



Parent/Caregiver Handbook 2023

Dear Camp Families,

We are pleased to provide you with our comprehensive Parent/Caregiver Handbook, designed to ensure a fantastic summer experience for your child at Camp DASH. This handbook includes essential information about our camp, including our contact information, how to reach us on-site or in the health office, and my personal contact information.

As the Program Coordinator of Waterford Youth and Family Services, I am available to address any questions or concerns that you may have. Additionally, our team, including Dani and Brandon, will be available to provide any necessary support to you and your family.

We kindly request that you review the handbook thoroughly and sign the last page, which you then return to us. Your child's safety and well-being are our top priority, and we appreciate your cooperation in ensuring a successful summer experience for your child.

Thank you for entrusting your child to us, and we look forward to creating unforgettable memories together at Camp DASH.

Sincerely,

Joseph Trelli

Program Coordinator
Waterford Youth and Family Services

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Camp DASH Contact List

Title	Position	Phone #	Text?	Email
Dani Gorman	Human Services Administrator	860.984.8844	Yes	dgorman@waterfordct.org
Joseph Trelli	Program Coordinator	860.449.2742	Yes	jtrelli@waterfordct.org
Brandon Smith	Director of Camps	860.389.6740	Yes	bsmith@waterfordct.org
Heidi McSwain	Human Service Coordinator	860.444.5839	n/a	hmcswain@waterfordct.org
Isabella Dazzi	Admin and Intake Specialist	860.444.5848	n/a	idazzi@waterfordct.org
Adam Pinch, Kyle Cardoza, Julie Tigeleiro	Oswegatchie Site Directors	860.333.4258	Yes	bsmith@waterfordct.org
Tessa D'Agostino	Oswegatchie Health Aid	860.326.6529	n/a	n/a
Melina Santangelo, Sofia Gonzalez, Payton Sutman	Quaker Hill Site Directors	860.389.4659	Yes	bsmith@waterfordct.org
Maria Valiente	Quaker Hill Health Aid	860.326.4529	n/a	n/a

In any situation where you need to speak to camp leadership, call Brandon at 860-389-6740 and he will return your call as soon as possible.

Camp Philosophy

At Camp DASH (Daily Activities for Summer Happiness), our philosophy is simple: we believe that every child deserves a fun, safe, and supportive summer camp experience. We strive to create a positive and inclusive environment where campers can explore new interests, build self-confidence, and make lasting friendships. Our goal is to provide a variety of activities and experiences that challenge and inspire our campers. We believe in the power of play, and we encourage our campers to try new things, travel outside their comfort zone, and learn from their mistakes. We want every camper to feel valued and respected, and to know that they have a place where they belong. We are committed to creating a safe and healthy environment for our campers; both physically and emotionally. We believe that every camper deserves to feel supported and encouraged, no matter their background or ability level. Ultimately, our philosophy is centered on the idea that every child has the potential to learn, grow, and thrive. We strive to provide a summer camp experience that helps each camper reach their full potential, and that creates lifelong memories and friendships.

More Than Just a Day Camp

Camp DASH has a goal to create a vibrant community centered around children. Our primary focus is on the growth and development of each individual, equipping them with invaluable skills that will last a lifetime. Whether they're mastering new activities, forging lifelong friendships, or cultivating qualities such as resilience, independence, and empathy, our campers are encouraged to lead a life they can truly be proud of.

Learning Through a Legacy

Learning through a legacy is a powerful and valuable aspect of Camp DASH. The influence that volunteers and staff members have on the campers as role models is cherished by our staff. It creates a special bond and sense of community within the camp. When campers see volunteers and staff members outside of the camp and they are recognized and treated respectfully, it reinforces the impact they have made on the campers' lives. It shows that their role modeling and mentorship have made a lasting impression.

The fact that campers often transition into becoming volunteers speaks volumes about the positive experience they had at Camp DASH. It demonstrates their desire to give back and pass on the same support and guidance they received as campers. This cycle of campers becoming volunteers, and then potentially staff members, helps to sustain the legacy of Camp DASH and ensures the continuity of the positive influence it has on young individuals. As campers grow into volunteers and staff members, they are elevated into leadership positions within the camp. This opportunity allows them to develop valuable skills and qualities that will serve them well in their future endeavors. It also reinforces the idea of personal growth and the ability to make a difference in the lives of others.

