



Parent Handbook

For your convenience the Summer Cohesion Parent Handbook addresses the most frequently asked questions by parents about the program. We hope you find this Handbook to be informative and useful. If at any time you have any questions or concerns about Summer Cohesion, please address them immediately with your Site Coordinator. We hope you and your family have a safe, happy summer.



Summer Cohesion is a program operated by the Chemung County Youth Bureau
599 Harris Hill Road. Elmira, NY 14903

Phone Number: (607) 737-2907 Fax: (607) 737-0435

Office hours: Monday-Friday 8:30AM to 4:30PM

Website: ChemungYouth.com

Email: YouthBureau@chemungcountyny.gov

Welcome to Summer Cohesion

Developed in 1974, Summer Cohesion is a six-week summer, drop-in, recreational, educational and cultural enrichment program, which provides children, ages 4 through 12, with a safe, structured, and fun summer. Summer Cohesion serves over 800 children each summer at school based sites throughout Chemung County. Youth participate in activities such as arts and crafts, indoor/outdoor games, special performances, swimming, and field trips to local parks and museums. There are typically seven school-based sites located throughout Elmira, Elmira Heights and Horseheads each summer.

Site Staff

- Each site is staffed with a Site Coordinator, a Senior Recreation Leader, and Recreation Leaders.
- The Site Coordinator is responsible for the overall operation of the site. They supervise the staff, handle situations as they arise and are available to talk to parents daily.
- The Senior Recreation Leader works with the Site Coordinator, assists with classroom setup, site attendance, all supplies and handles office duties.
- The Recreation Leaders work in teams of two with up to 20 children in a class. They are responsible for organizing and conducting indoor/outdoor games, crafts, and reading activities to name a few.

Employee Certification and Training

- All staff are certified in Standard First Aid, AED and Adult/Child CPR.
- Staff attend a comprehensive 3-day training with workshops on child development, classroom management, lesson planning, arts & crafts and indoor/outdoor activities.
- In addition, representatives from local service agencies and law enforcement provide classes on child abuse and maltreatment, emergency procedures, site safety, intruder training and swimming safety.

Arrival, Dismissal & Pick Up:

- Summer Cohesion operates Monday-Friday. Arrival is at 8:00AM, Dismissal is at 2:00PM.
- Staff are not responsible for children before 8:00AM or after 2:00PM.
- Summer Cohesion staff are **NOT** permitted to transport children to and from the site (this includes if the children are family members.)
- Children arriving late or leaving early are signed in/out in the Summer Cohesion office.
- Adults picking up children must be listed on the registration pick up list.
- There must be written consent from the parent/legal guardian if there are any changes to the pick up list.
- If a person is not listed on the pick up list, or consent granted by the parent/legal guardian, the child will not be sent with them.

Meals:

- The Summer Feeding Program provides free breakfast and lunch each day at eligible sites. Meals will begin the first day.
- Summer Feeding is a program of the NYS Education Department and is operated through the Elmira City School District.
- Children can choose to eat the meal provided or bring their own.
- Please send lunches in a labeled, insulated lunch bag with an ice pack.
- Breakfast is served from 8:00 to 9:00AM, lunch is from 11:30 to 12:30PM.

- Sending in classroom snacks are very much appreciated. Please check with the Site Coordinator first to see if there are any food allergies in the class.

Classroom Organization, Management and Field Trips:

- Recreation Leaders work in teams of two or three in the classrooms with up to 20 youth in each room.
- Classes are determined by age and grade the child is going in to in the fall.
- Class rosters are created during staff training. Some larger sites may have more than one class of the same age.
- If you have questions regarding your child's classroom placement, please contact the Site Coordinator after the first few days of the program.
- Daily lesson plans are created for each class, arts n crafts, indoor/outdoor games and Traveling Programs make up the sites daily routine with field trips, special events and sports tournaments added as off-site activities.
- Summer Cohesion is not responsible for personal items that are brought such as; cell phones, toys, games and money.

