

PARA Youth Programs Parent Handbook





January 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We are enthused to meet our new participants and to see the excited faces of those who are to return. We are committed to providing a safe and enriching experience for all children complemented by hands-on recreational opportunities through all programs, events, and activities held by Tuscaloosa County Park and Recreation Authority.

This handbook is designed to provide information on our activity and program procedures, guidelines, and expectations. We ask for the support and cooperation of each child's parents/guardian in reading the handbook and understanding its contents to ensure the success and sustainability of our program.

We look forward to active and engaging camps and extended day program this year. If you have any questions, please contact your child's location coordinator, program director, or the supervisor of PARA's Youth Programs.

Health & Happiness,

Johnathan Herbert,
Supervisor of Youth Programs
Tuscaloosa County Park & Recreation Authority
parakids@tcpara.org | (205)562-3230
2200 Rock Quarry Drive, Tuscaloosa, AL 35406

Programs/Dates & Times/Locations:

- **PARAkids Summer Day Camp**

May 28, 2024, through August 6, 2024, Monday – Friday, 7AM – 5:30PM.

Planned/organized daily activities are mostly between 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM each day. Weekly activity schedules are available on our website, www.tcpara.org, and are emailed to parents each week. This will help you and your child be adequately prepared. Please know that activity schedules are subject to change and times/activities are subject to weather, participant numbers, and staffing.

Campers must be **entering kindergarten through the 5th grade for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year** to participate in PARAkids Summer Day Camp Program. Upcoming kindergarten students must have been enrolled into pre-k for the 2023-2024 school year before they are eligible to be enrolled into camp.

PARAkids Summer Day Camp is not licensed for preschoolers and does not currently have resources to provide special education/needs services.

Faucett Activity Center – 13040 Eugenia Faucett Dr, Northport, AL 35473

Miller Activity Center – 300 Bobby Miller Pkwy, Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

Phelps Activity Center – 2200 Rock Quarry Dr, Tuscaloosa, AL 35406

Tingle Activity Center – 21973 AL-216, McCalla, AL 35111

- **Rock Quarry & Verner Summer Learning Extended Day**

May 29, 2024, through June 28, 2024, Monday – Friday, 2:00PM – 5:30PM.

Students enrolled will join RQE day campers immediately following school dismissal. Parents must remain aware of camp schedules to be best prepared. Each child **MUST** be enrolled to participate. Otherwise, students will be expected to ride the bus home or be picked up by their parent/guardian at 2:30PM.

- **PARA Youth Teen Enrichment Camp**

June 3, 2024, through August 2, 2024, Monday – Friday, 8:00AM – 5:30PM.

Each week, students will venture to the great outdoors, volunteer with PARAKids Summer Day Camp, learn the values of helping to sustain a healthy environment, participate in STEM activities, field trips, and so much more!

Students must be **entering grades 6th – 9th for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year** to participate in PARAYouth & Teen Summer Enrichment Program.

PARAYouth program activities do not currently have resources to provide special education/needs services.

Belk Activity Center – 2101 Bowers Park Dr, Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

NEW - *Optional* Morning Pick-up from Day Camp Locations:

Faucett – Students must be signed in at the **Faucett Bros. Activity Center** no later than **7:15AM** each morning to be bused to Youth Summer Enrichment at the **Belk Activity Center**. Parents are required to pick their child up from the **Belk Activity Center** no later than **5PM**.

Phelps – Students must sign in at the **Phelps Activity Center** no later than **7:30AM** each morning to be bused to Youth Summer Enrichment at the **Belk Activity Center**. Parents are required to pick their child up from the **Belk Activity Center** no later than **5PM**.

Tingle - Students must be signed in at the **Tingle Activity Center** no later than **7:00AM** each morning to be bused to Youth Summer Enrichment at the **Belk Activity Center**. Parents can expect their child to arrive back at **Tingle** no later than **5:30PM** each day. **Maximum 20 students per day**, parents are encouraged to enroll while space is available.

