



The IMAGINARIUM
science discovery center

**Explorer Camp
Parent Handbook**

Revised April 1, 2008

During the online registration process, a parent or guardian will acknowledge they have reviewed and understand the contents of this document. Contact the Director of Programs at 276-3179 with questions regarding content.

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Part I: Program Overview

The Imaginarium Explorer Camp Program

The Imaginarium is an independent, private, non-profit educational organization dedicated to increasing the public's understanding of science and technology through interactive, inquiry-based programs, exhibits, and outreach.

The Imaginarium's Explorer Camp Program provides a variety of educational and fun week long science-based experiences for kids between the ages of 6-12 in the months of June and July. Parents are welcomed to observe or participate with their children in any camp session.

EXPLORER CAMP GOALS:

- To inspire a love of science and/or technology in school-aged children
- To educate school-aged children and (by extension) their families on engaging and relevant topics, theories, principles, and processes in science and technology
- To provide an environment for school-aged children which promotes hands-on, creative exploration of scientific and technological concepts
- To provide school-aged children with authentic (real-world) opportunities for scientific and technological inquiry and exploration
- To provide school-aged children with supportive environments for social growth

Program Types and Hours of Operation

All Explorer Camps are based at Pacific Northern Academy (PNA) at 550 Bragaw St. in Anchorage. Two types of camps are offered on a weekly basis: on-site camps which remain primarily at PNA, and field camps, which spend half or more of their time out and about in the greater Anchorage area. Camps operate from June 2nd to August 1st (excluding the week of July 4th). Below is a list of Explorer Camp types by format and by age group:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| ◆ Children entering grades 1-3 | On-site and Field Camp |
| ◆ Children entering grades 4-6 | On-site and Field Camp |

Grade Requirements

Our camps are designed to be grade specific, catering to a camper's academic, social and motor skill levels. A child will be able to attend a camp only if he/she is entering that grade in the fall of 2008.

All camps are 7.5 hours in length (*9 am to 4:30 pm*). Children are expected to arrive with two nutritious snacks and a lunch.

Full camp schedule and on-line registration are available at www.imaginarium.org/camps.html

Part II: Program Registration

Registration Procedures and Payment Arrangements

Explorer Camp participants must complete registration online and include all weeks the camper will be attending. Payment in full is required at the time of registration. Camps are offered on a first-come, first-served basis and space is limited. If a camp is full you will have the option to add your child to a waiting list; payment is processed only when there is an opening available. Sorry, no refunds unless your selected camp is cancelled. A \$20 processing fee will be applied if transferring between sessions. This does not apply to transfers made available through openings in our waiting lists.

How We Confirm Online Registrations

When online registration and payment are completed, a receipt will be sent by email for each camper. A reminder email will be sent out one week prior to camp. It will contain a packing list and a field trip or activity schedule and any additional information you may need to know for the first day of camp.

Required Camper Information

Parents will complete camper information online during the registration process. **Registration is not complete until this information has been entered during the online registration process and payment is received.**

The following information is required during the registration process.

- Emergency contact information, including physician and health care providers
- Health History including medications, allergies, etc.
- Medical insurance information, if applicable (carrier or plan name and Group #)
- Immunization record
- Imaginarium membership number (to receive discount)

Camp Fees

The range for camp fees by type are listed below. Families with an Imaginarium membership receive a \$20 discount per camp. In addition, all families who register for more than one camp receive a family discount.

- On-site Camps at PNA \$210 members – \$230 non-members*
- Field Camps \$250 members – \$270 non-members**

Additional fees

* A \$15 field trip fee will be charged for on-site camps using a chartered bus for a field trip. A material fee will apply for camps that require additional supplies that the camper will keep.

** Special activity fees apply, for field camps, on activities that require extra admission; for example, admission to H₂Oasis or the Alaska Sealife Center.

Before and After Care fees

Imaginarium Explorer Camp offers Before and After Care to parents who need extended care for their child. Before Care runs from 8:00 to 9:00 am and After Care from 4:30 to 5:30 pm. Weekly sessions may be purchased during online registration or added the first day of camp.