The continued success of Camp DASH can be attributed in large part to the learning that takes place through its legacy. The passing of the torch from one generation to the next ensures that the values and principles of the camp are upheld and carried forward. It instills a sense of pride in knowing that the campers who looked up to role models in previous summers will now become role models themselves.

Camp DASH Camper Code of Conduct

Respect and Inclusion:

- Treat all campers, staff, and volunteers with respect, kindness, and consideration.
- Embrace diversity and inclusivity, valuing individual differences in backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and abilities.

Safety and Well-being:

- Follow all safety guidelines and instructions provided by camp staff.
- Take responsibility for your own well-being and the well-being of others. Report any concerns or emergencies to camp staff immediately.
- Be mindful of personal boundaries and respect the privacy of others.

Cooperation and Collaboration:

- Work together with fellow campers, staff, and volunteers in a spirit of cooperation and teamwork.
- Be inclusive and encourage others to participate.
- Listen attentively to others' ideas and opinions, and be open to different perspectives.

Positive Communication:

- Use respectful language and tone when speaking to others.
- Refrain from using offensive, derogatory, or discriminatory language or behavior.
- Resolve conflicts peacefully and seek assistance from camp staff if necessary.

Environmental Stewardship:

- Respect and appreciate the natural environment and the camp facilities.
- Follow all rules regarding waste disposal and recycling.
- Conserve resources, such as water and electricity, by using them responsibly.

Personal Accountability:

- Take responsibility for your actions and their consequences.
- Adhere to the rules and guidelines set forth by the Camp DASH handbook.
- Accept the consequences of any violations or misconduct.

Reporting Violations:

- If you witness or experience any violations of the code of conduct, promptly report them to a camp staff member.

Remember, Camp DASH is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and enjoyable experience for all campers. By following this code of conduct, you contribute to creating a positive and welcoming environment for everyone.

Hours and Days of Operation

Monday – Friday (closed on July 3rd and 4th in observance of Independence Day)

- Extended Care: 7:30am-5:30pm*
- Regular Care: 8:45am– 3:15pm*
- Summer Academy Regular Care: 12:00pm to 3:15pm*
- Summer Academy Extended Care: 12:00pm to 5:30pm*

*For those registered for regular care, one excused tardy pick-up is permitted at no charge. Any following tardy pick-ups will be assessed a \$5 late fee per each 10 minutes after 3:30pm. This rule will also apply to Extended Care.

Dates of Operation: June 22nd 2023 - August 11, 2023

No day-of drop ins are allowed at Camp DASH. Pre-Registration and Pre-Payment is required for camp participation.

Forms Required:

- Completed & Signed Registration Form / Participant Agreement Form & Parent Handbook
- Health Record
- Permission Slips / Any Other Forms as required

Sign In / Pickup Procedure

At Camp DASH, the safety and security of our campers are our top priority. To ensure that all campers are properly accounted for, we require that each camper is signed in by an adult each morning and turned over to our Camp DASH staff. Please note that we do not assume any responsibility for campers who arrive before the start of the camp day.

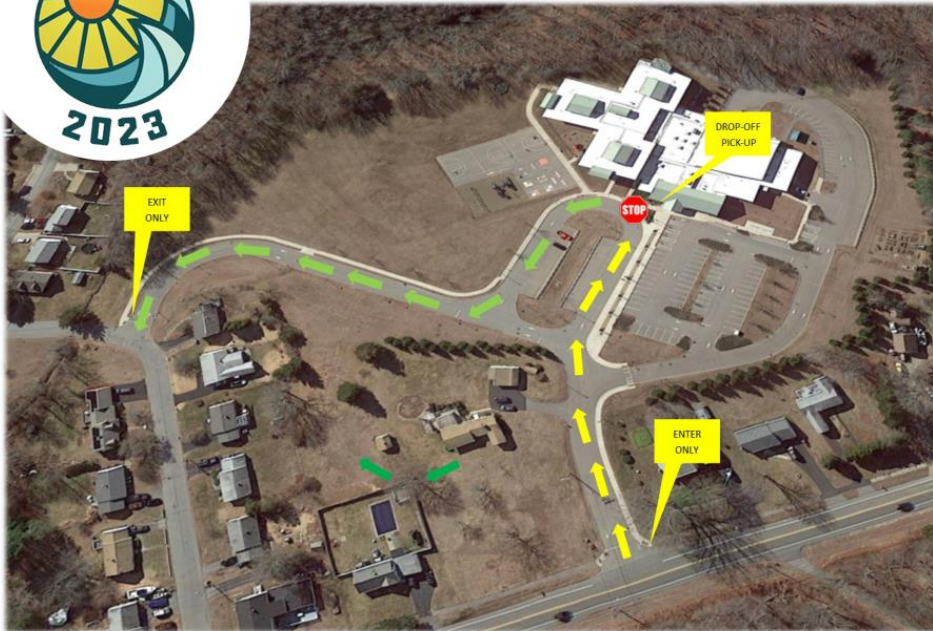
During pick-up, all campers must be signed out by individuals authorized in the Registration / Participant Agreement. To ensure the safety of our campers, we require that all authorized individuals present a photo ID and know the code word. **Please be advised that children will only be released to authorized individuals. Siblings, cousins, or anyone under the age of 18 will not be permitted to sign out a camper.**