PARAYouth Adventure Holiday Camps

2024 – 2025 School Year. Dates and locations to be listed on PARA’s website.

Students must currently be enrolled in grades 6th – 8th (2024-2025 school year) to participate in holiday camps.

PARAYouth & Teen activities do not currently have resources to provide special education/needs services.

Youth & Teen Connect Clubs

2024 – 2025 School Year. Clubs and meeting dates to be listed on PARA’s website.

- **PARA’s Extended Day Program**

August 7, 2024, through May 22, 2025, Monday – Friday, 2PM – 6PM.

Rock Quarry Elementary School students walk to the Phelps Activity Center each day. Snack is provided by PARA upon arriving at the center and assisted homework time is given also. Students will participate in outdoor and indoor playtime, craft activities, and periodic field trips. The extended day program is open to all students, but parents are responsible for transporting their child to the Phelps Center if they do not currently attend Rock Quarry Elementary.

PARA’s youth programs do not currently have resources to provide special education/needs services.

Mary-Ann Phelps Activity Center – 2200 Rock Quarry Dr, Tuscaloosa, AL 35406

PARAkids Holiday Camp

2024 – 2025 School Year. Dates and locations to be listed on PARA’s website.

Campers must currently be enrolled in kindergarten through the 5th grade to participate in holiday camps.

PARAkids Day Camp is not licensed for preschoolers and does not currently have resources to provide special education/needs services.

Check In-Check Out:

- It is **required** that a parent/guardian swipe their child(ren) in and out daily, or sign-in/out on the provided sheet each morning when dropping off your child **and** each afternoon when picking up – on the same line. **One child per line is a must!**
- Youth program and/or center staff will only release a child to a parent/guardian, if they’re listed in our system as able to pick up, or someone listed on the child’s registration form. A photo I.D. may be required. This policy has been established for your child’s safety. Be sure and let us know when there are any changes/additions in your pick-up plans. Each program location will have a phone

for contact. This contact number will be posted on the program/activity's weekly itinerary.

- Frequent or recurring **late** pick-ups will result in suspension or termination from any PARA Youth program. Late pick-up fees will be \$10 for every 10 minutes. This must be paid for before the child can return.

Program Fees:

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>PARAkids Summer Day Camp Program</u> \$30 Registration Fee (Registration fee covers administrative costs and camp t-shirt.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Enroll by week:</u> \$150/week Non-members \$125/week PARA Members</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Enroll by day:</u> *If Space Allows* 45/day Non-Members \$35/day PARA Members</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>PARAkids - Discounts for siblings:</u> (Discounts apply to weekly rates. No discount on registration fees.) \$10 off/week for second child \$25 off/week for third (or more children)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>PARAkids Summer Learning Extended Day</u> \$30 Registration Fee (Registration fee covers administrative costs and camp t-shirt.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">\$80/week non-Members \$70/week PARA Members</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summer Learning Extended Day - Discounts for siblings:</u> (Discounts apply to weekly rates. No discount on registration fees.) \$5 off/week for second child \$15 off/week for third or more children</p>

Youth/Teen Summer Enrichment Program Fees

\$30 Registration Fee

(Registration fee covers administrative costs and camp t-shirt.)

\$150/week non-Members

\$125/week PARA Members

Discounts for siblings:

(Discounts apply to weekly rates. No discount on registration fees.)

\$10 off for second child

\$25 off for third or more children

Extended Day Program Fees

\$30 Registration Fee

(Registration fee covers administrative costs and t-shirt)

\$14/day non-Members

\$12/day PARA Members

Discounts for siblings:

(Discounts apply to weekly rates. No discount on registration fees.)

\$1 off for second child

\$2 off for third or more children

Activity program staff and/or the supervisor of PARA Youth Programs reserves the right to deny the attendance of any child if payment has not been made prior to your child attending any activity.

