



2025

# Camp Simchah Family Handbook

**Camp Simchah**

*(Campers entering grades 1-7)*

**Camp Simchah Specialty**

Sports, Art, Tennis, Dance, Pickleball & Travel

*(Campers entering grades 3-7)*

Welcome *Simchah* Families!

Welcome to Camp Simchah! We are thrilled to have you join us this summer. Our top priority is to provide your child with a fun, safe, and positive camp experience.

Each day, our Simchah campers will participate in a variety of exciting and enriching activities in a vibrant summer camp atmosphere. From splashing around in the beautiful outdoor JCCNS pool to enjoying our playground and engaging in creative sessions with our specialists (such as Arts & Crafts, Musical Adventures, Science & Nature, and Sports & Games), there is something for everyone!

For our older campers, we also offer targeted Specialty Camps, including Sports, Arts, Dance, Pickleball, Tennis, EHS STEM, and two amazing Travel Camp Weeks.

The following pages contain valuable information to help you, and your camper prepare for a fantastic summer.

*Please note: no child can be admitted to camp until all required camper forms are submitted and processed.*

**Save the Date:**  
**Summer at the J Open House**  
**Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**11:00 AM - 1:00 PM**  
**Outdoor Pool Area**

We cannot wait for a summer filled with fun, laughter, and new friendships. Rest assured, we are already hard at work planning an incredible camp experience for everyone.

See you soon!

**Heather Gravelese**

Camp Simchah Director

# Camp Simchah Basic References

Jewish Community Center of the North Shore, 4 Community Road, Marblehead, MA 01945

**Main Line: 857-285-7900**

Important Phone Numbers & Emails		
<i>Camp Simchah Director</i> Heather Gravelese	857-285-7923	<a href="mailto:hgravelese@jccns.com">hgravelese@jccns.com</a>
<i>Camp Simchah Assistant Director</i> Thomas Callahan	857-285-7949	<a href="mailto:tcallahan@jccns.com">tcallahan@jccns.com</a>
<i>Summer at the J Camp Controller</i> Stephanie Greenfield	857-285-7914	<a href="mailto:sgreenfield@jccns.com">sgreenfield@jccns.com</a>
<i>Inclusion Director</i> Melissa Caplan	857-285-7956	<a href="mailto:mcaplan@jccns.com">mcaplan@jccns.com</a>
<i>Camp Aquatics Manager</i> Brandon O'Donnell	Outdoor pool 857-285-7960	<a href="mailto:bodonnell@jccns.com">bodonnell@jccns.com</a>

## Statement of Purpose

The Jewish Community Center of the North Shore is committed to being the central gathering place for Jewish life, learning and culture on the North Shore; offering enriching experiences to strengthen Jewish identity and connection to the state of Israel; enhancing all members' social, physical, educational and spiritual lives; and strengthening our relationship with the community at large.

JCCNS Early Childhood and youth-focused programs provide a safe, warm environment for childcare and enrichment opportunities for today's diverse family needs. *Camp Simchah* is licensed by the Marblehead Board of Health. Copies of policies for staff background checks and camp health care policy are available upon request.

## Camp Simchah Core Values

The Hebrew word Simchah (שמחה) means Happiness and Joy. Here at *Camp Simchah*, we believe in the power of Camp and the power of Happiness and Joy — so we have selected principles that guide everything we do at camp.

Sunshine	Shemesh	שמש
Family	Mishpacha	משפחה
Kindness	Chesed	חסד
Being	Havaya	הוויה

We passionately believe that everyone can share in the JOY (Simchah) that is *Camp Simchah*! Summertime means SUNSHINE (Shemesh) being present outside in nature, at the pool, on the field, with a group of friends who might start as strangers, but who we can call FAMILY (Mishpacha) even by the end of just one week of camp. We model and teach that through KINDNESS (Chesed) we can develop stronger relationships with one another and have fun.

While BEING (Havaya) in the moment of every camp day, we grow as campers, as groups, and as a camp community — that is the wonderful thing we call CAMP!

