

Felix Neck's Fern & Feather Day Camp - Parent Information Packet

This packet contains important information, please read carefully.

Welcome to Felix Neck's Fern & Feather Day Camp, where we have been bringing together children and nature for over 50 years. We look forward to seeing you and your camper here this summer. To finalize your child's enrollment, please complete the enclosed forms. Below, you will find a checklist for your convenience. Thank you for choosing to send your child to camp with us!

To Do:

- Check that the sessions and dates listed in the confirmation letter are correct.
- Review this entire information packet for important details regarding your child's camp experience.**
- Health insurance is required for your child to attend camp. If your child does not have health and accident insurance valid in the United States, contact Felix Neck today, additional paperwork will need to be filed.
- Families whose religious beliefs advise against physical exams and/or immunizations need to contact Felix Neck regarding our emergency treatment policy and waiver.
- Make sure you have a copy of your child's current immunization record signed by a doctor. Please mail everything to us yourself. *Remember: Doctors' offices are very busy and it may take a while to get the information you need from them. Please plan ahead as your child cannot attend camp without a current copy of their immunization record.*
- Make sure that your child has had a physical exam within 24 months before camp; we do not need proof of the physical.
- Fill out the Mass Audubon Health Form and return it to Felix Neck with your child's immunization record.
- If your child is in the Adventurer or Ecologist group, please include a copy of his/her insurance card.
- Send the following to us all in one envelope**
 - Camp Health and Waiver Forms completed and signed
 - A current copy of immunization record signed by your child's doctor
- Get your child excited for summer fun & discovery!**

Felix Neck & You: A Camp Partnership

Felix Neck strives to offer high quality, fun, and educational experiences to all of our campers—experiences they will enjoy, remember, and cherish for a very long time. However, we can't meet this goal without help from all of our campers and their families, so we invite you to enter into a partnership to ensure that every child has the best possible learning adventure while attending our camp program.

We pledge to provide:

- A safe and healthy environment for your child;
- A high quality, enjoyable, educational program;
- A staff firmly committed to providing a positive camp experience for each and every camper; and,
- A community spirit that helps every child feel included and cared about.

In return, we expect the following from our parents and campers:

- Attention to the daily needs of your child in preparing him/her to come to camp (dressed in the appropriate clothing, with a water bottle and nutritious snack/lunch);
- Cooperation with our stated and written policies; and willingness to act in concert with camp staff to maintain or restore appropriate behavior and courtesy; and,
- Commitment to the well-being of the entire camp community (such as keeping a sick or over-tired child at home).

If, at any time, you have a question or concern about our day camp program, we ask you to please speak with your child's counselor or the Day Camp Director. No question or concern is too small for you to bring it to our attention. You may request copies of our background checks, health care and bullying & discipline policies, and/or grievance procedures at any time.

Before your child comes to camp:

Please take some time to prepare your child for his/her participation in our camp program. Here are a few things to share:

- Each child will be expected to be courteous and respectful of others, as well as to follow our rules. We will talk to each camp group about this on the first day of each session.
- Please show your child how to apply his/her own sunscreen and bug repellent for camper safety. We do not supply sunscreen or insect repellent for the campers, but can help them reapply with your permission. **Aerosol sprays are not permitted at camp.**
- Each group will have a separate meeting area with a space to place their things. On the first morning we will show all campers the location of the rest rooms, where they will put their things, and where they will be picked up.
- Encourage your child to go to bed early – a good night's rest is essential to having a good day at camp!
- Make sure your child understands that she/he cannot bring to camp the following items: animals (pets included), knives, matches, firearms/ammunition or other potentially dangerous items, I-pods, electronic devices & games, cell phones, playing cards, personal treasures, and valuable items. The possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs and weapons is prohibited.

How should my child dress and what should he/she bring?

Your child should:

- ❑ Dress for exploring outdoors and playing games, clothing that can get wet and/or dirty (play clothes).
- ❑ Light-weight, long sleeve shirts and long pants can be helpful to avoid mosquito bites.
- ❑ Wear comfortable walking shoes that can get wet and muddy (Texas, Keens, etc) but **no flip-flops**: it is difficult to walk through the marsh, along trails and in the pond without losing them!
- ❑ Bring a hat for sun protection
- ❑ Pack a sweatshirt or lightweight jacket for cooler days.

Please apply each morning at home before arriving at camp:

- ❑ Sunscreen with a minimum of SPF 30 - we are outside in the sun for the majority of the day.
- ❑ Bug repellent is recommended; mosquitoes share the habitat at Felix Neck.

