

BEST DAY EVER!

BOROUGH of WYOMISSING • DEPARTMENT of RECREATION

SUMMER PLAYGROUND PROGRAM

**PARENT
HANDBOOK**

WYOMISSING HILLS MEMORIAL PARK & PLAYGROUND

HAPPY HOLLOW PLAYGROUND

Welcome

We are pleased to welcome you to the Borough of Wyomissing's Summer Playground Program: **BEST DAY EVER!**

The Summer Playground Program is open to Wyomissing residents only and consists of a semi-structured environment where participants are allowed the opportunity to try different things and take part in our planned activities and curriculum. Participants may socialize with friends, join in impromptu or organized games and activities, or follow their own creative pursuits.

The Program gives kids a chance to be active, build friendships, create lasting memories, and most importantly, have fun. Our goal is when you ask your child, “*...How was playground today?*” – their answer is, “*BEST DAY EVER!*”

In order to run a successful program, we ask that parents read through the entire handbook as well as other materials and electronic communication that may be sent. We encourage you to discuss the rules, regulations, and details included in this handbook with your child prior to the start of the program.

Contact Information

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Summer Playground Program Philosophy

We are dedicated to providing safe and active opportunities that promote teamwork, friendship, and fun. Through individual successes and group challenges, participants develop a strong sense of self-confidence, while creating memories that can last a lifetime.

Playground Dates

This is a nine-week program, running from the first Monday once school is out through the nine week period. The Program is CLOSED for the 4th of July Independence Day Parade and Celebration, but playground participants are encouraged to attend the festivities.

Locations and Hours

Wyomissing Hills Memorial Park and Playground • 53 Valley Road

Happy Hollow Playground • 1100 Wayne Avenue

- Tot Lot: Monday through Friday | 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
- Morning Playground: Monday through Friday | 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
- Evening Playground: Monday through Thursday | 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Playground Staff

Under the leadership of the Playground Director, Facilitator, and Staff, supervised activities are provided which include sports and games, arts and crafts, and special “themed” weeks with guest speakers and activities.

Staff members are chosen for their maturity and experience with the program and children. We hire Program Coordinators and Counselors who love to work with children, have infinite energy, and want to be part of the program. Staff receive training covering safety and first aid, leadership, conflict resolution, diversity, and emphasizing learning through cooperative play.

Participant Supervision Ratios

No participant will be left alone with one staff member in any setting. The Rule of Three should always be followed. Staff should never go anywhere alone or be alone with one program participant. We will always have a third person present, either another staff member or another program participant. Staff to participant ratios will be assigned based on staff resources and type of activity being supervised, but our goal is to maintain a 1:10 Team Leader/ Volunteer to Participant ratio.

Sign In and Out Policy

Under no circumstances are children participating in the Borough's Tot Lot Program (ages 5 and 6) allowed to be dismissed or leave the playground by themselves. All participants must be physically signed in and out by a parent or guardian.

Note: If a child is to be released or dismissed under the care of someone other than the parent or guardian, this must be communicated to the program staff in advance.

Children participating in the Morning and/or Evening Playground Program (ages 7 through 12) are allowed to leave the playground on their own without being signed out by a parent or guardian unless otherwise specified by parent or legal guardian.

Please be sure to address any changes or notes on your registration forms.

Late Pick Up Policy

Under no circumstances will staff members be able to transport children to or from the playground. We ask that you be respectful of the program, the staff members, and your child by being observant as far as pick-up times.

Please be advised that parents will be assessed a late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute per child for each minute beyond the program's closing times (12:00PM and 8:00PM). The Playground Coordinator's watch will be used, and fees will be assessed immediately.

Three or more incidents of late pick-up may result in your child being dismissed from the program and refunds will not be issued.

In emergency situations, parents should contact the Director of Recreation or Playground Director if they are unable to pick up their child on time. Parents may also opt to contact one of the persons listed as an emergency contact to make arrangements for pick-up.

Absence Policy

It is not necessary to report single day absences.

In an effort to better accommodate your child(ren) during the Summer Playground Program, we kindly request that you provide information on any specific dates they will not be attending. This may include scheduled vacations, participation in other camps, or any other planned absences.

Curriculum and Activities

Our program offers opportunities for active play as well as time to relax, participate in games, arts and crafts, read, story-time, and enjoy quiet activities.

We've developed a flexible curriculum and created weekly themes to center our activities around. We'll use the WyomissingREC.com email and text platforms to communicate more details and specifics for each week.