Managing Behaviors:

Summer Cohesion staff will use their best judgement when addressing behaviors and redirecting children through the following measures.

A verbal reminder and review of the classroom rules will be given to the child by the Recreation Leader.
 The child may have a time out, if necessary.
 The Recreation Leader will contact the Site Coordinator in the case of repeated behaviors.
 The Site Coordinator will contact the parent/legal guardian and a letter may also be sent home.
 Continued behaviors may result in a one-day suspension from the program with parent notification.
 If behaviors persist, the child may be dismissed from the program.

Parents are encouraged to offer information that will ensure their child's success

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Summer Cohesion is committed to eliminating racism and other forms of discrimination and harassment in our program. Summer Cohesion strictly prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation in any form. Children, parents, staff, and other involved members of the program who violate this policy of zero tolerance are subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination or dismissal.

Field Trip Information:

- Permission Slips for all off-site activities will be sent home at least one week prior to the trip and must be signed and returned prior to the day of the field trip.
- All field trips can be seen on the sites master schedule that is posted at the Summer Cohesion entrance and the website.
- If your child does not have a signed permission slip, they will not be able to attend.
- Children must ride the bus to all off-site events, **parents are not allowed to drop their child off at the field trip location.**
- Children that arrive late for field trips will not be able to stay at the site. Also, if your child does not want to attend the field trip, please keep them home for the day.

Swimming Field Trips:

- Children have to be on site by 8:30 to be able to attend the field trip. Accurate counts must be taken to ensure proper staffing and time given to create 'Buddy Lists' for the day.
- Recreation Leaders are always in the water with the kids.
- Send your child with their bathing suit on underneath their clothing, send a towel and extra clothing in a backpack.
- Sun screen should be applied before arriving at the site.
- The pools provide for an hour of swim time and we like to make sure they can enjoy that time in the pool so the kids come out of the pool after an hour, dry off and put on shorts, shirt, shoes, line up and head for the bus.

Swimming Field Trips (continued):

- There is no time built in for showers or spending time in the changing rooms—your child will likely return home in their bathing suit.
- Summer Cohesion staff do their best to help kids gather their belongings before getting on the bus to return.
- If a field trip has to be canceled due to inclement weather, we will do our best to reschedule the trip for a later date.
- Parents will be notified of the date. NO additional permission slip is required.
- If your child does not plan on getting in the water, they will not be allowed to attend as there is no additional staff provided to watch children outside of the pool.
- Please keep your child home if they have an ear infection.
- Children that have casts on may attend if they wear a ‘Cast Protector’ and have a doctors’ note.

Health Information:

- Please list your child's allergies and illnesses on your created account.
- If your child carries an Epi-Pen, please let the Site Coordinator know.
- Summer Cohesion staff are not permitted to administer medication to children at any point of the program.
- Parents may come in to give their child medicine during the day if necessary.
- All injuries, such as a cast or stitches, require a doctors’ note to attend Summer Cohesion.
- If your child is ill please keep them home.
- **Children must be fully toilet trained to attend the program. Diapers and/or pull ups are not allowed.**
- If your child has lice, please treat their hair before bringing them to the program.
- Please apply sunscreen to your child before sending them each day. Please label sunscreen that is sent in.
- Sneakers must be worn each day.

COVID-19 Policy:

- If your child is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19, please keep them home until they have either tested negative, or they are no longer showing symptoms.
- Facemasks are not mandatory in the Summer Cohesion sites, but if your child wishes to wear one, they may.
- The staff are responsible for disinfecting highly touched surfaces daily before arrival and after dismissal.
- If your child tests positive for COVID-19, please keep them home and call the Chemung County Youth Bureau.

Parent Page Information:

- The online Parent Page gives you access to your child’s site information including, program calendar, weekly messages from the Site Coordinator, the lunch menu, newsletters and more.
- To find your child's site on the Parent Page, visit ChemungYouth.com