# Camp Simchah Table of Contents

Basic References .....	4
Hours of Operations* .....	4
Extended Care: .....	4
Unscheduled / Extra Hours: .....	4
Arrival and Departure Procedures .....	4
DROP OFF .....	4
PICK UP.....	4
DROP OFF & PICK UP RULES.....	5
Program Policies .....	5
Parental Responsibilities .....	5
Clothing .....	5
Food .....	6
Sunscreen .....	6
Absenteeism .....	6
Schedule Changes/Withdrawals .....	6
Pool Policy .....	6
Medication Policy .....	7
Late Policy .....	7
Group Request Policy.....	7
Health and Illness Policy.....	8
Discipline Policy.....	8
Termination Policy .....	9
Policies & procedures on institutional abuse and neglect .....	9
Reporting Abuse or Neglect Policy.....	9
Inclusion Camp .....	10
Important Information .....	10
Late Fees .....	10
Notification of Injury .....	10
Use of Pictures for Publicity.....	10
Plan for sharing information with parents/guardians .....	11
Email: .....	11
Text: .....	11

## Basic References

### Hours of Operations\*

Camp Simchah campers must register for a five-day program.

<i>Camp Simchah</i>	9:00am-4:00pm (full camp day) 9:00am-1:00pm (early pick up for KC and ECE siblings ONLY)
<i>Camp Simchah Specialty</i>	9:00am-4:00pm (full camp day)

*\*Inclusion campers may have individualized schedules arranged with our Inclusion Camp Director*

### Extended Care:

For those families that require additional hours of care, our extended care hours are available by pre-enrollment, Monday-Friday at the following times:

AM Care	8:00am-9:00am
PM Care	4:00pm-5:00pm (not available on Fridays)

### Unscheduled / Extra Hours:

We strive to accommodate all needs in providing emergency care. However, we can only provide this area when space allows. We urge you to develop a list of back-up names for emergency use which you will be asked to list on the Emergency Release forms on CampDocs.

## Arrival and Departure Procedures

### DROP OFF

- **8:00am-8:45am (pre-registered AM Care):** Drop-off for AM Extended Care takes place between 8:00am and 8:45am in the Ocean Room. This option is available only for those who have pre-registered.
- **8:45am-9:00am:** Standard morning drop-off for Camp Simchah occurs in front of Epstein Hillel School (EHS) at the far end of the upper parking lot. Campers who are not registered for AM Extended Care must be dropped off between 8:45am and 9:00am. Camp Simchah is not responsible for campers before this time. Once dropped off at EHS, campers will be checked in and join their group behind EHS for morning Flagpole.

### PICK UP

- **1:00pm (early pick up for KC and ECE Siblings):** Early pick-up for pre-registered campers is at the rock by the outdoor pool at 1:00pm. Campers not picked up by 1:10pm will be returned to their groups for the remainder of the camp day, and the drop-in rate for the afternoon camp will apply (see fees below).

- **3:30pm-4:00pm:** Standard afternoon pick-up for all Camp Simchah campers takes place between 3:30pm and 4:00pm in front of EHS at the far end of the upper parking lot. Campers not picked up by 4:10pm will incur additional fees (see rates below). Guardians and emergency contacts listed on camper forms will be contacted in the order provided.
- **4:00pm-5:00pm (pre-registered PM Care):** Pick-up for PM Extended Care occurs between 4:00pm and 5:00pm in the Ocean Room. This option is only available to families who have pre-registered.

## DROP OFF & PICK UP RULES

- No child may be picked up during or at the end of camp by anyone other than his/her parent or the person(s) listed on the child release forms, unless previous arrangements have been made by the parents, **in writing**, with the Camp Director.
- No camper can be dropped off past 10:30am
- Please be mindful of traffic in the parking lot and observe one-way traffic signs during drop off and pick up times for safety
- Campers over the age of 10 can walk to/from camp but this must be communicated **in writing**, with the Camp Director.