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- Households whose financial dues are responsible for by DHR, or any other child service entity must have written confirmation sent to the supervisor of youth programs prior to any child attending.
 - Registration fees are non-refundable. And under certain circumstances, the supervisor of PARA's Youth Programs may decide on whether transferring an amount paid for enrollment is necessary or appropriate.
 - Checks should be made payable to PARA. Please write your child's name and location on each check.

- Returned checks must be paid in cash or by a money order at our downtown office (not at the program/activity site). There is a \$30.00 returned check fee in addition to your check amount. Once a child's parent/guardian is notified of a returned check, the child **cannot return until fees have been paid**.
- PARA's policy states that any person having **three** returned checks will forfeit check-writing privileges and will be required to pay in cash, or by credit card, from that date forward for any PARA activity.
- **Regarding Split Households** – information from both parties is required on separate registration forms. PLEASE COMMUNICATE THIS WITH THE OFFICE MANAGER and CAMP COORDINATOR.
- A \$1 fee may be applied to all past due balances EACH DAY that payment is not made after services have been rendered by all PARA Youth Programs.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that balances be paid following services being rendered.

Accommodation:

PARA's youth program staff are not equipped or trained to provide care for children with special needs and/or certain learning disabilities. PARA's Youth Program is not federally funded like most schools are to be able to provide the necessary care that children with special needs **must** have. We are also not required by law to accept participants that the program isn't able to properly care for.

Dress Code:

- Campers should come in play clothes. **T-shirts, shorts/pants, and "closed toe" shoes are required for safety. Sandals are not permitted** other than within pool spaces. **NO EXCEPTIONS**.
- Campers may be restricted from camp activities if not properly dressed for safety reasons and/or appropriately dressed for camp.
- Jewelry such as watches, bracelets and necklaces are not allowed.
- Caps are encouraged to be worn outside during play. The sun gets hot!
- Campers can wear their swimsuit (covered with shorts and a T-shirt) to camp on swim days. Send a towel and a change of clothes each day they swim, **regardless**

of weather in the morning. They are to wear **tennis shoes** to camp on these days. Send the sandals in their bag.

- Clearly **label all items** worn/brought to camp.
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Daily Camp Items:

- Campers need to bring **one** lunch, **two** nutritious snacks, and a refillable water bottle. No refrigerator or microwave is available.
 - Children cannot bring money, toys, trading cards, dolls, etc... or any personal items from home **unless it is a daily planned activity**. PARA assumes no responsibility or liability for lost, stolen, broken, or misplaced items.
 - Campers may not bring fake or real guns, knives or weapons to camp.
 - **No electronics or phones of any sort are allowed at camp.**
 - Contact from either campers or parents can be made through our camp phones. You will be given the contact numbers on your weekly schedules.
 - Books are welcomed daily!
 - **Parents - please** check backpacks every afternoon when you are picking your child up and every morning as you bring them to camp.
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General Camp Rules:

PARA strives to maintain an engaging, safe, and wholesome environment for all our camp participants. To further this goal, we have outlined basic rules each child and each parent must follow. Please discuss these rules with your child.

- Listen and follow instructions.
- Keep hands, feet, and teeth to yourself.
- Always respect authority.
- Always stay with your assigned group.
- Do not throw objects of any kind without staff instructions/permission.
- Remain seated while on the bus, keeping head, arms, and hands inside bus. Feet must be out of the aisle at all times.
- No item can be thrown from the bus.
- Do not take/destroy/hide any of PARA's or other camper's property.
- Inappropriate, harassing, or profane language will not be tolerated.
- No talking disrespectfully to anyone, at any time, at any place.

- **Kids cannot share food.** Some campers have food allergies!
- Any camper that has a bowel or urinary incontinence problem while at camp, can be suspended or terminated.
- Campers are not allowed to borrow or loan money. The snack machines are **not** to be used during camp hours. Day Camp does not reimburse lost money.

