

# **TOWN OF HOLLISTON**

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Recreation Department

**100 Linden Street Holliston, MA 01746**  
(508) 429-2149 Fax (508) 429- 0696

June 2010

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Holliston Outdoors Summer Programs! We are planning a full schedule of fun and games, arts and crafts, field trips, and special surprises. Whether you are returning, or coming for the first time, we are delighted you will be spending part of your summer with us! This letter will give you some helpful information about the **Senior Patoma Program** and answer questions about our policies and procedures. Please be sure to read all the information carefully.

## **Drop Off/Pick Up**

**DROP-OFF:** Drop-off for the Senior Patoma Program is at Stoddard Park. Please do not drop your child off before 8:45 am, as supervision will not be available. Unless otherwise noted, our schedule of activities begins promptly at 9:00am. Please be sure to arrive on time each day! Senior Patoma gathers under the pavilion.

**PICK-UP:** Dismissal takes place between 2:45 and 3:00pm (unless otherwise noted due to a field trip) from under the pavilion. Please stay in your car, a staff member will bring your child to you. Please be patient on the first days of the program during dismissal, as it takes a day or two to get the system in place. *Please be on time for pick-up! Parents who are consistently late picking up their child will be required to pay late fees to cover the cost of keeping staff past 3:00pm.* Included in this packet you will find an authorization form for people to pick-up your child. Please send your completed form in with your child on the first day. We will only release your child to those listed on the form!

- **THE ATTACHED PICK UP AUTHORIZATION FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND TURNED IN TO YOUR CHILD'S COUNSELOR ON THE FIRST DAY. PLEASE DO NOT MAIL THESE FORMS INTO THE OFFICE.**

## **Weather Days**

We make every effort to run the program everyday, and would only cancel in the case of an extreme weather situation. Rainy days are always very challenging, as it is difficult to second-guess the weather. If it is predicted that the day is to be overcast and drizzly, the staff may opt to stay at the park and try to run the program as scheduled. If the forecast calls for heavier rains, the staff may opt to move the program over to the Flag Building. If there are consecutive rain days, we may take another field trip such as roller skating or bowling (due to the costs associated with running an additional field trip, this option is a last resort). Determinations as to how the rain day will be spent are made by the staff, and generally not until 8:30 in the morning. Once a plan has been put into place, a staff member will greet cars at the entrance to the park and advise participants of the "rain day schedule". It is very possible that, if you have children attending both Senior and Junior Patoma,

they may be doing different things or going to different places to get out of the rain. Please check with the staff member at the gate to find out what EACH program is doing that day. It is highly recommended that you send your child everyday with light rain gear and an extra pair of socks and sneakers. Everyone needs to exercise a little patience on weather days. It's never easy on anyone, especially the staff. Thanks in advance for your understanding.

### **Early Release**

In the event of an unexpected heavy rainstorm that occurs later in the day, due to space and shelter limitations it is advisable for you, if at all possible to come pick up your child for an early release. We do not have the space to keep everyone out of the rain when storms move in later in the day. In the event of a rainstorm, Senior Patoma will be under the pavilion at Stoddard Park waiting for pick-up. Junior Patoma will be released from the craft cabin at Patoma Park.

### **Medical Information**

Holliston Recreation Department staff are not permitted to administer medications of any kind to program participants. Parents who want their minor children to *self-administer* a prescription must sign a Release of Liability Waiver. If your child is taking antibiotics for any reason, please adjust their medication schedule accordingly so that it is administered at home before and after the program. The Recreation Department reserves the right to request that a parent come to the program to administer prescription drugs to their child. Parents of children with special medical needs should contact the Recreation Office prior to the beginning of the program. Children who may require the use of Epi-Pens or inhalers must have a signed permission form on file.