Additionally, please note that no camper will be allowed to leave by themselves, regardless of written permission. We take the safety of our campers seriously and appreciate your cooperation in ensuring that each camper is properly signed in and signed out each day.

Please familiar yourself with where to drop-off and pick-up your camper(s) using the map on the next page.



OSWEGATCHIE SITE
Drop-Off / Pick-Up Map



QUAKER HILL SITE
Drop-Off / Pick-Up Map



WHAT SHOULD CAMPERS BRING TO CAMP?

ALL ITEMS MUST BE LABELED WITH CAMPERS NAME

- Water/Water bottles
- Hat (to protect from sun)
- Sunscreen (It is recommended that parents/guardians spray campers before coming to camp, we will reapply sunscreen as needed throughout the day)
- Change of clothes
- Towel and bathing suit (ON DESIGNATED DAYS – SEE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER)

What should stay home?

Personal Devices *

At Camp DASH, we understand that many campers may have cell phones. While we strongly advise leaving cell phones at home, if your camper chooses to bring their cell phone to camp, we have established a designated cellphone room in the main office of each campsite. Our staff members will be present to monitor the phones, and the use of cell phones will be at the discretion of the director.

Our primary concern is for the safety and well-being of our campers. We believe that disconnecting from technology allows campers to fully immerse themselves in the camp experience and develop meaningful connections with their peers and counselors. Please refrain from bringing the following:

- any items of value
- toys and playing cards
- money/debit card
- personal sports equipment (unless otherwise specified)

*At Camp DASH, we believe in empowering our campers to become leaders and active participants in shaping their camp experience. As part of our leadership development program, our DASH Academy campers (Middle Schoolers) work collaboratively with our staff to create policies regarding the use of devices during their stay at camp. Through this leadership development work, our campers gain valuable skills in collaboration, communication, and decision-making. We believe that this approach fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among our campers, ultimately contributing to a more positive and enriching camp experience.

Please note that Waterford Youth and Family Services and the Town of Waterford are not responsible for any lost, stolen, or broken items, including electronic devices. We advise that campers only bring essential items to camp and leave valuable items at home.

What Should Campers Wear?

We encourage campers to dress comfortably and appropriately for an active day of fun and adventure. We suggest that campers wear shorts, t-shirts, socks, and sneakers. Additionally, we recommend bringing a sweatshirt, as the air conditioning in our buildings can make them surprisingly cold in the summer. Please note that clothing with inappropriate words or numbers is not permitted at camp.

During Water Weeks (Weeks 2, 4, 6 and 8), campers will have the opportunity to participate in water activities. We kindly ask that campers bring a bathing suit and towel with a name written on the tag or somewhere on the towel to avoid any confusion or misplaced items.

We also advise campers to bring a change of clothing, especially during Water Weeks, to ensure they are comfortable and dry throughout the day. We want all of our campers to feel comfortable, confident, and ready to have a great time at Camp DASH.

Snack & Lunch

We provide morning snacks to our campers at approximately 10:00 am, depending on their group schedule. Extended Care campers will also be provided a snack at approximately 4:00 pm. Every Wednesday, Camp DASH will host a pizza party that provides free pizza to our campers!