TUSCALOOSA COUNTY PARK & RECREATION AUTHORITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO TERMINATE ANY PARTICIPANT ON THE BASES OF KEEPING ALL OTHER PARTICIPANTS SAFE AND TO ENSURE A QUALITY PROGRAM FOR ALL.

General Pool Rules:

This will help determine the areas in which campers will be allowed to swim. PARAYouth staff as well as the PARA pool lifeguards will be supervising campers. The safety of each camper is of top priority. Please discuss safety rules with your child. Basic rules include the following:

- A lifeguard or pool manager will **evaluate** campers on their swimming skills and knowledge of the pool with a designated “swim test.” If a camper does not pass a swim test, they must wear a life jacket. See below.
- Always walk in the pool area.
- No diving in the shallow end.
- Always obey the lifeguards.
- Stay in assigned area.
- If a child wears ear plugs, parents should show program staff how to assist the child in applying them.

General Pool Safety

- ❖ Certified lifeguards will be on duty at all times.
- ❖ Lifeguards enforce rules for the safety of your camper and other campers. Campers may be asked to sit out if they do not listen to directions of the aquatic staff.
- ❖ Campers are required to take a Swim Test to enter the deep end of the pool.
- ❖ All swimmers who have passed the Swim Test will be given a wristband to wear while at the pool to access the deep end.
- ❖ Campers that cannot pass the swim test will be issued a wrist band that restricts them to the shallow end of the pool **ONLY** and will not be allowed in the deep end of the pool.
- ❖ We strongly suggest that guardians of all non-swimmers (swimmers that cannot pass the swim test) send a lifejacket on swim days.
- ❖ **We recommend that you provide a Coast Guard approved life jacket for your child and write their name on the back of it with a permanent marker.**

Unfortunately, we may not have enough lifejackets for every non-swimmer that wants to get in the pool each visit. We also strongly suggest that non-swimmers enroll in swim lessons. Swimming lessons are provided by PARA. **Call the Faucett Center for more details: 205-331-5600.**

- ❖ Campers with open wounds, sores, or casts will not be allowed in the pool without a doctor's note stating the camper is cleared for pool use.
- ❖ Diving is only permitted in the deep end of the pool. Diving board use and safety for diving will be determined by aquatic staff.
- ❖ Use of the slide is only permitted for those that can pass the Swim Test

Discipline Policy:

Positive reinforcement combined with "time-out" is our preferred approach. Verbal and/or written warnings will be given to the child's parents for any repetitive disciplinary problem. All discipline will be recorded in a behavior log that may be used to create a behavior plan or implement disciplinary action as discussed with supervisor, director, and parent.

*This also includes parents or guardians. *

Behavior Management and Discipline Policy:

At PARA, bullying and any form of disrespect towards another participant, staff, volunteer, or associated person is inexcusable. Our mission ensures every camper with the opportunity to have a constructive, safe, and fun environment.

Techniques PARA Behavior Management Staff will carry out:

1. Always discuss and enforce rules.
3. Guide children by setting clear, consistent, and fair limits for behavior.
5. Redirect children to a more acceptable behavior or activity.
6. Use positive reinforcement, including positive behavior recognition.
7. Make eye contact and listen when children talk about their feelings and frustrations.
9. Use effective praise that is immediate, sincere, and specific.
10. Attempt to prevent problems before they occur.

Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Behavior requiring constant attention from staff.
2. Behavior that may threaten the physical or emotional wellbeing of oneself or others.
3. Behavior abusing the staff and/ignoring or disobeying the rules.
4. Name calling / threatening.
5. Physical bullying/fighting such as pushing, spitting, tripping, pinching, pulling, groping, biting, and punching.