## Program Policies

### Parental Responsibilities

#### Clothing

Send your child to camp with appropriate outdoor clothing. Ensure they arrive in their swimsuit with sunblock already applied. Also, please label the following items with your child's name:

- A backpack
- A large towel
- An extra change of clothes
- Underwear and socks to change into after swimming
- Personal care items (e.g., feminine care items, hairbrush, hair ties, sunglasses)
- A bag for their wet swimsuit and towel
- Sunscreen (labeled inside a zip-lock bag)
- A sun hat
- Rain gear, jacket, or sweatshirt (appropriate to weather)
- Sneakers or closed-toe shoes (no sandals)

#### Do not send the following:

- Electronic devices (cell phones, smartwatches, video games)
- Toys & stuffed animals
- Playing/trading cards
- Candy & gum
- Anything else of value that could be lost or damaged

*If a camper is found with prohibited items, the Camp Director will hold the item until the end of the camp day.*

## Food

- **Snacks:** Provide a nut-free and meat-free snack, clearly labeled with your child's first and last name. Pack extra, as campers get hungry with all the fun activities!
- **Lunches:** Children must bring their own lunch in an insulated lunch bag, also clearly labeled. Note that **there is no refrigerator or microwave** available.
- **Dietary Policy:** The JCCNS dietary policy has recently changed. Dairy only lunches are NO longer exclusively required. Lunches may include meat products. As a reminder, there is no food sharing allowed between campers. If your child is celebrating a birthday at camp, please let us know so we can inform you of any food allergies within your child's bunk.

## Sunscreen

In accordance with the camp state guidelines 43-.163, all camp staff will encourage campers and staff to reduce their exposure to ultraviolet exposure from the sun. Such measures shall include, but need not be limited to, encouraging the use of wide brim hats, UV protective apparel (rash guards, tops, and summer weight long pants), SPF 25+ and lip balm. For Camp Simchah age children, we strongly encourage that sunscreen be provided in the form of a lotion or stick as the aerosol format does not always provide full coverage when applied.

In addition to our Permission to apply sunscreen form, sunscreen will be applied by the parent or guardian prior to arriving at camp. Simchah Staff will supervise the reapplication of sunscreen throughout the day (after water activities, lunch, and midafternoon sun exposure. When required, will assist campers when applying sunscreen.

## Absenteeism

Please notify the Camp Director if your child will be absent or late on any regularly scheduled day via email or text (using our Remind 101 group). Camp fees are based on registration, and refunds are not provided for absenteeism.

## Schedule Changes/Withdrawals

We ask that you notify the camp of any changes to your child's schedule at least one week prior to its effective date. There is a change of enrollment form on our website. ***Changes are subject to a \$25.00 processing fee***

## Pool Policy

- Each camper will be swim tested on the first day of the camp session to determine their swim level.
- Based on ability, campers will be identified into non-swimmer, at-risk swimmer, and proficient swimmer categories. Non-swimmers and at-risk swimmers will be asked to stay within certain areas of the pool.
- Swimmers will be evaluated at the end of each 3-4 week period and guardians will be given an update on their progress when evaluated.

## Medication Policy

The nurse's office is located at the Outdoor pool nurse's office from 9:00am-4:00pm.

If your camper must receive medication while at camp, the following steps must be taken:

- Legal guardian must fill out a Permission to Administer Medication form and hand the form, along with the medication to the Camp Nurse, head counselor, or the Camp Director.
- Medication must come to the camp office in its original container.
- Medication will be kept inside the refrigerator and/or in the office in a locked box, clearly labeled Medication.
- A Registered Nurse and/or staff who administers the medication will mark the dosage and time and sign off to indicate the camper received the required medication.
- It is the guardian's responsibility to retrieve the medication at the end of the camper's session.

