



# **CAMPS AT SIGNAL**

## **FAMILY HANDBOOK**



## **WELCOME TO CAMP SIGNAL**

We're happy to have you and your family involved in this special piece of our program. Please read through our Family Handbook and let us know if you have any questions. We ask that families and caregivers sign the statement at the end of this handbook to let us know that you are comfortable with our policies and procedures.

### **SIGNAL CENTERS**

Established in 1957, our services include helping children get the best start possible through excellent early childhood education and developmental therapies; supporting adults to facilitate independent living and employment, helping individuals of all ages use technology to overcome obstacles, supporting parents; and training professionals who work in the field of education. All programs promote lifelong learning and independence.

### **OUR MISSION**

To strengthen children, adults, and families through services focusing on disabilities, early childhood education, and self-sufficiency.

### **OUR VISION**

A community that fosters lifelong independence for children, adults, and families.



## **SIGNAL CENTERS CAMPS**

### **CAMP SIGNAL**

Camp operates during a portion of June and July, with a break scheduled during the week of the Fourth of July.

### **CHATTER CAMP**

This camp is generally held during the first week of June and conducted with the help of our own Assistive Technology Professionals and is designed to provide a unique, fun camp experience for children who use Augmentative Assistive Communication devices.

### **VISION CAMP**

This is a one-week camp designed to provide fun activities that promote independence for children and youth with vision loss. Families may take part in more than one type of camp if eligible. Please talk with our Camp Director if you have questions about eligibility.

## **HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION**

### **Camp Signal**

9:30 am to 2:30 pm Monday through Friday

### **Chatter Camp**

9:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday through Friday

### **Vision Camp**

Hours vary and are announced annually

All of our camps are designed to provide an authentic, fun summer camp experience for children with various needs.



## FEES

Fees for Camp Signal are \$250/week. Fees for the first week of camp must be paid in advance; thereafter, fees are due every Friday for the coming week. Some families choose to pay for the full summer in advance, which is also permitted. Fees (check or cash) can be paid directly to our Camp Director or left with our Children's Services Administrative Assistant.

Additionally, fees may be paid online on our website at:

[www.SignalCenters.org](http://www.SignalCenters.org)

Select Signal Payment

Select Camp from the drop-down menu and proceed.

Please let us know if you need any assistance completing an online payment. \*Please do not leave payments with your child's teacher or in the classroom.

Scholarships are available for eligible families through our partnership with the City of Chattanooga and/or the Friends of Special Children. If you would like to learn more about our scholarship opportunities, please reach out to our Camp Director.

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance is not collected during Camp other than for the purposes of USDA reporting and safety measures, and for measuring our impact. We recognize that families often have varying work and personal schedules during the summer months which may interfere with a child's attendance.

We ask that if you know in advance that your family is going to be vacationing or taking time out of camp, you let us know so that we may offer those days to other children in need. Our only other request is that if your child is going to arrive after 10:00 am, please let us know so that we can plan accordingly.





## **INFORMATION ABOUT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

A brief exchange of information between parent(s) and camp counselor(s) is important each day. In the mornings, please let us know if anything is out of the ordinary in your child's routine. At pick-up, teachers will let you know if there is anything out of the ordinary about your child's camp day (we also love sharing success stories!). If there is ever a time when you need additional information about your child's day or care here, please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's camp counselor or to our Camp Director.

## **AUTHORIZED PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

We require that families complete an Emergency Contact form (this must be redone annually for each child and updated if there are changes in contact information).

Please include anyone to whom your child may be released (other than parent) in a typical scenario (grandparents, nannies, etc.).

For last minute changes in pick-up plans, you may contact the camp office with verbal consent. The person picking-up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy. If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts.

Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after hours we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, a local child protective services agency will be contacted.



## **FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS**

Signal Centers believes that a child's family lays the first foundation for learning, and this extends to school-age children. Although we may care for your child(ren) only during the summer months or during school breaks, we want to build a strong relationship with you so that we can support the goals you have for your child. To do this, we ask that you attend pre-enrollment meeting with our Camp Director prior to the start of service. We also offer multiple family engagement opportunities throughout the summer months. It is important to us that parents are well-informed about their child's day at camp. We will make every effort to share information with you at the end of the day, but please don't hesitate to let us know if you have specific questions.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All records concerning children enrolled in our programs are confidential. Unless we receive your written consent, no information will be released except when required by our regulatory agencies. Upon enrollment, we ask that you sign a media release if you are comfortable having your child's photo on social media. We respect families' rights to privacy, so if you do not want your child featured in our media, please rest assured that we will be mindful of that.