- Before Care or After Care \$30/wk
- Both Before and After Care \$50/wk

Please note: If the parent/guardian is more than 15 minutes early in dropping their child off in the morning or late in picking up their child from camp, the child will be checked into the Before or After Care program and the parent will be charged \$10 for each occurrence.

Special Needs

Contact The Imaginarium Camp Director to discuss the strengths and limitations of campers with special needs. The parent and Imaginarium staff will evaluate the appropriateness of the camp for the child and identify activity adaptations. Children who face severe challenges in mobility cannot at this time be accommodated in our field camps, due both to the accessibility of camp vans and to the nature of many field camp activities.

Non-Discrimination

The Imaginarium does not discriminate in providing camp services on the basis of sex, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, race, religion, color, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or physical handicap, in accordance with AS 18.80.203 and AMC 5.20.50.

Part III: About Explorer Camps

Staffing and Ensuring Constant Supervision

The Imaginarium Summer Camp program will maintain the following ratios:

- During the camp day (9am-4:30pm) a ratio of one adult staff member or one 16-18 year-old staff member for every 8 children entering grades 1-3 (ages 6-9). A 16-18 year-old staff member shall always work under direct supervision of an adult staff member.
- One adult staff member for every 10 children entering grades 4-12 (ages 9-18).
- One adult certified in Basic First Aid/ CPR for every 20 children (every 13 children on field camps.)
- One adult professional educator for every 20 children.
- During before and after care staff will maintain a ratio of one staff member for every 15 children with a minimum of two staff at all times.

Trained camp staff will supervise campers at all times. “Supervision” means that camp staff will be in the same room or group area; will be focusing their attention on campers, and will be able to see, hear, and quickly respond to campers.

Only paid staff members are used to meet staff-to-camper ratios. Teen volunteers from The Imaginarium’s teen volunteer program may assist with program activities, but are not used to meet ratios.

Novice CIAs are paid staff members who are 16-18 years old. Novice CIAs are at least 2 years older than the campers they supervise. At least 80% of all camp staff members are adults 18 and older.

All camps are taught by professional educators and hold a bachelor’s degree (or equal teaching and childcare experience), have prior experience in the education field and are certified in CPR and First Aid. All camp staff must go through extensive background checks.

Volunteer and Substitute Plans

Explorer Camps use Imaginarium Science Guide volunteers as a supplement to our regular camp staff. Imaginarium volunteers ages 13 and older will assist adult camp staff during camp program activities and must meet qualifications for working with children as specified by American Camp Association standards. In the absence of an instructor or camp assistant, the Camp Director or The Imaginarium’s Education Department staff will maintain staff to child ratios.

Transportation Arrangements

The Imaginarium does not provide transportation to or from PNA for the arrival and departure of campers each day. In a medical emergency, paramedics will transport children. Field camp vans may be used to transport campers in the event of a medical emergency during a field trip.

Field Trips and Parent Permission

During the registration process parents are asked for permission for campers to participate in camp activities. One week prior to camp, an email with a detailed list of locations, times, and dates of field trips or special activities will be sent out. On the first day of each camp, parents will be given the option to opt out their child from any activities and make arrangements with the Camp Instructor and Camp Director for camper supervision during the trip or activity. Arrangements may include the child being picked up from camp by parents, or an individualized activity offered to the student while the main group activity is taking place. Supervision ratios will always be maintained.

On-site Explorer Camps may also take field trips to locations throughout Anchorage, such as the Alaska Zoo, Russian Jack Springs Park, or The Imaginarium Science Center. Transportation for these trips will be by People Mover or contracted school bus.

Field Camps

Field camps start and end the day at PNA and will take daily field trips to locations throughout Anchorage, the Mat-Su Valley and as far south as Seward. Transportation for these trips will be The Imaginarium's 15-passenger vans.