Entertainers, Professional Guests, and Special Events

Our program will have a variety of special guests throughout the summer. This may include magicians, singers, entertainers, police and fire department officers, and more. We expect that during these special events, children will conduct themselves with the utmost respect. Specific dates and times of these guests will be included in our weekly email updates.

Donations: Arts & Craft Supplies, Books, and Games

We are always in need of additional supplies at the playgrounds. If you have items at home that you are ready to discard and wish to donate, please contact the Director of Recreation to determine if we can use them. Such items include yarn, fabric, markers, crayons, unused paper plates, egg cartons, cans/ jars with lids, beads, craft projects, paper, glue, etc. Also, games and puzzles in good condition are always welcome as well.

Appropriate Clothing and Attire

Participants will be very active during the program. As a result, they should wear appropriate clothing and footwear that will enable them to participate in the activities.

Please be sure to have your children wear closed-toe athletic shoes – no flip flops, crocs, or sandals. Participants should dress comfortably. Children should wear light, easy-going fabrics. Please make sure your child's clothing does not contain any offensive wording or pictures. Parents will be contacted to bring an alternate set of clothes for their child if their clothing is deemed offensive.

Water and Snacks

All participants are encouraged to bring a snack and water each day. Snack times for Tot Lot will be at approximately 10:15 AM. It is recommended that snacks have adequate nutritional value. The snack should be non-perishable and should not require refrigeration. Microwaves are not available, and we are not able to heat food up. A refillable water bottle with your child's name on it is the best. We do have a water fountain, and participants can fill their water bottles. Children will not be able to go back home to get snacks or water and return to the program.

Dietary Concerns

Our Playground Program operates on a strict “NO NUT POLICY.” Due to an increasing number of children having severe peanut or tree nut allergies we want to be clear about what a “no nut” policy means and the ways that we hope you will work with us to ensure safety.

When you pack a snack for your child, we ask that you do not include anything containing peanuts or tree nuts (almonds, cashews, hazelnuts/ filberts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, walnuts, etc.) as well as packaged snack bars that contain nuts.

Our allergy policy has always been centered on awareness and education for all parties involved – playground staff, children, and parents. It’s important for everyone involved in our program to understand the seriousness of food allergies and know how to avoid it becoming a medical condition for a child.

Behavior

Participants are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times. Our guidelines help ensure that programs are safe and enjoyable for everyone.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

- Show respect to all participants, staff, and nature.
- Good Sportsmanship is a must. Play as a team, play fair, and take turns.
- Hands to yourself. No pushing, shoving, or putting your hands on one another.
- Respect your Coordinators, Team Leaders, and Volunteers and listen to them at all times.
- Participants are expected to respect the personal space of others.
- Be kind.
- Safety first, make good choices.
- Exhibit appropriate group behavior that does not disrupt program implementation.
- Throw trash away and pick up after yourself.
- Use of inappropriate language or having inappropriate conversations is strictly prohibited.
- Verbal threats will not be tolerated.

- Be respectful of all facilities and take care of equipment and supplies. Treat them like they are your own.
- NO BULLYING or STEALING. If a participant is found to be participating in such activity, it may result in removal from the program.
- Alcohol, drugs, and weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited and will result in immediate removal from the program.

Parents of participants engaging in these recurring behaviors will be notified by the Playground Director. If these behaviors continue, participants may be suspended or dismissed from the program. We need the cooperation of everyone to maintain a safe environment for all.

REMOVAL FROM THE PROGRAM

If removal the participant becomes necessary, the following procedures will be followed:

- The parent or guardian will be notified immediately of the specific reason(s) for removal.
- Written documentation of any and/or all incidents will be provided.
- Refunds will not be given if the child is removed from the program.

Discipline Policy

- Discipline used in the Summer Playground Program is constructive.
- Under certain circumstances a child may need to be removed from the activity or situation and if so, the child will be monitored by a Playground Coordinator.
- If inappropriate behavior or language occurs, Team Leaders will take the following steps:
 - First Occurrence – talk to the participants involved, review the rules and why their actions were inappropriate.
 - Second Occurrence – talk to the participants involved, the Coordinator will sit with the participants for a time-out from the activity, and parent will be notified by the Playground Director.
 - If the behavior becomes a consistent problem or issue, this may result in removal from the Program.
- A record will be kept of participant’s misbehavior.

- Any instance of fighting, bullying, physical aggression, or violence toward staff or peers will not be tolerated and may result in immediate removal from the Summer Playground Program.

Electronics and Cell Phone Policy

Gaming Systems, or any other electronic games or devices are not allowed at the Summer Playground Program.