- **BOARD OF HEALTH REGULATIONS REQUIRE THAT EVERY PARTICIPANT HAVE A CURRENT HEALTH/IMMUNIZATION FORM ON FILE WITH THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT. PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE NOT TURNED IN FORMS BY JUNE 30 2010 WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE PROGRAM**

### **Attire**

We recommend your child dress appropriately for a "being outside all day program". Also, just as in the schools, we discourage tight-fitting clothing, very short-shorts and inappropriate language on T-shirts, etc. We have noticed this trend increasing, particularly with this age group, over the years and those types of clothing are just not appropriate for an outdoor, experiential-type program. Please do not allow your child to wear expensive clothing or jewelry. We will not be responsible for lost or damaged articles of any kind. All personal articles, especially beach towels, program t-shirts, water bottles and lunchboxes should be clearly labeled. Comfortable footwear is "a must"! We suggest sending your child in sneakers, and packing a pair of flip-flops, or sandals for the beach.

### **Bathing Suits**

Bathing suits are a necessity, as we swim everyday. We recommend sending your child in their suit under their clothes, and putting a change of clothes in their backpacks.

### **Sun Screen**

We recommend lathering your child up with sunscreen before the beginning of the program each day. Remember...we are outside all day, everyday. If your child is particularly sensitive to the sun, please notify your child's counselor, so that we can remind your child to re-apply sunscreen later in the day. Please send in your sunscreen daily, clearly labeled with your child's name.

### **Lunch, Snack and Water**

We do not have refrigeration available for lunches. We recommend packing your child's lunch in a small cooler. Pack a hearty snack, and don't forget plenty of water in a labeled bottle!

### **Program T-shirts**

Your child will be given a program T-shirt. Please make sure the shirt is clearly labeled with your child's name. These shirts are very important as participants are required to wear them on all field trips. If the shirt is lost, an additional shirt may be purchased for \$5.00.

### **Field Trips**

Five field trips are planned and included in the fee, and they are a major part of this program. Field trip days will be advised a letter you will receive from the program coordinator on the first day. Possible field trip destinations include Starland Amusements, canoeing, Canobie Lake, Pinz, Water Country. We require a signed waiver and release form for each field trip. These forms will be handed out on the first day of the program.

### **Tennis, Archery, Swimming, Games, Arts & Crafts**

If your child had attended Junior Patoma in the past, they are used to having these activities as a major part of their day. Senior Patoma participants are cycled into these areas as scheduling permits, they do not happen everyday, although it is not unusual to have a "free swim" activity each afternoon.

### **Cell Phones, Electronic Devices and Program Participation**

Please be advised that cell phones are absolutely not permitted to be brought to the program by participants. They are distracting and take the child's focus away from being outdoors and participating in the planned activities. The staff reserves the right to take cell phones away from participants (should that become necessary, they will be returned to parents at the end of the day). We have phones available on-site for use if needed. Additionally, electronic devices (iPODs, Gameboys, etc....) should not be brought to the program or field trips unless otherwise permitted (for a special reason) by the program supervisor. Electronic devices are also extremely distracting and their use inhibits the child's ability to participate in healthy, team-building, outdoor activities. Please help your child learn how to "unplug" and let them know that these items are not permitted to be brought to our program.

### **Another Note on Senior Patoma:**

This is an outdoor, experiential program, heavy in field trips and fun, but not without certain expectations. We do require that participants willingly involve themselves in all the activities. A certain amount of 'hanging-out' time—something this age group loves—is built into each day. However, there are also scheduled activities such as games, arts & crafts, and other ideas that participants are expected to willingly and ungrudgingly take part in. Participants are expected to be respectful towards staff members and peers, and are required to sign a behavior contract to that effect at the beginning of the program. It is not at all fair to those who WANT to attend the program and enjoy DOING, to be ridiculed by those that don't. Please be advised that children who are disruptive or disrespectful will not be permitted to attend field trips, or may even be asked to leave the program. Due to staffing constraints, we can not supply "day care" to those that are held back from field trips. Absolutely no refunds will be given under these circumstances or after the start of

the program. Please have a discussion with your child before the first day so they are fully aware of the program expectations and consequences of their behavior.

Hopefully we were able to answer some of the questions you may have. It is our goal to insure a fun-filled, safe experience for your child this summer! We look forward to having you join us. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the Holliston Recreation Department at 429-2149.

Thank you,

**Holliston Outdoors Program Staff**