To help ensure that each camper receives their snack, please mark all lunches and snacks with the camper's first and last name. We kindly ask that you disclose any allergies your camper may have to our camp leadership, as we take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of our campers. We also have a designated peanut-free table at camp.

If you prefer that your child not be served food by Camp DASH, please inform our camp leadership prior to your child's arrival. We understand that proper nutrition is essential to our campers' well-being. We strive to provide a variety of healthy snacks and refreshments.

Camp Structure

Each camp site is divided into four groups based on the grade campers will be entering in the next school term. All campers must be potty trained before starting camp. Ratios are the number of Camp staff to Campers, we maintain 5 to 1 camper to staff ratio in Happy Trails, 8 to 1 for Base Camp and Summit Camp, and 10 to 1 for DASH Academy

Happy Trails Entering Preschool or Kindergarten

Base Camp Entering 1st, 2nd or 3rd Grade

Summit Camp Entering 4th and 5th Grade

DASH Academy Entering 6th, 7th or 8th Grade*

DASH Academy's "Hybrid" Program

*We are committed to developing the leadership potential of our DASH Academy students. Our Hybrid program is designed to give DASH Academy Campers an opportunity to take on the role of Volunteer-In-Training while still enjoying their camper experience.

The Hybrid program is exclusive to DASH Academy Campers who have demonstrated a high degree of responsibility, empathy, and maturity. These campers will split their time at Camp DASH between being a regular camper and participating in this program, where they will receive training and guidance from our volunteers and camp staff. Campers will learn leadership on how to become full-fledged volunteer with the goal of becoming a full fledge staff member at age 15

Through the Hybrid program, DASH Academy Campers will have the opportunity to develop leadership skills, build confidence, and gain experience in working with younger campers. We are excited to offer this unique opportunity to our DASH Academy Campers and look forward to seeing them grow and thrive as leaders at Camp DASH. **Eligible campers will only be given hybrid status at executive director or program coordinator's approval after conferring with camp leadership.**

Contacting Parents and Legal Guardians

In the event of an emergency that impacts camp operations, such as cancellations or early dismissals, we will utilize the primary phone numbers listed on your account. We will also provide updates on our website and social media platforms. To keep our camp families informed and up-to-date, we regularly send out newsletters and reminders via email. It is important that you check your email frequently to stay informed about camp activities and events. Additionally, we love to share pictures from camp on our Facebook and Instagram pages. We encourage you to follow us for the latest updates and highlights from our program.

Beach Days and Safety

Beach Days are as scheduled, weather permitting.