Your child should bring:

A backpack containing the following:

- ❑ **Snack and Lunch:** A nutritious and filling, non-refrigerated (an ice-pack is recommended to keep food cool) snack and lunch that will produce as little trash as possible. A carry-in/carry-out policy is followed for any waste generated. Due to potential problems with food allergies, children are not permitted to share food. **If there is a child with a nut allergy in your child's group, we will notify you via email prior to camp.** We will ask you to pack snacks and lunches that are nut-free. If you have questions about nut-free products, please contact the Camp Director and be sure to read the ingredients on the packaging. A good website to refer to is: www.foodallergy.com.
- ❑ **Water:** A reusable water bottle or canteen; please do not freeze the water bottle, the ice won't melt fast enough to give your child enough water to drink! We refill water bottles whenever needed.
- ❑ **Shoes** (an extra pair) that can get wet and muddy, again **no flip-flops**.
- ❑ **Sunscreen- SPF 30+!** With your permission, we can help reapply.
- ❑ **Insect repellent!** We share our habitat with mosquitoes. Aerosol sprays can be dangerous for children and wildlife and are not permitted for the safety of campers. We recommend lotions, wipes, and pumps. With your permission, we can help reapply.
- ❑ For Adventurers and Ecologists, bring a bathing suit and towel.
- ❑ Younger children should bring a spare set of clothes and shoes; that way, if an "accident" should occur, they can get clean and dry. ***LABEL, LABEL, LABEL! Please label** all of your child's belongings.

What do I need to know about morning drop-off?

- Check-in on the first day will take longer as we greet families. Please plan to stay 15 minutes to check in your child on the first day of the session. This is also a time for you to meet your child's counselor and the other children and parents in your child's group. You cannot check-in your child before 8:50am.
- **Early drop-off is available at 8:30am for a fee of \$30/week and late pick-up from 2:30pm-3:45pm for a fee of \$90/week (except for Discoverers). Discoverers Late Pick-up from 12-2:30pm for a fee of \$100/week.**
- When entering the Sanctuary, parents should drive slowly and stay alert for pedestrians, wildlife and other vehicles. Use turnouts when other vehicles approach.
- After you check in with the Camp Director, you must escort your child to their designated group area. There, you will be met by your child's counselor with whom you must sign your child in and out every day. A parent/guardian must be present on the first day of the session in order to verify health and authorized pick-up information. Under NO circumstances may you drop off your child without signing them in with their counselor.

What about picking up my child?

Please be prompt in picking up your child. Dismissal times for each group are listed below:

Discoverers: 12:00pm

Pathfinders: 2:30pm

Explorers: 2:30pm

Adventurers: 2:30pm*

Ecologists: 2:30pm*

*Friday 9am, after campout

- NEW! Discoverers Late pick-up is available from 12-2:30pm for a fee of \$100/week (must pack lunch from home)
- Parents are to pick up their child at the same designated meeting area and must sign each child out. Please be prepared to show proper identification to camp staff. Staff will remain with campers until an authorized adult has picked up each camper.
- Whoever is picking up your child **MUST BE AUTHORIZED** on the release form (Health Form, pg 4). You may modify that list in writing when you drop your child off in the morning. We will **not** release your child to anyone who is not listed on the release form or has not been authorized by you in writing. **There are no exceptions.**
- If you must pick up your child during the middle of the camp day please try to give us advance notice. Your child's camp group may be up to 30 minutes away from the Nature Center.

Other important reminders:

