



KINDERGARTEN AND 1ST GRADE CAMP

CAMP INFO &

READINESS GUIDE

An abstract, colorful background featuring a large yellow swirl in the top left, a blue swirl in the top right, and a central orange area with blue dots. There are also pink, green, and yellow sections with various brushstrokes and lines.

Welcome!

SPR understands that a child's first summer camp experience is a big step for many families and that you may have questions.

This guide was created to give insight into our program and resources. We hope it answers your questions and helps you to determine if our recreation day camp is the right fit for your family!



A few basics...

Camp Staff

Ratio: 5 campers to 1 counselor
Each of our camps is overseen by adult camp directors who are very experienced. They are supported by a team of well-trained and enthusiastic counselors, many of whom started their SPR paths as campers!

Campers

SPR's Kinder-First Grade Camp is comprised solely of children entering Kindergarten and 1st Grade in the upcoming school year. We accept up to 125 enrollments for this group, but we'll expect less than 100 per day.

Location

Located at the Saco Community Center, Kinder-1st Camp has a dedicated classroom and use of the gym – both are temperature controlled. We have an age-appropriate playground, splash pad, and a large field for outside activities.

Your child might be ready for Summer Camp if they:

- Use the toilet, redress completely, and wash their hands without assistance
- Dress themselves – including a bathing suit
- Ask other adults for guidance when they are unsure about what to do or have a problem
- Take care of their personal snack/activity space when it's time to move to the next event
- Are excited to participate in a range of new indoor and outdoor activities
- Usually keep an open mind to new experiences and people
- Work with grown ups to move through difficult, sad, or frustrating experiences
- Can be a willing participant in our fun camp community
- Follow basic directions and remember safety rules

**Please read on for more info
about camp readiness...**



Independence



How independent is your child with basic care tasks and solo activities at home, daycare, or school?

Has your child had successful experiences with babysitters or at playdates away from home?

At summer camp, each camper must be independent enough to use the toilet alone, wash their hands, dress themselves, and change in and out of a bathing suit by themselves. Being self-reliant and mature enough for camp extends beyond personal hygiene. They will eat their snacks/lunch each day with minimal assistance from staff and be expected to help tidy their space after meals and activities. Counselors will continuously assist all of the campers through our daily routine in a group setting. However, staff are not permitted to go in to the camper bathrooms. It's important that kids are already comfortable with caring for their body and practicing their own independence.

Confidence

Consider previous experiences with meeting unfamiliar kids/teachers and new places...

- Was your child excited to explore and reacted positively?
- Or did they become upset and avoidant?
- If an issue comes up, are they able to seek help from an adult?

Camp is all about new adventures and new friends. For most children, it's a great opportunity to experience new things and broaden their horizons. Summer camp can help to encourage your child out of their comfort zone, and our counselors are here to provide lots of guidance and support for the campers, but it's best if they already have demonstrated an open mind and some willingness to try new things.

A note about attendance...

If you choose to register part time (weekly), we strongly encourage that your child attends at least one of the early weeks. This helps greatly to boost your child's confidence within the SPR camp family, learn the daily routines and become comfortable with staff and other campers. We have found that it can be tough on little ones who join camp for only one or two weeks near the end of the summer.





Emotional Health

How does your child cope with sadness, anger, or disappointment?

SPR Camp counselors are well-equipped to guide campers through rough spots or times of sadness, and redirect the campers as needed. However, to maintain our camper to counselor ratio and our schedule of activities, we are not able to provide a one-on-one support person for any camper. It is essential that the kids are able to move through these difficult, sad, or frustrating situations with some guidance and continue on with their camp day.

If your child works with a Behavioral Health Practitioner,
please contact the SPR Office to discuss how we may be able to support this in our program.

Following Directions

**Does your child follow instructions well?
Can they demonstrate listening,
remembering directions, and
following through on what
they are asked to do?**

Joining a community of people calls for understanding and following a set of rules and expected behaviors. Our camp days are bustling with fun, age-appropriate activities within a well-planned schedule. Children this young are not expected to be perfect at camp, but please remember that many of our rules were established for child safety. When they are ignored, the consequences can impact all of our campers and staff.

Every camper should be willing to follow instructions given by the counselors, including moving from activity to activity and remembering safety rules. If transitions and listening are challenging for your child – whether they are unresponsive to others, stubborn, or have frequent tantrums when given direction – they may not be ready to attend camp.

Schedules & Supplies

Each month, families receive a calendar which includes theme days, special on-camp activities, and field trips. Important info and updates to the calendar are emailed and posted to the sandwich board at the check-in station.

CALENDARS

Kinder-1st Camp attends several age-appropriate field trips through the summer (usually 1-2 per week) and will travel on school busses. All campers and all staff are required to wear special brightly colored SPR t-shirts (provided by SPR) at all times when we are off-site campus.

FIELD TRIPS

WHAT TO PACK

Each day, your camper will need a water bottle, a few snacks, and lunch. They should always have a sealed, labeled bag with a full change of clothes.