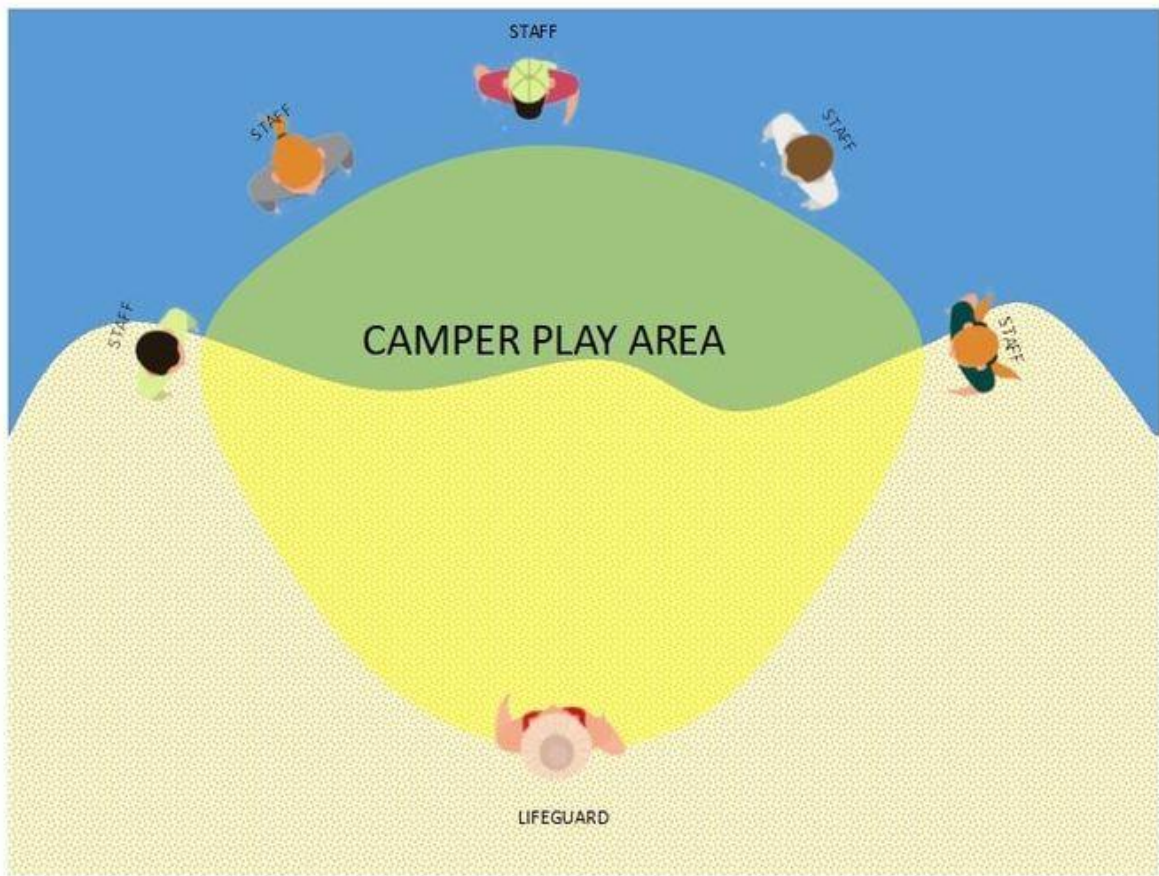
Oswegatchie AM: 10:00am to 11:45am PM: 1:30pm to 2:45pm	Quaker Hill AM: 9:30am to 11:45am PM: 1:00pm to 2:45pm
Tuesday, June 27th, 2023	Friday, June 30th, 2023
Wednesday, July 5th, 2023	Friday, July 7th, 2023
Wednesday, July 12th, 2023	Friday, July 14th, 2023
Wednesday, July 19th, 2023	Friday, July 21st, 2023
Tuesday, July 25th, 2023	Friday, July 28th, 2023
Wednesday, August 2nd, 2023	Friday, August 4th, 2023
Tuesday, August 8th, 2023	Friday, August 11th, 2023

Campers have the opportunity to go to the beach as scheduled (under the discretion of staff). If a camper decides they do not want to go to the beach, they are not required to do so. They may remain at camp and participate in alternate activities. Once at the beach, campers will adhere to the Waterford Beach rules and follow the regulations of the certified lifeguards present at the beach.

Waterford Beach Rules:

- **Swimmers must stay in the identified camper play area**
- **No roughhousing in the water**
- **No dunking other swimmers**
- **No holding anyone underwater**
- **Remain in the beach area**

Our Staff Positions at the Beach



Camp DASH strives to ensure the safety and well-being of our campers during swim time. Lifeguards from Waterford Rec and Park work closely with our staff to create a safe barrier of camp counselors for our campers to swim in the light surf at Waterford Beach while under constant supervision. This procedure is a vital part of our operations for our Happy Trails and Base Camp programs, and while more relaxed for older and more confident swimmers in our Summit and DASH Academy programs, we always seek to protect the safety and well-being of all our campers.

Oswegatchie Trails

Campers at our Oswegatchie site will have the opportunity to visit the trails behind the school. Visits will be facilitated by our trained staff with outdoor activities that focus on ecology, forestry skills and outdoor "survival" activities.

Trail rules:

- Stay on marked trails and away from tick prone areas (tall grass)
- Take out what you take in
- Do not disturb wildlife
- Be mindful of your surroundings
- Do not touch/ingest unknown plants or fungi

Tick bite prevention is a critical first step to prevent Lyme disease and/or other tick-borne illnesses. We advise all parents and legal guardians to thoroughly check their campers for ticks once they are home from camp.

Please be aware of the most common symptoms of tick-related illnesses are:

- Fever/chills: With all tickborne diseases, patients can experience fever at varying degrees and time of onset.
- Aches and pains: Tickborne disease symptoms include headache, fatigue, and muscle aches. With Lyme disease you may also experience joint pain. The severity and time of onset of these symptoms can depend on the disease and the patient's personal tolerance level.
- Rash: Lyme disease can result in distinctive rashes the rash may appear within 3-30 days, typically before the onset of fever.

