch through our Facebook page!

## Feedback- Voice Your and Your Camper's Opinions

We want to know how we're doing! Please email Christine Tordahl, Camp Director, [ct584@cornell.edu](mailto:ct584@cornell.edu), with feedback. Your opinions, suggestions and concerns are valued!

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County (CCE Suffolk) provides equal program and employment opportunities. CCE Suffolk is funded in part through the office of Steve Bellone, County Executive, and the County Legislature.