WATER

On water trips, your child will never be in deep water. This age group stays in the shallow shin-deep water and are constantly and completely surrounded by counselors. On camp, we love to offer fun water games outside to beat the heat, so your camper will need a bathing suit and towel sometimes.

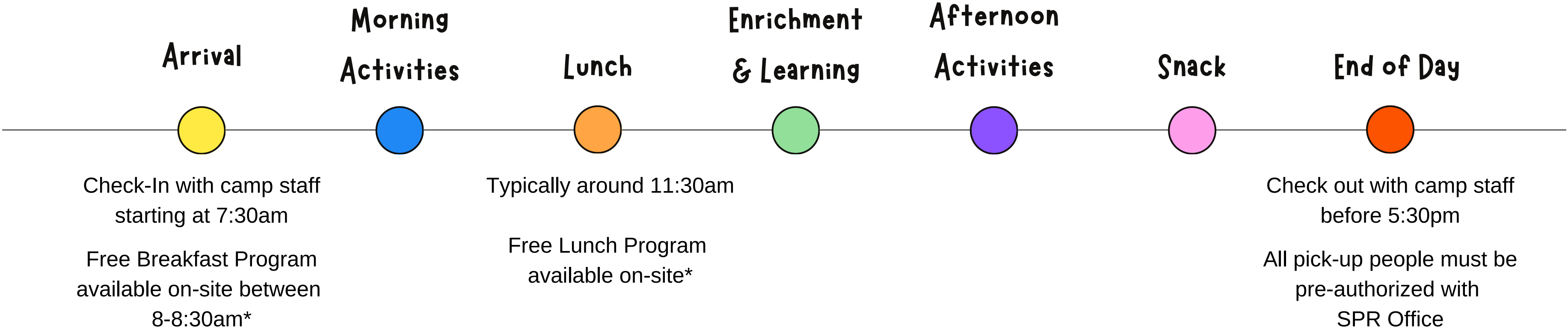


This photo demonstrates our water safety formation while at Bayview Beach.

The Saco Community Center is a Summer Meals Distribution Site providing free breakfasts and lunches to Saco residents 18 and under. These meals are available to our campers. Menus will be shared with camp families as we receive them.

This timeline represents an average camp day. Our counselors will make daily adjustments based on what each day's group needs.

A Day at Camp



Activity Examples:

Daily playground time, story time, dance parties, circle/rug time, sensory tables, field time, blocks, cars, fine motor skill practice like coloring and crafts, educational sessions, indoor gym time, variety of age-appropriate field trips (including some water activities).

*Please note that some of our activities are loud – please send your child with any equipment they may need if they are sensitive to stimuli (ie. noise cancelling headphones).

**Provided by the Saco School Department and open to the public*

Behavior & Discipline

01

Guiding Principles

Our goal is to create a safe and fun learning-teaching environment for our campers and help them achieve success at our programs whenever issues occur.

02

When Issues Come Up

Should situations happen in our programs that require disciplinary attention, our program staff are trained to follow steps that include: talking to all parties involved to get the best sense of what happened and create resolution, talking to staff who witnessed the incident, documenting the incident on a report form, and informing parents/guardians.

03

Consequences

In the event of repeated or severe behaviors, it may be necessary to discuss if any disciplinary consequences should be instituted.

Program staff work with our full-time staff and department administration in the majority of these decisions. Consequences can include a discussion with parents, time off from the program, and in some cases, removal from the program.

04

Early Pick-Ups

If a situation requires that a camper be isolated from the group with a team of counselors for an extended period of time (more than 30 minutes), parents/guardians will be contacted for immediate pick up.

05

Removals

Removal decisions are not taken lightly and typically incorporate meetings with parents to discuss the incident and next best steps for everyone.

06

Pre-Camp Reviews

In some cases, SPR Administration may request a meeting with families prior to completing enrollment. This will be used to discuss questions and concerns ahead of camp attendance to ensure the best experience for your child and make sure this is the right program for you.



Supports & Limitations

Supports and benefits of SPR Camp:

- First Aid for minor injuries
- Camper conflict resolution and mediation
- Applying spray-on sunscreen daily
- Redirection when transitions are difficult
- Emergency medication administration (with prescription submitted in advance)
- Help opening snack/lunch packaging
- Help tying shoelaces
- Quiet time for tired campers
- Temperature-controlled facility
- All activities and trips included in camp fees

We cannot assist with the following:

- Toileting support - all must be fully potty trained
- Clothing/accident help inside camper bathrooms
- Pull-Up training pants are not permitted at camp
- One-on-One camper support away from group
- Applying anything to campers' skin and hair styling
- Administration of any non-emergency medication (please see policy on prescribed emergency meds)
- Physically restraining or moving a camper except in circumstances of imminent danger
- Dedicated nap time

Summer Fun!



Get to know us!

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CITY OF
Saco
PARKS & RECREATION