Medical/Emergency Information

All campers are required to have a current record of health on file that is signed by a physician, APRN or RN. Campers may not attend camp if a health record is not received.

It is essential that any medical conditions, including allergies, are disclosed on your camper's registration form and health record. Please inform the camp director immediately if your child's health needs change. If your child or anyone in your household develops any communicable conditions such as pink eye, COVID symptoms, vomiting/upset stomach, rash, or head lice, please notify camp leadership right away. If your child is feeling unwell or at risk of becoming ill, we ask that you do not send them to camp. We strongly recommend that you follow the public health guidance for your family's activities to keep our camps open. Please keep your child at home if they are not feeling well or if anyone in your household is exhibiting COVID-19 or flu symptoms to prevent possible transmission to others. If your camper becomes ill while at camp, you will be promptly notified to pick them up. In case we cannot reach you, the emergency contact listed on your camper's registration form will be contacted.

Bathroom Procedures

We prioritize the health and well-being of our campers, and we understand that using the restroom is a natural and necessary part of the day. Therefore, campers are encouraged to use the restrooms whenever they need to, and we have scheduled bathroom breaks during transitions between activities. Our highly trained counselors accompany campers to the bathroom doors and wait outside until they have finished.

We kindly remind parents and guardians that all campers are required to be fully potty trained prior to the start of camp. If a camper requires assistance with potty training or bathroom use, our Camp Health Aid is available to provide the necessary support. At Camp DASH, we are committed to providing a positive and comfortable experience for all campers.

Contacting Campers

Should you need to speak to a camper during the course of the day at camp please call the camp phones at (860-389-0009 FOR OSW & 860-326-9682 FOR QH) or the WYSB office at (860)-444-5848 and we will be happy to get your camper in contact with you. We ask that no camper comes to camp with a cell phone as it can be a distraction for themselves and other campers. We encourage you to call the camp phone prior to calling the camper's cell phone.

Scholarship

We recognize that not all families have the financial resources to bear the expenses of summer camp. To address this issue, we have established a scholarship fund aimed at providing financial aid to qualified families in need. It is imperative to note that our scholarship funds are limited and therefore, we are only able to extend financial assistance to those who meet our specific eligibility criteria.

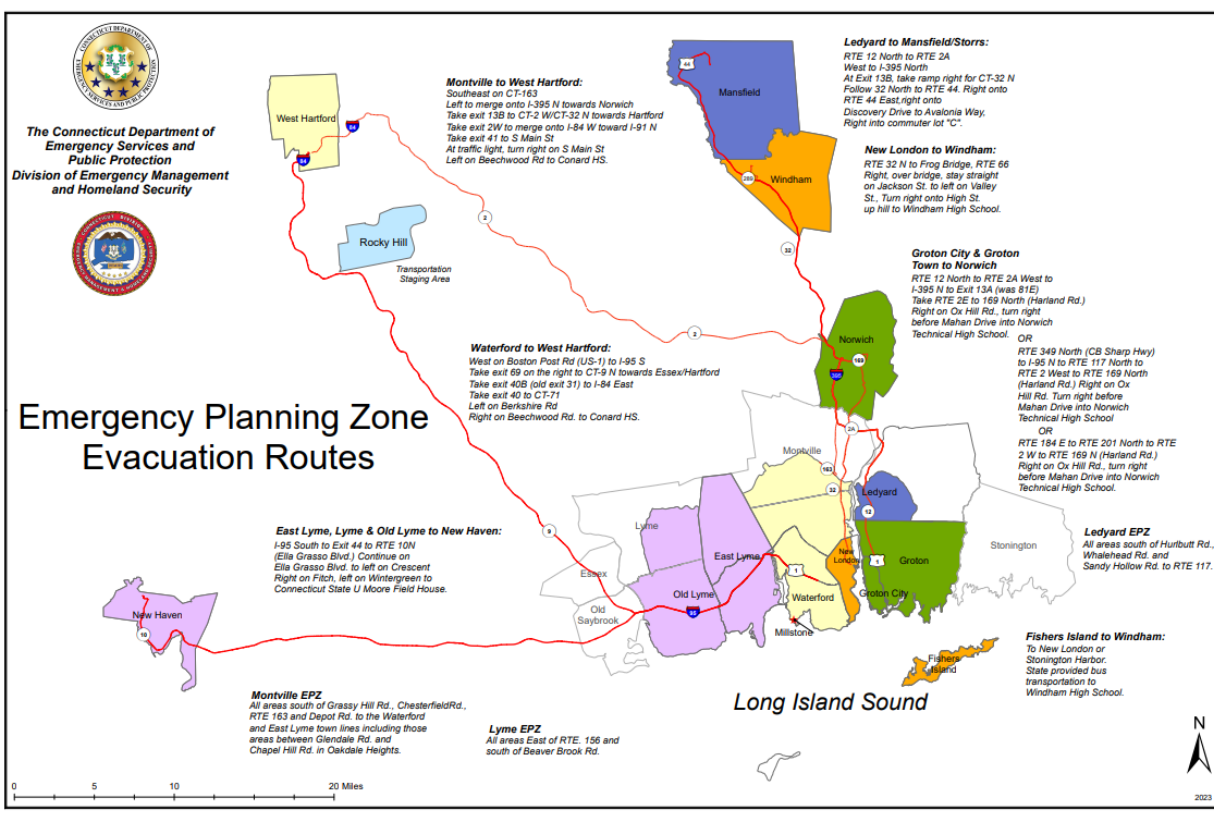
We encourage families who believe they may qualify for our scholarship program to apply and take advantage of this opportunity. Our goal is to ensure that every child, irrespective of their financial circumstances, has access to the enriching experiences and benefits that Camp DASH has to offer. Together, let us work towards creating equal opportunities for all children to make lifelong memories and learn valuable life skills at Camp DASH.