Each Monday, field campers will be briefed by the Field Camp Instructor and Camp Assistant in the following van safety rules prior to transporting:

1. Passengers should remain seated at all times with hands and arms inside vehicle.
2. Seatbelts are to be fastened – one person per seatbelt.
3. Noise level should be such as to not distract the driver. No throwing objects, shouting, kicking seats, or other disruptive behavior
4. Passengers are to enter and leave the vehicle under the direction of a staff member. If the vehicle makes an emergency stop, passengers should follow directions of staff members and use the buddy system if leaving the vehicle.

The above rules apply to all forms of motorized transportation that campers may take (excluding rule #2 for school or city busses). The Imaginarium prohibits the transporting of campers in non-passenger vehicles and the non-passenger areas of vehicles, such as utility vans and truck beds.

All campers weighing less than 40 pounds must be transported in child booster seats when traveling by van. Parents must provide a child booster seat if their child weighs less than 40 pounds and is registered for a field camp. Booster seats are not necessary for campers on field trips traveling by city or school bus.

Use of Public Facilities

Imaginarium Explorer Camps use staffed public facilities for aquatics, low ropes course activities, such as H2Oasis and The BLM Campbell Creek Science Center. It is Imaginarium policy to use only staffed public swimming facilities that have certified lifeguards on duty and persons on duty certified in First Aid/CPR.

For low ropes course activities, it is Imaginarium policy to use facilities which provide the following: an adequate number of instructors to lead campers in the safety and mastering of low-ropes activities; appropriate types and sizes of well-maintained equipment; equipment meeting nationally-recognized guidelines for construction and maintenance; and instructors certified in Basic First Aid/CPR. In addition, all Imaginarium Explorer Camp Instructors are certified in Basic First Aid/CPR.

General Camp Behavioral and Safety Rules

On the first morning of camp, campers will be briefed on the general rules for their behavior listed below. Each Camp Instructor may add rules specific to his or her camp as deemed appropriate.

1. **Respect yourself.** Stay within physical boundaries set by your camp leaders. Stay where you are if you get separated from the group, and your Instructor will find you.
2. **Respect your camp leaders.** A raised hand means silence for an announcement. Be an active participant. Portable electronic devices (game boys, cell phones, ipods, etc.) are not allowed at camp and will be confiscated.
3. **Respect your camp sites.** Keep classrooms, vans, and playground neat. Put trash in cans, and pick up litter. Put appropriate mixed paper in the recycling bin. Walk instead of run while indoors. This applies to PNA and any field trip destinations.
4. **Respect your fellow campers.** Keep track of your “buddy”. Listen while another camper is sharing his or her ideas. Stop and think about your choices and consequences before reacting to behavior that frustrates you. Have fun without getting in the way of someone else’s fun.

Behavior and Discipline Policies

Imaginarium Explorer Camps advocate a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on prevention, positive reinforcement, redirection and the development of self-discipline. All disciplinary action is contingent upon violation of clear, consistent rules and limits, established on the first day of camp. All camp staff members are trained in how to best handle discipline situations by using methods appropriate to the child’s age, development, and behavior. Corporal punishment is NOT permitted at Imaginarium Explorer Camps at any time.

To minimize disruptive behavior, staff will use the following disciplinary steps:

1. Prevention by clearly communicating guidelines and expectations
2. Redirection, positive reinforcement
3. Verbal warning; discuss rules and consequences for continued behavior
4. Quiet time; being separated from the group within the same room or activity area
5. Restriction from activity and/or to closer adult supervision
6. Referral to, and conference with Camp Director
7. Phone call to parent/guardian and or possible removal from camp

Parents are responsible for picking up their child if they are removed from camp, in a timely manner.

** If at any time inappropriate camper behavior jeopardizes other campers' safety and/or camp experience: parent will be notified, camper will be removed from camp for the rest of the day and possibly withdrawn for the remainder of the camp session.

Enforcement of behavior standards and expectations will be clear and consistent in application. Camp staff will document any disciplinary action taken and the Camp Director will be informed. The Imaginarium and Camp Director reserves the right to supersede the above disciplinary guidelines as deemed appropriate and necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of all campers and camp staff.