## CLASSROOM STRUCTURE AND CURRICULUM

Our classrooms are staffed with energetic, well-trained camp counselors who want to see children have a fun and exciting summer. All classrooms have at least two counselors; some may have three as necessary.

At times, volunteers may also be present in camp to provide extra engagement and supervision—volunteers are never left alone with children and all volunteers submit to a background check.

All of our camps are designed to be fun, engaging, and to be educational in the sense that students have opportunities for exploration and learning through play and specially planned activities.

Our Camp Director works with staff members to create weekly themes that are interesting to young learners, and the week's activities are scheduled around each theme which provide a variety of experiences. Some of our weekly themes include: Superheroes, Cooking, Around the World, and more.

In-house field trips are held, where we invite visitors to bring exciting content (petting zoos, Creative Discovery Museum, the Tennessee Aquarium, and other fun visitors).

Children have opportunities for daily outdoor play on our accessible playground (weather permitting) and in our gymnasium, which includes a climbing wall and age-appropriate equipment.



## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

We recognize that every student who comes to camp may have different behavioral needs. We operate under the guidelines that the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services provides regarding discipline and classroom management, and our staff are trained to never use discipline that is shameful, humiliating or frightening, nor will discipline ever be related to rest, food, or toileting.

If a child demonstrates behaviors that become harmful to others or to themselves, we will reach out to parents and/or caregivers to discuss ways that we can support the child while keeping them and others safe.

We do ask that parents let us know in advance if your child displays behaviors such as elopement (running away or hiding from adults), or behaviors that could be construed as aggressive, please let us know.

We want to make every effort to work with you and your child, accommodating these needs as our program allows, so that they can have an enjoyable summer.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

We discourage an abundance of toys, blankets, and other items being brought from home and cannot be responsible for lost items. However, we recognize that sometimes, children feel more comfortable if they have a particular item that's familiar and we do allow items as needed.

If your child needs to bring a particular toy, blanket, or other item for comfort, please talk with his or her camp counselor and, if needed, our Camp Director can help create a plan for ensuring that items brought from home serve your child well during the day.





## NUTRITION

Signal Centers provides lunch and snack for all campers, daily. This is included in the cost of camp. All meals meet or exceed USDA requirements. We are happy to accommodate children who have allergies by providing alternative food/drink, but we ask that you make us aware of allergies as soon as they arise.

Food allergies can be life threatening, and each child with a food allergy must have an action plan (completed by the child's pediatrician) on file with our nurse. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are asked to provide a form detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments, and care.

Families must provide the doctor-approved medications (Benadryl, Epi-pen, etc.) and proof of prescription. All medications must be labeled with the child's name and dates of provision to the center and must be in the original prescription packaging. Our center is a nut-free facility. At time if it necessary, some classrooms may be required to be free of other anaphylactic allergens.

If a classroom serves a child with life-threatening allergies, signs will be posted on the classroom doors and families will be notified of this requirement. Additionally, a child's allergy notifications are posted conspicuously to be easily identified by camp counselors, subs, and volunteers. Staff are trained in CPR and First Aid as well as administering Epi-pens and medication.

Should you choose to send lunch for your child, the following requirements must be met: Lunches from home must be nut-free and must include, at a minimum, a protein, a fruit and/or vegetable, and a grain. Sugary items such as cakes, candy, Capri Sun, and Little Debbie's are discouraged as we are not permitted to serve these to other children. If you are sending your child's lunch but wish for him/her to have milk from our center, please let us know and we're happy to provide.



## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). State regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed.

Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department. A Child Care Immunization form that shows up-to-date immunizations is required upon enrollment in our program. This form must include a physician's signature documenting a health examination. Faxed copies are acceptable when coming from a physician's office.

### ILLNESS

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children, we cannot permit children who are sick to be at camp.

We ask that parents notify us immediately if your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness so that we may be on the lookout for children with any similar symptoms.

Signal Centers is fortunate to have a licensed nurse on staff during most business hours, and we will try to keep your child comfortable if he or she becomes ill while in our care while maintaining a safe environment for all children in the program. You will be called and asked to pick up your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms.



**THIS IS NOT AN INCLUSIVE LIST:**

A. Acute Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities (child looks or acts differently, unusually tired, pale, no appetite, confused, irritable, excessive nasal drainage for greater than seven days, or a cold lasting longer than ten days).

B. Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.

C. Fever: Parent will be contacted for pickup if a child has a fever of 100 degrees or higher. Child may return to camp when fever-free for 24 hours without medication.

D. Diarrhea: We will call parents for pick-up after increased episodes of loose, runny stools. Child may return to camp when symptom-free for 24 hours without medication. If diarrhea appears to be a side effect of antibiotics, you will be asked to speak with the camp nurse for further instructions.