Cell Phones are permitted, but not recommended at the playground. If a participant chooses to bring his/ her phone, it must be kept in the child's bag and the Department of Recreation is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft. Participants are allowed to use their cell phone only to contact parents and in the presence of a staff member.

Inclement Weather Policy

On occasion, inclement weather may cause the Playground Program to close for the day. We will notify registered participants via the Borough's Department of Recreation website; WyomissingREC.com, social media platforms, and email distribution list. The notification will be posted by 8:30 AM on WyomissingREC.com .

In the event that the program has opened and needs to close earlier than the scheduled time, participants will take shelter in/ under the pavilions and parents will be contacted to pick up their children.

Sunscreen Policy

Staff members cannot provide sunscreen for participants. Children should arrive already having sunscreen applied and be familiar with how to apply sunscreen as needed. We will assist if necessary, but Staff are prohibited from directly applying sunscreen to children. Children who suffer from sun allergies or severe sun burning should bring protective headgear, sunglasses, and sunscreen each day. If you request your child to wear sunscreen or reapply, please provide a bottle sunscreen with your child's name on it. Sunscreen must be the spray-type sunscreen.

Safety and First Aid Policy

Specific members of our staff are First Aid and CPR certified and responsible for immediate, on-site administration of basic first aid and/ or CPR for injuries occurring at the playground. If the injury or illness is beyond common occurrence injuries (scraped knees, bumps and bruises, overheating) and proves to be a more serious condition (head injuries, sprains/ breaks, heat exhaustion, severe allergic reaction, cardiac injury), we will contact parents or guardians and necessary emergency medical services immediately. We will treat to the best of our abilities on site. In the case of such an emergency, the staff will first attempt to contact the child's parents/ guardians. If unsuccessful, we will contact any emergency contacts listed during registration until we are able to reach someone. Please inform your emergency contacts of their responsibilities and be sure that they are readily available if needed.

- The safety of your children enrolled in the Summer Playground Program is our primary concern.
- Emergency contact information, allergy or other necessary health information, liability waiver, and parent/ guardian signature are required as part of the registration process.
- Team Leaders are equipped with a first aid kit for minor accidents. For all other accidents, The Playground Director will be contacted to respond.
- No staff members will administer aspirin or medication of any kind.
 - Exceptions: Epi-Pen, Rescue or Fast-Acting Inhalers, Allergy Medications for severe allergies as instructed by parents/ guardians.
- Injury/ Accident Reports will be completed for all injuries and a note will be sent home if basic first aid is administered.

Sick and Illness Policy

If your child is sick, please keep him/ her home. Please report any communicable diseases promptly, i.e. chicken pox, head lice, pink eye, etc. to the Playground Director. Refunds or credits are not given for missed days due to illness.

If your child becomes sick during the program day, a parent/ guardian will be contacted immediately and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. If sent home with a fever or has vomited, the child will not be allowed to return the following day.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

The Borough of Wyomissing's Department of Recreation is a mandatory reporter; therefore, staff is required by law to report any suspicion of any direct reports made to us of unexplained bruising, broken bones, sudden unexplained behavior problems, neglect, or other bodily injuries on any child to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Lost and Found Policy

Please label all your child's belongings. We keep a designated area for lost and found items by the sign-in/ out tables throughout the week. Items must be claimed, or the items will be donated or discarded the following Monday at the end of the program – August 7th.

Photography Policy

The Borough of Wyomissing's Department of Recreation reserves the rights to photograph community events, programs, activities, and the participants at any of the Borough's recreational facilities or properties. Use of photographs may be used for promotional purposes and may be used in publications and media communications in any format as the Borough decides without obligation to provide compensation for those photographed.

Attendance at the Borough's programs and events constitutes consent to be photographed. To ensure privacy of individuals and children, images will not be identified using names or personal identity information. If you do not want us to use a photo of you or your child, please tell the Department of Recreation staff before the event or activity.

Parent Involvement

We strongly encourage parent communication and cooperation with the staff. Good communication with each parent helps the staff relate to the children most effectively. Please feel free to communicate any special needs or address any concerns that you may have with the Playground Director.

The Borough of Wyomissing's Department of Recreation is committed to providing safe and quality programs for your child. For the safety of the children in the Summer Playground

Program, we do not allow parents/ adults to volunteer or make extended visits during program hours. Engaging in activities or interacting with other children during the program hours is prohibited. This limited visitation time allows for our staff to have better supervision of the children, limit their exposure to strangers, and ensure a safe environment.