Personal Belongings

Items not directly related to camp activities or at risk of loss or theft should be left at home (i.e., toys, cell phones, personal music players, games, cards, etc.) Items at camp without approval may be confiscated. If a camper is enrolled in Before or After Care, he or she may bring a book or quiet activity to be used only during this time. A camper may bring his or her own sports equipment to participate in a scheduled camp activity or to use during lunch. **The Imaginarium assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen personal items.**

Cell Phones

Cell Phones must be powered OFF, silent and out of sight at all times. Camper must seek permission from the instructor to make a call. Approved calls must be conducted in a manner as not to disturb the camp activity. The first time a cell phone is used without permission it will be collected by staff and returned to the camper at the end of the day. On the second offense the camper will lose cell phone privileges and the cell phone will not be allowed in camper possession for the remainder of the camp. In the event of an emergency the Camp Instructor or Camp Director will contact the parents directly. If parents need to reach the camper, they may contact the camp contact phone and a message will be given to the instructor and student. All field camps will have an emergency cell phone. The phone number will be given out on the first day of camp.

Animals

The Imaginarium maintains several collections of live animals as part of our public exhibits. These include reptiles, amphibians, marine tidepool animals, and live arthropods. Campers will only have access to these animals if their specific camp includes learning about them. In that case, a trained staff member in a controlled setting with clear and direct instructions will introduce the live animal to the campers. Some camps may include a visiting animal from the community, such as a live raptor from Bird TLC or a small animal from the Alaska Zoo. Campers may not bring animals from home to camp without explicit prior permission from their Camp Instructor. The Camp Director must be notified of all arrangements made between the camper and Camp Instructor.

Forbidden Items

No firearms or other weapons (including pocket knives), no alcohol, and no illegal drugs are permitted at The Imaginarium, at PNA, or on an Explorer Field Camp.

Smoking

No smoking is permitted at The Imaginarium, at PNA, or during an Explorer Field Camp.

Lost & Found

The Imaginarium assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen personal items; however lost and found items will be kept at PNA until the conclusion of camps. At the end of the camp season, an email list of items will be sent to all parents and these items will be available at The Imaginarium for a two week period, after which they will be donated to charity.

Part IV: It's Camp Time!

Camper Arrival and Departure Procedures

Please be mindful of all posted traffic patterns and speed limits when arriving and departing Pacific Northern Academy's parking lot and when accompanying your camper(s) into or out of the building. We may have up to 65 campers arriving or departing within a 30-minute period. Your cooperation will help ensure the safety of all participants and help to expedite the pick-up and drop-off processes.

Arrival – Monday

Parents and campers will be checked in by Imaginarium staff on the first day of camp at the entrance of PNA. Please plan an extra 15 minutes for the check in process. Parents will sign a release/waiver and provide any medications (if applicable) for their camper. After check-in, campers will be signed into their individual camp. A week prior to camp parents will receive a description of specific activities or field trip locations their child camp. During camper check in, parents will be given the opportunity to opt out their child of any field trips or activities and make arrangements with the Camp Instructor and Camp Director.

- ◆ Before Care sign in is from 7:45 am – 8:30 am
Before and After Care activities will take place primarily in the school gymnasium.
- ◆ Camp sign in is from 8:30 am – 9 am
Please allow yourself extra time to confirm receipt of all necessary information.

Arrival – Tues through Friday

- ◆ Before Care sign in is from 8:00 am – 8:45 am
Campers will be checked in by staff in the school gymnasium.
- ◆ Camp sign in is from 8:45 am – 9 am

Staff will be available to check in your child at 8:45 am. Parents will be charged \$10 (per occurrence) for campers, who are not registered for Before Care, and are signed into camp before 8:45 am. Campers arriving before 9 am will be signed in only in the school gymnasium on Tuesday - Friday. At 9 am all campers and staff will move to their classroom. Campers arriving after 9 am will sign in at the classroom. Campers must be signed into camp by a parent or guardian each day. Other authorized parties (with a picture ID) may sign in campers if parents have listed them as authorized to do so on camper records.