Refund Policy

This refund policy is in lieu of making all prepayments nonrefundable, and therefore will be strictly adhered to when receiving any requests from campers, and/or guardians or parents, for return of any funds received by the Camp Program. Parents / guardians of a registered camper must notify the Town of Waterford Youth and Family Services' Camp DASH by email 60+ days prior to the associated camp start date to receive a refund less 10% for online processing and administrative fees. From 60 days and less than three weeks prior to a camper's first day of camp, parents / guardian must notify the Town of Waterford Youth and Family Services' Camp DASH by email to receive a 50% refund. No refunds will be issued less than three weeks prior to a camper's first day of camp. To request a refund (per this policy), please email Dani Gorman, Human Services Administrator, at dgorman@waterfordct.org to process. Authorized refunds will be issued in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Town of Waterford Finance Department.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency information is very important to us, please let us know if any of your contact information changes. Emergency Plan: Camp DASH follows the same emergency plan as Waterford Public Schools, this plan states: ***“When there is limited warning, students (campers) will be sheltered in those areas of the school building deemed safe. When adequate warning for evacuation, arrangements will be made for transportation of all students (campers). Evacuation of the area will result in all students (campers) being bused to Conard High School in West Hartford”*** Should an evacuation occur please do not interfere with the evacuation process, camp staff have been trained in how to handle evacuations and Waterford Youth Services will notify you should an evacuation occur.



Liability Statement

PARTICIPANT / PARENT / GUARDIAN AGREEMENT: This health history is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and my child has permission to engage in all prescribed camp activities, except as noted in the health report, my son/daughter is in good health. In consideration for participating in activities sponsored by the Town of Waterford, I hereby waive and release the Town of Waterford, its agents, officers and employees, whether paid or voluntary, from and against any and all claims, suits, actions, damages, liabilities, costs, expenses, and or judgments, including attorney's fees and court costs, which may arise from my child's participation in activities or any illness or injury resulting therefrom, either directly or incidentally. I hereby represent that I understand and am familiar with the nature and type of activities in which my child participates in. I acknowledge that I will be solely responsible for the furnishing of necessary safeguards and appropriate equipment for protection against injury. Photos taken during programs may be used for promotional purposes. Please notify Recreation and Parks or WYSB if you do not want a picture of your child published. By signing, I am in agreement that this registration commits me to providing payments for each of the participants registered. If any payment is not received by the designated payment due dates, my child will be unable to attend the program effective Monday of the following week and will be disqualified for the remainder of the program. I have read this document and understand and agree to its terms and conditions.

Camper(s) name(s): _____
Name (Printed): _____

I read and understand the policies above.

Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____