6. Inappropriate exposure.
7. Stealing.
8. Not following directions.

Conduct Policy:

Every effort will be made by PARA staff in conjunction with parents to ensure a rewarding and positive experience for each child. **However, any behavior that interferes with the safety, learning, or enjoyment of other children will not be tolerated.**

If there are frequent or recurring discipline problems, the parents/guardians will be notified. In the event there are behavioral difficulties deemed irreconcilable by a child or a parent, there may be reason for either or both to be suspended and/or terminated from the program.

Disciplinary Action Steps:

PARA staff will utilize the following disciplinary steps in normal circumstances. More dire situations will result in steps being skipped which could result in immediate suspension or termination from one or all programs.

1. Remove camper portraying negative behavior and place them in “Personal Time” or “Time Out” for up to five minutes so they can regain control of their behavior
2. PARA staff will inform parent/guardian of behavior issues, and with child verbally, and in writing.
3. Meeting between the activity’s director and guardian/parent to enact a Behavior Improvement Plan.
4. Suspension of camper for one or more days
5. Removal of camper from the program.

PARA cannot serve children who display chronically disruptive behavior. If a child cannot adjust to the program setting and behave appropriately, the child may not be able to return to the program. Reasonable efforts will be made to assist children in adjusting to the program setting.

****NOTE: Campers suspended or terminated for behavior management problems are not eligible for a refund, and will not be allowed to relocate to another PARA Campsite****

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Outings:

Outings are scheduled throughout the summer and school year. Flyers/registration forms will be handed out.

Medical Information:

We are naturally concerned about your child's health and safety. Parents **MUST** include on the registration form if your child has a special medical situation, allergy, or physical disability.

Medication:

- PARA employees may not dispense over the counter (OTC) medication to campers. **No OTC medication is allowed at camp.**
- Children are **not allowed** to keep/have anything (such as cough drops) in their backpack or lunchbox.
- In the event a child must receive **prescription** medication, a parent/guardian must take the following steps:
 1. Communicate the need to the director for approval.
 2. The medication (only enough for one day) should be brought to camp and given to the site director each day, with the medication in the original container that is labeled from the pharmacy. The form must be signed as distributed.
 3. Parents are not authorized to change the dosage, frequency, or any other instructions from those printed on the bottle. The instructions on the bottle will be followed by PARA staff. In the event this information changes, parents must contact their doctor/pharmacy and obtain new labels or signed written instructions.
- PARA reserves the right to refuse to dispense medication.

Medical Emergencies:

If your child is injured and requires more than just basic first aid, the following steps will be taken:

1. Staff will call 911.
2. The parent or guardian will be contacted.
3. If a parent or guardian is not available, adults listed on the registration form will be contacted.
4. Paramedics will take the injured child to DCH Regional Medical Center.

- PARA employees are not permitted to transport injured parties in PARA vehicles, school buses, or private vehicles.

You will be responsible for the emergency medical charges for all services rendered. Your authorization and commitment for payment is part of the release attached to the registration receipt after payment is received.

Illness:

If your child has been ill or has a fever, they cannot be sent to camp. If your child becomes ill at camp, a parent/guardian will be notified and required to pick up the child **immediately**. If a parent/guardian is unavailable, the emergency contacts will be called. **A parent's telephone number on the registration form should be always available.** **Please remember – you must be able to be contacted during program hours.**

Minor Injuries and Accidents:

While PARA staff work hard to prevent any sort of injury and/or accidents, children will sometimes get hurt. For minor injuries or accidents, a staff member may give a child's parent/guardian a call or send a text if unreachable if a camper receives a "boo-boo". Parents are not required to pick their child up for minor injuries, but our goal is to simply inform a parent of anything that may require attention outside of program hours.

Head Lice:

Lice are transmitted by ways of close contact of objects like caps, hats, towels, and hairbrushes. **Children do not need to share these items.** In the event a child is thought to have lice, parents will be contacted. The child must be picked up. Children must be free of bugs (insects) and eggs (nits) before they can return.