**It is important to inform staff if your camper has been medicated at home, because it may affect the camper's day at camp.**

## Late Policy

Camp Simchah is open from 9:00am-4:00pm, Monday through Friday, with extended care available by pre-registration from 8:00am-9:00am, Monday through Friday. Families are expected to pick up their child by the designated time for their specific program and based on their specific registration. *We ask for your complete cooperation in this matter so that we can maintain appropriate staff-to-camper ratios, respect the schedules of our staff, and, most importantly, ensure the welfare of the children placed in our care.* If a camper is picked up after their designated time without prior notice, the staff member will verify and document the time of your arrival. You will be charged \$15 for any portion of the first 10 minutes your camper is picked up late. You will then be charged \$2 per minute, thereafter. We hope that all parents establish some form of emergency back-up procedure if you are unable to pick up your camper on time and so that this policy need not be enforced. **Please note that a waiver of this fee will only be granted in extreme emergency situations and is at the discretion of the Camp Director. We reserve the right to terminate the camper's contract with us for continued late pickups.**

## Group Request Policy

If you would like your camper to be placed in a group with their friends, please make that request in writing or by email to the camp director. The request must be received by June 6<sup>th</sup>. We will do our best to honor all requests; however, actual group placement is determined by the director based on requests, availability, age guidelines, and efforts to balance groups as much as possible.

Please remember that camp is a time for your child to make new friends and participate in new experiences. Your support of these new friendships and experiences is helpful if/when group requests cannot be accommodated.



## Health and Illness Policy

- It is essential that all children are in good health and free from contagious infections. A completed physical examination and proof of required immunizations must be submitted before the camp begins. The Marblehead Board of Health mandates that the program maintains up-to-date and complete forms for each child and staff member. **Children will not be allowed to start camp until all necessary forms are on file. Camper forms will not be accepted on the first day of camp.**
- **Mild Illness:** If your child feels unwell, please keep them home. If symptoms develop during camp, we will assess their ability to participate and contact you.
- **Contagious Illness:** If your child shows signs of a contagious illness, we will immediately contact you to pick up. All contagious diseases (e.g., chickenpox, measles, COVID-19) must be reported.
- **Isolation:** Symptomatic campers will be isolated and must be picked up immediately. Procedures for emergency care will be followed if necessary.
- **Head Lice:** Parents should check their child's head for lice before camp begins and periodically during the summer. If a child contracts head lice, the camp must be notified immediately. Any child who has a confirmed case of head lice must be treated prior to returning to camp and will need to submit a doctor's note or a note on letterhead from the professional who treated your child(ren). Please note that a re-check must take place 7-10 days after diagnosis.
- **Returning to Camp After Illness:** If a child is absent due to contagious disease, they may return to camp after being on an antibiotic and fever free for 24 hours. A written note from the child's physician is also required. These same requirements apply if your child is out sick for more than one week.

## Discipline Policy

The Jewish Community Center of the North Shore, *Camp Simchah* abides by the rules of regulations of the Marblehead Board of Health and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regarding discipline.

Discipline and guidance must be consistent and based upon an understanding of the developmental needs of children.

- Corporal punishment shall not be used, including spanking.
- No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse.
- No child shall be denied food or water as a form of punishment.
- No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Counselors redirect children's unexpected behavior through verbal interaction. We talk about behavior and not the child. We feel that this is the most effective way of teaching and re-teaching expected behavioral responses and involving a child in solving the problem at hand. This helps them to retain their feelings of self-esteem. Whenever possible, we give the child viable options and allow them to choose solutions.

On rare occasions, “Time out” may be implemented, allowing children to take a break from the situation until they are able to return to the problem-solving stage. This method involves removing the child from the situation and asking them to sit and think about what has occurred or to take a moment mentally to themselves. After a few moments, a staff person discusses with the child the situation and the child rejoin the group/activity.

## Termination Policy

A camper may be terminated from the program on the following grounds:

- *Summer at the J* is unable to meet the needs of a child, which results in chronic disruption and/or unsafe situations for them or other campers or staff.
- Non-payment of tuition or late fees.
- Parental failure to cooperate and collaborate with staff and administration concerning policies and procedures.
- Chronic lateness after closure time (6:00pm – see late policy).
- Submission of registration, inclusion pre-application, or camper forms which leave out essential information about the child, such as medical diagnoses or any other information that is necessary for *Summer at the J* to appropriately support a child in our care. In these cases, we will make attempts to correct the misinformation and provide needed support; however, campers may be asked to pause programming until such support becomes available (See Children with Disabilities/Inclusion policies below).