Departure – Monday through Friday

- ◆ Sign out is from 4:30 pm – 4:45 pm

Campers will be ready for pick up at 4:30 pm. Campers will be signed out of camp by a parent or guardian at the camp's classroom door. Again, other authorized parties (with a picture ID) may pick up campers if listed as authorized individuals on camper records. At 4:45, The Imaginarium will transfer any child still in our care to our After Care program and parents will be charged \$10 (per occurrence) for this service.

◆ After Care sign out time is 4:45 pm – 5:30 pm

For campers enrolled in After Care, the same procedures as specified above will be followed. After Care activities will take place primarily in PNA's gymnasium.

Sample Daily Schedule

Each camp has its own unique content to be presented during the times listed below as "program activities".

8:45-9:00	Sign in, store coats and lunches
9:00-10:15	Program activities
10:15-10:25	Restroom and hand washing break
10:25-10:40	Morning snack and outdoor/gym play
10:40-Noon	Program activities
Noon-12:10	Restroom and hand washing break
12:10-1:00	Lunch and outdoor/gym play
1:00-1:10	Restroom and hand washing break
1:10-2:35	Program activities
2:35-2:45	Restroom and hand washing break
2:45-3:00	Afternoon snack and outdoor/gym play
3:00-4:15	Program activities
4:15-4:30	Prepare for departure and sign out

Outdoor Activities

When attending a camp, children will go outside 3 times a day or more, except in inclement weather (heavy wind or rain) or if the temperature drops below 30 degrees F.

What to Wear

Staff and camper dress requirements:

- Sandals worn to camp must have a heel strap (i.e. no flip-flops)
- No Heelys or other wheeled shoes
- Sleeved shirts that reach the belt
- Pants or skirts that conceal underwear.
- Leave at home: Clothing printed with obscenities or offensive statements toward members of any race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, age, sex, national origin, disability or handicap, or sexual orientation.
- Additional clothing appropriate for weather conditions; raingear, jackets, etc.

Explorer camps are hands-on. This means that they are sometimes messy! Don't send your child to camp in his or her best clothes or any clothes you would be disappointed to find dirty.

Field camp may have extra rules regarding appropriate clothing. They may require, for instance, that campers wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes, long pants and raingear.

Lunches, Snacks, and Beverages

Parents will be required to provide a nutritious **lunch and two snacks** for their child each day of camp. Campers will not have access to a refrigerator or microwave. Lunch and snacks will be kept in the camp room (or van in the case of field camps). Each room or van will have drinking water available to children at all times.

Lunch should include a serving of milk, meat (or poultry or fish or cheese or egg or beans and peas or peanut butter or nut or seed butter), juice (fruit or vegetable), and bread. Snacks might include graham crackers, raisins, carrots, cheese and crackers, or other prepackaged snack item.

Late and/or Absent Campers

If a camper does not arrive as scheduled for camp, the Instructor will assume that the camper is safe with his or her parents and that he or she chose not to attend camp that day. The Instructor may, but will not necessarily, verify this with a phone call to the number(s) on record.

Departure of some field trips may be as early as 9:15 am. If a camper has not arrived for camp by 9:10 am, the Instructor will attempt to contact the camper's parents at the phone number(s) on record to verify that he or she will be attending camp on that day. If no contact has been made with the parents, the group will leave for the field trip without the tardy camper.

Parent Visitation Policy

Parents of campers may visit and observe their children's camps at any time during normal camp and Before/After Care hours. For safety, all visitors must sign in with the Camp Director and receive a visitor pass. Parents of Field Campers are welcome to accompany a camp on a field trip, but will need to provide their own transportation and notify the Camp Director and Instructor of their intentions. Any child traveling with a parent will be signed out of our care until the child returns to the group and is signed back in to our care.

Part V: Additional Medical and Safety Information

Medication and Topical Products

The Imaginarium staff may dispense medications to a child if the parent fills out a written order. Prescription medications must be in the original container with the prescription label that includes the child's name, name of the medication, dosage, dosage intervals, name of prescribing physician, and date prescription was filled. Non-prescription medications must be in original container and can only be given for two consecutive days without a written note from a physician.