E. Vomiting: Parents will be contacted for pick-up after two episodes of vomiting occur. Child may return to camp after being symptom-free for 24 hours without medication.

F. Rashes: Parents will be called for pickup if an unexplained rash is noted. Child may return with doctor's statement.

G. Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge: Parent will be notified and contacted for pick-up. Child may return with a doctor's statement.

H. Infected Skin Patches: Parent will be notified and contacted for pick-up. Child may return to camp 24 hours after treatment and with a doctor's statement.



**ILLNESS cont.**

I. Sore Throat and/or painful swallowing: If a child has a sore throat and/or painful swallowing with fever or swollen glands, parent will be notified and asked to pick-up. Child may return to care with doctor's statement. If a child has a persistent sore throat or painful swallowing with no fever, parent will be contacted, and we will continue to monitor.

J. Head lice: If live lice are noted on the scalp or hair, parents will be contacted for pick-up and provided with information on treatment of head lice. Child may return with proof of lice treatment (box, receipt, or other proof of purchase). Parent will be asked to continue to monitor and work on nit removal and speak to our nurse to determine if a second treatment is required.

K. Scabies: A rash with intense itching may be scabies. If it believed that a child has scabies, parent will be contacted for pick-up. Child may return to care with doctor's statement that indicates that it is safe for them to return.

L. Severe or Uncontrolled Coughing: If a child has severe or uncontrolled coughing, parent will be contacted for pick-up. Child should be seen by a doctor and may return to camp with doctor's statement.

M. Ringworm: Symptoms include ring-shaped, raised border of lesion, usually intense itching. If ringworm is noted and area is oozing or larger than a Band-aid can cover, parent will be contacted for pickup. Over-the-counter medications may be effective; child may return to camp with proof of treatment (box, receipt or other proof of purchase). However, if there is no improvement in 5-7 days, child must see a doctor.

N. Open Lesions: All lesions must be covered while at camp. If, for any reason, the lesion cannot stay covered, parents will be contacted for pickup.





## MEDICATIONS

If a child is to be administered ANY (prescription and/or over-the-counter) medication, the following guidelines must be followed:

- A. We must have a doctor's order for prescribed or over-the-counter medication to be administered. A form must also be completed and signed by the parent.
- B. Certain medications may require a Medication Action Plan to be completed by the provider.
- C. The medication must be in its original container with the following information on the label: child's name; name of the medication; dosage to be administered; instructions for administration.
- D. Medication must be stored in a locked container (each classroom has a container for storing medication).
- E. Sunscreen: Hamilton County Department of Education requires children to have a prescription for sunscreen and we can only apply as directed.
- F. Diaper cream: Diaper cream may only be applied with a doctor's order.

All medications and ointments should be handed to a staff member with specific instructions for administration. Medications and ointments should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is dispensed as directed.



## **SAFETY**

A. Clothing. Children enrolled in our program have lots of opportunities for messy play (this can include painting, sand play, and water play during warmer months). Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather and choose clothing that is good for messy play. Children must wear closed toe shoes.

B. Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play. We believe that outdoor play is essential to our curriculum. Our playground is used as an extension of the classroom and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits. Whenever possible, we will spend some amount of time outdoors each day. During extreme temperature conditions, we will limit the time we spend outdoors and will not stay out longer than is comfortable and appropriate for children. In the event of extreme air quality warnings, we will stay indoors.

C. Injuries. Safety is a major concern in any early education program, and daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by our trained staff if your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an accident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

D. Prohibited Substances. The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the precamp premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited. Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately. We reserve the right to contact law enforcement as necessary and/or refuse release of a child to an adult that appear to be under the influence of prohibited substances.



E. Smoking. Smoking is prohibited on the entire Signal Centers campus. The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children. The indoor and outdoor environment are always non-smoking areas.

#### F. Weapons

Weapons are prohibited on the Signal Centers campus. Anyone who brings a weapon onto our premises will be asked to leave immediately and the police will be contacted immediately.

#### G. Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

#### H. Marketing, Advertising & Publicity

Pictures, images, and/or names of children may be utilized for marketing, advertising, or publicity purposes. A consent form is included in the enrollment packet. Families may opt out.

#### I. Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities. If we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred, we are mandated reporters. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may investigate. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect. Camp staff members are trained in the prevention, detection and reporting of child abuse before they begin providing care each summer.



## **FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented. Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care.

We look forward to getting to know you and your family. Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

I have received the Signal Centers Children's Services Family Handbook, and I have reviewed the handbook with a member of the Children's Services program. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself with the Family Handbook and to ask center management for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the Signal Centers Children's Services Family Handbook.

### **Contact Information:**

Signal Centers  
109 N. Germantown Road  
Chattanooga, TN 37411  
423.698.8528