## Policies & procedures on institutional abuse and neglect

The Jewish Community Center of the North Shore, as an agency, is committed to the safety and well-being of all children of all ages, races, and religions. As part of this commitment, the staff is made aware of the signs and reporting procedures involving cases in which a child is suspected of having been abused or neglected. Abuse is defined as the non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker who causes or creates a substantial risk of harm to a child’s physical or emotional well-being, including sexual abuse. Neglect is defined as the failure of a caregiver to provide a child with minimally adequate food, safety, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, or other essential care. Training in this regard takes place during the staff’s orientation sessions at the beginning of each summer.

*\*All questions should be directed at: Department of Child and Family Services, Salem/Cape Ann 978.825.3800*

## Reporting Abuse or Neglect Policy

All center staff are mandated reporters. They are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect to both the Department of Child and Family Services or to the licensee’s program administrator, who is then required by law to report to the Department of Child and Family Services.

## Inclusion Camp

*Summer at the J* services children with varying abilities and needs. The Camp Department of the JCCNS will make every effort possible to accommodate the needs of all children. In determining whether to accept or serve a child with a disability, the JCCNS staff shall, with parental consent and as appropriate, request information related to the child's participation in the Center's program from the Local Education Agency, Early Intervention Program or other health or service providers.

**Any child with an IEP, 504 plan, a medical, developmental, or behavioral health diagnosis, or who receives any specialized services should be registered through our Inclusion Program. Once camp begins, if it is determined that your child requires support through the Inclusion Program, the Camp Team may pause participation, and your child will be put on a waitlist until the support needed is able to be provided.**

For any questions related to children with disabilities and/or our Inclusion Program, please contact our Inclusion Director, at 857-285-7956.

## Important Information

### Late Fees

- Late Pick up Fee after 4:00pm: \$15 for any portion of the first 10 minutes, and \$2 per minute, thereafter.
- \*Change Fee: Changes made after May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, will be subject to a \$25 change fee.
- Fees for campers who are registered for early pick up only (to stay until 4pm with at least 24 hours' notice of change\*): 25/afternoon.
- Afternoon Drop-In Fee (*when a camper is returned to their group due to not being picked up by 1:10pm*): Full Day Rate

### Notification of Injury

Camp Simchah must notify you immediately of any injury which requires emergency care. The program must also notify you, in writing, within 24 hours, if any emergency first aid is administered to your child.

### Use of Pictures for Publicity

During the camp program, JCCNS staff members may take photographs of campers to use for JCCNS publications and/or internal/external marketing. If you do not want the JCCNS to use photos of your child, please request a form from the Camp Controller and submit it no later than June 6th.

## Plan for sharing information with parents/guardians

### Email:

#### ***Constant Contact***

- To opt into this system, you must: Include your email address on your child's registration form, NOT opt-out of receiving JCCNS communications via Constant Contact.
- If you have previously opted out, or are unsure, please contact Stephanie Greenfield, Camp Controller and Database Manager at [sgreenfield@jccns.com](mailto:sgreenfield@jccns.com) and request to be added to the camp lists.
- **Email (from [hgravelese@jccns.com](mailto:hgravelese@jccns.com))**

### Text:

Heather Gravelese's cell phone/office:

- **857-285-7923** – *Office phone that receives text messages*
- **781-927-5229** – *Cell Phone*

### *Remind 101:*

- TO JOIN REMIND: You may go through the Remind 101 app or web site to send messages to camp leadership. To join our 2025 Simchah Families list, please text "@25simfam" to the number 81010 to be added or search for @25simfam from the Remind 101 app/website. *Replies to our outgoing message will only be seen by camp leadership staff. We encourage all adults who regularly transport campers to/from camp to enroll in this text service.*