Contact Information:

- If any time your contact number changes, **please** give the activity director the new number where you can be reached.
- If at any time you wish to add or remove people from your list of emergency contact/pick-up, please give this information to your child's director.
- For emergency purposes each site director will carry a phone. Messages which are not emergencies can be sent to your child's camp location at any time.

Tuscaloosa County Park & Recreation Authority

Youth Programs

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Kenyé Underwood
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Summer King
Program Director, PARAKids Summer Day Camp & Teen Enrichment
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Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form PARAyouth Program

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Parent Handbook for the 2024 Tuscaloosa County Park & Recreation Authority's PARA Youth Program. I understand that I am responsible for ensuring that my child/ward, my family, and our emergency contacts abide by all rules, policies, guidelines, and procedures as outlined in the handbook. In addition, I understand and agree to the following:

- I, my family, and our emergency contacts agree to adhere to the rules, policies, guidelines, and procedures as outlined in the 2023 PARAyouth Handbook.
- It is our responsibility to ensure that our child/ward adheres to all PARAyouth rules, policies, procedures, and regulations and we will instruct our child/ward to behave accordingly. Ultimately, parents are responsible for a camper's behavior.
- We understand that PARA will take action in situations in which our child/ward behaves inappropriately. These actions are outlined in the handbook and may include suspension or termination from PARA's program.
- We understand that campers are not allowed to have electronics of any sort at camp unless approved by the camp site's Director.
- We understand that there will be no refunds for fees paid.
- We understand that payment towards any PARA Youth Program activity signifies agreement to ALL aspects of the outlined rules and procedures, even in the event that a parent/guardian does not sign the Handbook/Aquatic – No Responsibility Waiver.
- **We understand that TUSCALOOSA COUNTY PARK & RECREATION AUTHORITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO TERMINATE ANY PARTICIPANT ON THE BASES OF KEEPING ALL OTHER PARTICIPANTS SAFE AND TO ENSURE A QUALITY PROGRAM FOR ALL – AT ANY TIME.**

Child's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

Program & Location _____

MUST List Child's Name below if pictures **cannot be taken** or posted to PARA website:

TUSCALOOSA COUNTY PARK & RECREATION AUTHORITY
PARA AQUATIC & NO RESPONSIBILITY CLAUSE FOR 2023

I hereby give my permission for said participant/child/ward to participate in this program/activity conducted by the Tuscaloosa County Park & Recreation Authority (PARA). I assume all risks and hazards incident to such activities and transportation to and from the same. I release, discharge, and acquit PARA and all of its agents, servants, employees, staff and personnel from and with respect to all claims, causes of action and rights of recovery which I have, or might have at any time in the future as a result to any property damage or bodily injury suffered by said child/ward during the course of any such activities. Additionally, I agree to indemnify and hold harmless PARA and the employees from and against any and all claims, suits, damages, judgments, attorney fees and expenses of every kind on account of property or bodily injury, including death, suffered or experience by me or my said child/ward occurring during, or in any way resulting from any of said activities, whether or not cause by a negligent acts (except as may be occasioned by gross or wanton employees) or omission of any sort by PARA employees. I authorize PARA and employees to render any medical care and treatment to my said child/ward deemed necessary with respect to any illness or injury occurring during any PARA activities. I fully understand that PARA has NO ACCIDENT or MEDICAL PAYMENT INSURANCE COVERAGE for the participant/child/ward and I agree to pay all medical costs incurred if treatment is obtained. I understand that PARA assumes no responsibility or liability for lost, stolen, or misplaced items. I also give permission for PARA to take photographs and/or videos of my child during activity for publicity use. Furthermore, please take caution when sending valuable, sentimental items with child/ward to any activities. PARA accepts NO RESPONSIBILITY for lost or stolen items. This instrument is signed both on behalf of the individual and the child/ward. If paying via credit card, my signature authorizes PARA to charge the agreed upon amount to your card and I agree to pay the credit card charges according to the credit card issuer agreements.

Printed Name of Participant/Child/Ward

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian