



J&R Day Camp Parent Manual Summer 2021



CONNECTIONS • VALUES • GROWTH • FUN

Meet our J&R Camp Staff



Rachael Speck



Katie Metosky



Jamie Scott



Carla Likar



Brandi D'Amico

Rachael Speck **Director, J&R Day Camp**

Rachael holds degrees from Indiana University Bloomington in both journalism and sociology and is a graduate of Foundation for Jewish Camp's Yitro Professional Leadership program. Rachael grew up at the JCC's Emma Kaufmann Camp as a camper and seasonal staff member, worked as an educator in the JCC's Early Childhood Development Center, spent time as a program coordinator for the Clubhouse after-school program and helped lead the Young Adult Division at the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh. Most recently, Rachael was the Associate Director of EKC, where her primary responsibilities were camper recruitment, camper care, parent communication and marketing and PR.

Katie Metosky **Assistant Director, J&R Day Camp**

Katie is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. She has a BS in Business Administration from Carnegie Mellon University and a professional certification in secondary social studies from the University of Pittsburgh School of Education. She previously served as the PJ Library Ambassador for the East End and as the PJ Library specialist at J&R.

Jamie Scott **Department Director, Children, Youth and Families**

Jamie, a Pittsburgh native, is a graduate of Pennsylvania State University, with a bachelor's degree in human development and family studies. After college she worked on the Royal Caribbean cruise line, leading activities with children of all ages from around the world. She has been a counselor at Clubhouse and served on the staff of Emma Kaufmann Camp for seven summers.

Carla Likar **Director, JCC Aquatics**

Carla, a collegiate swimmer at Lock Haven University, began swimming competitively in the Pittsburgh area at age 6, including with the JCC Sailfish. Carla has more than 30 years of teaching and coaching experience and 20 years experience in aquatics management.

Brandi D'Amico **Program Coordinator, Sports & Recreation**

Brandi has an MS in health and physical activity from the University of Pittsburgh and a BS in health and physical education from Slippery Rock University. She has more than 10 years of experience working in day camps, child care, physical education and aquatics. During the school year, Brandi teaches preschool and youth sports programs at the JCC.

Open House at J&R

Join us Sunday, June 6 from 11 am-5 pm. Get a full tour of camp and meet our camp leadership team. Swim in our pools, enjoy some snacks and get some free camp swag before the summer starts!

*Advanced reservation is required. Time slots available are 11 am, 1 pm and 3 pm. RSVP for your preferred time slot now by emailing Rachael Speck at rspeck@jccpgh.org.

Contact Information

- Rachael Speck, Camp Director
412-697-3537
rspeck@jccpgh.org
- Katie Metosky, Asst. Director
412-697-3540
kmetosky@jccpgh.org

JCCPGHDAYCAMPS.COM

After June 1

Camp Phone: 412-829-7707

Social Media

Instagram: [@jandrdaycamp](https://www.instagram.com/jandrdaycamp)

Facebook: [facebook.com/jandrdaycamp/](https://www.facebook.com/jandrdaycamp/)

Camp Address

261 Rosecrest Drive
Monroeville, PA 15146

Camp Hours and Dates

9 am-3:30 pm

Transportation begins at 8:15 am

Camp Weeks

Week 1: June 21-25

Week 2: June 28-July 2

Week 3: July 6-9 (no camp July 5)

Week 4: July 12-16

Week 5: July 19-23

Week 6: July 26-30

Week 7: August 2-6

Week 8: August 9-13

Week 9: August 16-20



Welcome to J&R Day Camp

Welcome to our camp family! At J&R Day Camp, we prepare kids for life's journeys through connections, values, growth and fun. Our team is excited and honored to spend time with your child this summer, and offer them amazing experiences every day at camp.

At J&R, there is a space for every camper. We give children some of their first opportunities to develop a true sense of self. This concept carries on throughout the summer as the foundation of everything we do.

Through my previous experiences in camping and Jewish communal service, I have experienced the power of camp with hundreds of families and young adults and have seen first-hand the impact that day camp can have. We can't wait to be part of your child's journey.

We look forward to an incredible summer experience with your family! If at any point throughout the summer you have questions, feedback, or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact any member of our leadership team.

Shalom,

Rachael Speck, J&R Director



Connections. Values. Growth. Fun. The J&R Point of View

Our unique programming prepares campers for life's journeys through nurturing meaningful connections, instilling values, encouraging personal growth and delivering fun. Campers develop physically and emotionally through focused activities, group interaction and a connection with nature.

Camp Forms

Camp forms are available on CampMinder. You will be sent a link via email in order to create your account.

- Camper Information*
- Medical Information*
- Birthday Celebration

***Must be completed before your child can be admitted to camp.**

Camp Staff

We know the key to a great summer is the quality of the staff. J&R staff nurture the potential of campers of all abilities and backgrounds, creating an environment that fosters engagement and inclusion. Staff members model and teach positive behaviors for our campers including teamwork, active listening, leadership, problem solving, empathy and enthusiasm. All camp staff participate in a week-long intensive orientation before the summer starts which includes:

- Learning to work with children of various ages
- Values through a Jewish lens
- Red Cross Pediatric First Aid/CPR/Safety training
- Youth mental health First Aid
- Program planning
- Positive behavior support training
- Emergency preparedness

In addition, our counselors are continually evaluated by senior staff to ensure that they're providing your child with the best possible child care.



Covid-19 Response

The health and safety of our camp community remains a top priority, and as was the case last year, a successful Summer 2021 will once again require us to implement a number of best practices in mitigating the risk related to Covid-19. The changes we've made are intentional, with a focus first on the health and safety of every individual and family in our camp. Key elements include physical distancing to the greatest extent possible, requiring all campers and staff to wear masks, frequent hand sanitizing and disinfecting of materials/equipment throughout the camp day, and daily health screenings and temperature checks for all campers and staff.

Parents will receive our Enhanced Health and Safety Protocols prior to the start of camp. These protocols will help guide you in understanding detailed plans at J&R Day Camp. This information is developed after carefully reviewing guidance from a number of national and local authorities including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Camp Association, PA Departments of Health & Human Services, and the Allegheny County Health Department. We also consulted with the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative, a nationally-recognized leader in process improvement within healthcare settings.

Our guidelines are reviewed and updated regularly as new information becomes available. We are committed to open and transparent communication along the way, and we will share any and all changes in protocols, procedures and programming as our plans continue to develop over the fall. With your continued support, we are excited to welcome your children to J&R Day Camp and give them a place to call home this summer.

What's changing from the typical camp day?

- Mask wearing is required for all campers and staff.
- Campers will be in cohorts that are limited in size to the greatest extent possible.
- Our daily schedule is revised to ensure children have time to do activities in different spaces around camp and/or building with enough time in between for handwashing/sanitizing and cleaning and disinfecting equipment.
- Camp rituals that are typically held all together as a camp will be held in cohorts (i.e., flagpole, Shabbat).
- All out-of-camp trips are cancelled, with the exception of a few outdoor adventure trips for our middle school campers.
- Overnights for older campers will not be offered.
- Chugim and choice activities will not be offered to ensure physical distancing by cohort can be enforced. Counselors will request activities for their group so that we can ensure campers are getting to do the activities they love the most as often as possible.



Health

In response to Covid-19 and the current public health climate, and to best ensure a safe experience for all children and staff in our program, we are making a number of adjustments to our illness policies and daily procedures. We will share our illness policy and procedures for a positive case of Covid-19 in our Enhanced Health and Safety Protocols. As the situation with the pandemic remains fluid, there are a number of variables and people who play a role in finalizing this critical information. Your patience during the challenging time we are all continuing to experience is greatly appreciated.

The health and safety of each child in our camp community is a top priority. A camp leadership team member is on duty at all times to dispense medication and handle illnesses and minor injuries as needed and instructed.

If your child requires emergency medical attention, we will notify you or your designated emergency contact immediately.

For your child's protection, we do not permit children to take any kind of medication without supervision. If your child requires medication during the camp day, please provide it in a clearly marked container and give it to a bus monitor on the first day of camp. Make sure you indicate dosage instructions and whether the medication needs to be refrigerated.

All prescription orders must be accompanied by the written order of the child's physician.

If your camper uses an EpiPen, lactose pills, or has special medication, please bring it to the Open House or send it on the first day your child begins camp. EpiPens are kept in the Nurse's office unless a request to keep it with the camper is authorized by the Camp Director.

All medical forms are required on CampMinder.

Getting Ready for Camp

- Talk with your child about all the exciting activities that camp has to offer—swimming, ropes course, music, hikes, arts & crafts, sports, Gaga and more
- Keep the night before camp begins a bit calmer than usual and aim for your child to have a good night's sleep
- Be brief, yet warm, when you send your child off to camp on the first day
- Look through your camper's backpack before he or she leaves to ensure that all the important things have been packed
- Call us in the J&R office at 412-829-7707 after June 1, and we'll be happy to talk to your child directly about getting ready for the big days ahead.





Camper Drop off/Pick up

Getting our campers to and from J&R safely is our top priority.

- Transportation to and from camp begins at 8:15 am. Morning pick up will be between 8:15-8:45 am.
- Buses depart from camp beginning at 3:30pm. Afternoon drop off will be between 4-4:15 pm.
- Due to the need to physical distance, every camper will be assigned a bus stop location and morning pick up and afternoon drop off time.
- You will be notified **one week prior to camp** with the exact time your child will be picked up in the morning and dropped off in the afternoon, along with the bus stop and bus number.
- Transportation from central locations is included in the camp fee.
- Door-to-door pickup is an additional \$50 per week. Some home pickups may not be available based on location.
- Trained bus monitors are assigned to each bus to ensure camper safety, take attendance in the morning and afternoon and cross campers at bus stops if necessary.
- A daily health screening and temperature check will be required prior to campers boarding the bus each morning.

- Additional staff on the bus assist with monitoring camper behavior, ensure appropriate distance is being kept between each camper, and wait at central stops until all campers are picked up.
- Bus safety procedures and behavior are reviewed with all campers on the first day of each session.
- Upon arrival at camp, children are met by staff and are taken to their groups.

If you will be driving your child to and from J&R, morning drop off and afternoon pick up times will be assigned to you one week prior to camp.

Transportation Changes

- Due to the need to maintain physical distancing between cohorts and to minimize any potential exposure to Covid-19, campers will not be permitted to change to another bus.
- Written notification must be given to the bus monitor or an email sent to kmetosky@jccpgh.org for if you plan to pick your child up during the camp day. No verbal messages from children will be accepted as notification. In the case of a camp transportation change (bus delay, location or time) the camp office will notify parent/guardian by phone or notification via myCAMPapp.



Late Drop-off and Early Pickup

If your camper has a change to their drop off or pick up plans, please send a written note with your camper in advance whenever possible. When you arrive at camp, check in with the security guard at the entrance. We will have your camper waiting in the office for you or a staff member to take your camper to his or her group. Please do not attempt to find your child's group.

Safety at Camp, our #1 priority

Keeping our families and staff apprised of the steps we've taken to ensure our camp community is safe during their time at camp is top priority. As an agency, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh has strong and long-valued relationships with local law enforcement, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh's Director of Community Security. The following procedures are in place to ensure your child's safety:

- Full-time security personnel at J&R, monitoring the front gate and Camp
- Entrance to camp facility is closed each day once the buses have arrived
- Visitors must check in with security personnel at the gate
- Parents, relatives or friends may not visit campers

We invite you to reach out to us if you have questions on this topic.

What To Pack in My Camper's Backpack

Labeling: Label everything! We try our best to send everything home that comes to camp each day. Many articles of clothing look alike and many campers share initials. Please take the time to label your camper's belongings. Permanent ink or name tags are preferred; be sure to use your camper's complete name. Sunscreen removes permanent ink from nonporous surfaces; consider covering labels and markings with clear packing tape.

In the backpack: Campers should come to camp wearing a face mask, comfortable clothing, sneakers or closed-toe shoes, and a bathing suit underneath. Backpack should include underwear, an extra face mask, a towel, a water bottle, and sunscreen. In the event of a rainy day at camp, please send a raincoat or an extra sweatshirt. **Please—no umbrellas, sandals, crocs or flip flops!**

Water: We have water stations and fountains set up all around camp. Campers are taken for water frequently throughout the day. Please send a water bottle and label it.

Sunscreen: We encourage parents to apply sunscreen to campers before coming to camp each day. Staff members will assist campers in sunscreen application at camp. Please send sunscreen daily. If a camper does not bring his or her own sunscreen, we have some available.

Items NOT permitted from home:

- *Electronic devices of any kind. J&R is a screen free camp. Allowing campers to truly unplug and thrive in this screen free environment allows them to fully engage in relationships and activities and contributes largely to our ability to give campers such an impactful experience.*
- Soft items and toys
- There should be no food brought to camp unless approved for medical or dietary needs with prior notification.

Lost and Found

Every effort will be made to return labeled items. We will post pictures on our Facebook page and myCAMPapp. If you notice that something is missing, notify us right away. Any items without a label that are not claimed will be discarded after being held for one week.



Communication

Communication with parents is very important to us. Our unit heads or camper care specialist will be available to answer your questions and concerns, or to update you in a timely manner by phone or email.

The camp office is open from 7:30 am-5 pm daily. You can send an email to Kate Metosky, kmetosky@jccpgh.org or Rachael Speck, rspeck@jccpgh.org.

Stay Connected

Stay connected to J&R Day Camp through myCAMPapp and social media. You can check our Facebook and Instagram pages each day to follow what's happening at J&R. You will have the opportunity to view daily photos through myCAMPapp.

Facebook: [jandrdaycamp](https://www.facebook.com/jandrdaycamp)

Instagram: [@jandrdaycamp](https://www.instagram.com/jandrdaycamp)

Food

We work closely with our food service company, Aladdin, to serve a healthy, filling meal each day. A kosher style lunch (with a different selection each day), beverages, fruits, vegetables and snacks are provided. Our child-friendly menu includes chicken nuggets, pizza bagels, meatball hoagies and walking tacos. Sunflower seed butter and jelly is available at each lunch.

Our facility is nut aware and sensitive to food diets, allergies and restrictions. Please let us know on our medical and camper information forms if your child has any food allergies or restrictions in advance of the summer so that we can prepare our kitchen and eating areas accordingly.

Late stays

Late stays are exciting, unique experiences for older campers. These supervised evenings allow campers to stay at camp until 7pm swimming, playing games and participating in special programming in a fun and safe environment at J&R. Dinner is included. Parents must pick their child up at camp no later than 7 pm. Dates for these opportunities will be announced in the coming weeks.

Swimming

Swimming will be offered one time per day and will be a mix of instruction and “free swim.” Swim lessons will be by group and not by individual camper’s ability. Campers within the same group will be separated by ability the best we can. Lifeguards wear face shields while instructing campers in the water.

J&R’s swimming program is a modified version of the American Red Cross “Learn to Swim” program. We assess the skills of all campers and assign them to the appropriate level. When they have mastered specific skills, they advance to the next level with a token acknowledging their “graduation.”

Judaic and Israeli Culture

Campers learn Jewish and Israeli culture & customs through stories, song, dance. Jewish values and moral principles are woven into the fabric of our programming.

Each week has a theme based on a Jewish value/*middah*. Sample themes from previous summers include Hello/*Shalom*, Sacred Community/*Kehilla Kedosha*, Compassion/*Rachmanus*, Gratitude/*Hacarat Ha’Tov*, Joy/*Simcha*, Tranquility/*Menuchat Ha’nefesh*, Repair the World/*Tikkun Olam*, Courage/*Ometz Lev* and Goodbye/*Shalom*.

On Friday, we gather together in our cohorts to welcome Shabbat with blessings over the candles, juice and challah. Our campers learn to bake challahs and share them with the camp community. PJ Library programming as one of our many tools to infuse Jewish values.



Camper Groups

We group children according to school grade. We take the greatest care to place your child with children of similar interests and abilities. We do our best to accommodate a request for your child to be grouped with friends of the same grade. You can request to have your child grouped with friends of the same grade on the Group Request Form available on Camp Minder.

Recommendations made by the CDC are helping us to determine group size. Every effort will be made to keep the same counselors with the same children throughout the day. Floating staff will be limited. Children do not naturally physically distance and they require warmth and close contact with staff. Best efforts will be made to maintain physical distancing practices and limit group sizes to the greatest extent possible.

Program Participation

J&R is open and accessible to everyone, regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or special need by welcoming individuals of all backgrounds, embracing their uniqueness and diversity under our communal tent.

J&R strives to create connections among campers, families and staff. We grow our campers through the lens of strong Jewish values and morals. Our facilities and experiences create an atmosphere of safety and fun for each person involved.

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh may refuse acceptance of any camper who they believe is not suited to be in the camp environment. Any camper whose behavior is deemed inappropriate by the J&R Director may be asked to leave camp prior to the end of his/her camp session. Any camper who physically, psychologically, or verbally abuses another member of the J&R community will be sent home at the discretion of the J&R Director. This includes, but is not limited to, bullying, hazing, fighting, and teasing.



Units at J&R

Each unit has its own special activities.

- Karmiel: 4-year-olds (PreK)
- Tira: entering kindergarten
- Jerusalem: entering grade 1
- Shalom: entering grade 2-3
- Tel Aviv: girls entering grades 4-5
- Haifa: boys entering grades 4-5
- Misgav: entering grades 6-8

“Ruach” Spirit at Camp

There’s a healthy routine to camp, and then there’s the fun! We have a lot of *ruach* (spirit), and we like to dress up, act, sing, shout and dance. Wednesdays are wacky and may include Purim in July, Blue and White Day, Pittsburgh Spirit Day, Color War, Neon Day, PJ Day and Super Hero Day.



Camp Fees

Full payment of camp fees is due by June 1 unless you have made special arrangements with the Camp Director. Transportation arrangements will not be made unless payment has been made in full. For information regarding camp payments, please call Katie Metosky, Assistant Director, at 412-697-3540.

Refunds

No refunds will be made for absences or withdrawals during the camp season. The JCC reserves the right to remove a camper from J&R Day Camp because of a violation of camp regulations or because of personal conduct that interferes with the health or welfare of her/himself or others. If your child does not complete the session at camp’s suggestion, a refund will be made for the unexpired weeks registered.

J&R Activities

Archery	Outdoor Adventure	Mini Golf
Arts & Crafts	Kayaking	Jewelry/ Beading
Soccer	High/Low Ropes	Gaga
Baseball	Climbing Wall	Nature
Basketball	Cookouts	Challah Baking
Cooking	Four Square	Music
Volleyball	Foam	STEM
Diving Board	Gardening	PJ Library
Woodworking	Nine Square in the Air	
Hiking		
Slip n’ Slide		