- **Parent & Child Mornings:** *On Thursdays at 8:30am, parents are invited to join their child for a pre-camp walk or activity with Felix Neck staff and Suzan Bellincampi, Sanctuary Director. See the trails where your child spends their days exploring, learn how to identify trees, or take a net down to the pond – activities vary each week and are dependent on weather conditions. Parents are also invited to join our Morning Circle on Fridays, 9:00-9:30 during which each group shares something they have done or created during the week.*
- **Felix the Owl** – Each day, a lucky camper is selected to take Felix (a stuffed animal owl) home for an evening to play with and write/draw in our Felix Neck journal all about Felix's adventures with your family.
- **If your child will not be attending camp** for any reason (illness, family commitments, etc.) or if he/she is going to be significantly late please call us at **(508) 627-4850**. If we do not hear from you, parents will be called if the child is absent. Please keep your child home if he/she is not feeling well, overtired, etc. Sick or tired kids won't enjoy camp and risk infecting other campers. Parents of sick children will be called and be requested to pick up their child. For information on medication administration, please see the Health Form. Refunds are not issued for sick or absent days.
- **Illness or Injury notification:** If your child becomes ill or obtains an injury while at camp parents/guardians will be notified via phone by the Camp Director or at the end of the day by the child's counselor, depending on the severity
- **Rules and Expectations** – To ensure the safety of all campers and respect for people and environment, campers are made aware of camp rules on the first day of each session. Should a child choose to not follow camp rules, they will be asked to sit out of activities until they are ready to participate in a safe and respectful manner. If necessary, the Camp Director will ask the parent/guardian to join a conversation about the behavioral expectations at camp. If such expectations are not met, the Camp Director may dismiss a child from camp. You can request a copy of our Discipline Policy at any time and may contact us with any questions or concerns.
- **Every night, please check your child for ticks**, especially behind the knees, at underwear lines, underarms and at the hair line on the back of the neck. We encourage campers to do tick checks throughout the day, but a thorough check at home should be done.
- **Go Green!** Please support us this summer by adopting some "green" practices at home or while on vacation. Pack lunches with reusable containers, avoid juice boxes (they stay sticky and attract ants) if possible, and pick up a reusable water bottle. Visit www.wastefreelunches.org for more ideas on how to pack waste-free lunches and snacks. Families walk, bike, and even paddle to camp each summer! Consider the environment when planning your transportation and try to carpool when possible.
- **Felix Neck is open to the public daily from dawn to dusk – drop the kids off at camp and take a guided kayak tour, join us aboard The Skipper on a Marine Discovery Tour or bring the whole family for a walk on our trails. Members receive discounts off all programs and in the Gift Shop. Summer program brochures are available in the Nature Center.**

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Dani deRuyter

Administrator & Day Camp Registrar

mhammond@massaudubon.org

Josey Kirkland

Education Coordinator & Day Camp Director

jkirkland@massaudubon.org

Campers are not considered to have increased risk of Meningococcal Disease, but the Department of Public Health requires us to give you the attached information.

Meningococcal Disease and Camp Attendees: Commonly Asked Questions

August 2011

What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is caused by infection with bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. These bacteria can infect the tissue (the “meninges”) that surrounds the brain and spinal cord and cause meningitis, or they may infect the blood or other organs of the body. In the US, about 1,000-3,000 people get meningococcal disease each year and 10-15% die despite receiving antibiotic treatment. Of those who survive, about 11-19% may lose limbs, become deaf, have problems with their nervous system, become mentally retarded, or have seizures or strokes.

How is meningococcal disease spread?

These bacteria are passed from person-to-person through saliva (spit). You must be in close contact with an infected person’s saliva in order for the bacteria to spread. Close contact includes activities such as kissing, sharing water bottles, sharing eating/drinking utensils or sharing cigarettes with someone who is infected; or being within 3-6 feet of someone who is infected and is coughing and sneezing.

Who is at most risk for getting meningococcal disease?

People who travel to certain parts of the world where the disease is very common, microbiologists, people with HIV infection and those exposed to meningococcal disease during an outbreak are at risk for meningococcal disease. Children and adults with damaged or removed spleens or terminal complement component deficiency (an inherited immune disorder) are at risk. People who live in certain settings such as college freshmen living in dormitories and military recruits are at greater risk of disease.

Are camp attendees at increased risk for meningococcal disease?

Children attending day or residential camps are **not** considered to be at an increased risk for meningococcal disease because of their participation.

Is there a vaccine against meningococcal disease?

There are currently 2 types of vaccines available in the US that protect against 4 of the most common of the 13 serogroups (subgroups) of *N. meningitidis* that cause serious disease. Meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine is approved for use in those 2 years of age and older. There are 2 licensed meningococcal conjugate vaccines. Menactra® is approved for use in those 9 months – 55 years of age. Menveo® is proved for use in those 2 to 55 years of age. Meningococcal vaccines are thought to provide protection for approximately 5 years.

Should my child receive meningococcal vaccine?

Meningococcal vaccine is not recommended for attendance at camps. However, this vaccine is recommended for certain age groups; contact your child’s health care provider. In addition, parents of children who are at higher risk of infection, because of certain medical conditions or other circumstances, should discuss vaccination with their child’s healthcare provider.

How can I protect my child from getting meningococcal disease?

The best protection against meningococcal disease and many other infectious diseases is thorough and frequent handwashing, respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette. Individuals should:

1. wash their hands often, especially after using the toilet and before eating or preparing food (hands should be washed with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand gel or rub may be used if hands are not visibly dirty);
2. cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and discard the tissue in a trash can; or if they don’t have a tissue, cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve.
3. not share food, drinks or eating utensils with other people, especially if they are ill.

You can obtain more information about meningococcal disease or vaccination from your healthcare provider, your local Board of Health (listed in the phone book under government), or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Division of Epidemiology and Immunization at (617) 983-6800 or toll-free at (888) 658-2850 or on the MDPH website at www.mass.gov/dph.