The following products are considered preventative topical products by The Imaginarium and not as medications:

- Sunscreens
- Insect repellents
- Hydrogen peroxide
- First aid ointments
- Calamine lotion
- Baking soda
- Lip balms (never shared)
- Skin creams
- Band Aids
- Hand sanitizer (alcohol-based)

The Imaginarium supplies the listed items as needed. If parents choose not to allow camp staff to use certain items, then parents must provide alternative items for their child. The items must be clearly labeled with their child's first and last name and given to the child's Camp Instructor or Instructor's Assistant.

Illnesses

If your child shows visible signs of severe illness or injury they will not be allowed to attend Explorer Camps.

Some examples may include the following:

1. Severe pain or discomfort particularly in joints, ears, or abdomen
2. Diarrhea or vomiting
3. Severe coughing or sore throat
4. Fever of 101.5 degrees F or more
5. Red eyes with discharge
6. Infected, untreated skin patches, lesions or skin rashes
7. Difficult or rapid breathing
8. Severe itching of body or scalp

The Imaginarium will notify parents of occurrences of, or known exposure to communicable diseases or conditions. Children who have symptoms of or who have been diagnosed with one of the communicable diseases above may return to Explorer Camps

only when written documentation from a licensed physician states they have been evaluated and present no risk to camps staff or other campers.

Notification of Medical Problems/Emergencies

If a child is injured or becomes ill while attending an Explorer Camp, the child is removed from contact with other children and is placed under continued supervision by a staff member. In the event of an injury, a staff member will apply first aid and fill out an accident report. If the camper's injuries or illness are minor and routine, Explorer Camp staff will apply care for 15 minutes and then (if necessary) notify the camper's parents to discuss any further action. Based on the nature of the illness or injury, further action may include but is not limited to the following: allowing the camper to stay at camp for the rest of the day, parents picking up the camper as soon as possible, or calling emergency medical services. In the event that the staff cannot reach parents or alternative emergency contact person, a call may be placed directly to The Imaginarium's licensed medical advisor, or child's physician of record.

Because many people remotely access their voice mail, it is expected that camp personnel leave voice messages on answering machines that appropriately communicate the need for a given parent to call the camp. All contact, successful and unsuccessful, is documented on the medical treatment log.

In cases where the illness/symptoms or injury are such that there must be no delay in treatment, the Camp staff will obtain emergency medical treatment by calling paramedics to administer necessary aid and transport the camper to an emergency care facility. The parents or designated contact persons will then be notified.

Child Welfare

Parents are encouraged to discuss, with the Camp Director, any special circumstances or events occurring in a child's life that may affect that child's emotional status or behavior while enrolled in Explorer Camps. With this knowledge, camp staff can interact with and respond to your child in an appropriate and understanding manner.

Alaska State Statutes and American Camp Association standards require that camp staff report all incidents of suspected or actual abuse and neglect of children regardless of whether they occur in or are related to the facility. The Imaginarium is obligated by law to report such incidents within 24 hours to the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services, Child Protection Office at 269-4000.

Camper Records

Records and information concerning a child and his/her parents are held in strict confidence. The child's health history is stored in a secure location and available only to the Camp Director and designated staff. The Camp Instructor or Instructor's Assistant will have emergency contact and relevant medical information (medications, allergies, dietary restrictions) available at all times. Information is released to Camp Instructors and Instructor's Assistants working with the child as necessary and as required by law.

Camper health records are securely stored either electronically or by hard copy for up to 16 years.

Changes in Policy

The Imaginarium reserves the right to make changes to our policies and procedures. We will notify parents prior to camp if significant changes in Explorer Camp programs or policies occur.

Liability and Insurance Coverage

The Imaginarium maintains comprehensive general liability insurance as directed by the American Camp Association. We also maintain secondary liability coverage insurance to insure staff members when transporting camp participants in busses or Imaginarium vehicles.

Accreditation

The Imaginarium Explorer Camp is accredited by the American Camp Association. Accreditation is based on 300 standards for health, safety and program quality. The American Camp Association is a community of camp professionals who, for nearly 100 years, have joined together to share their knowledge and experience and to ensure the quality of camp programs. As a leading authority in child development, ACA works to preserve, promote, and improve the camp experience.