

Our Commitment to Safety

Physical Safety

- **Southampton's #1 organizational priority is to keep your camper safe from harm** that may occur from camp activities or from other campers. We follow 300+ standards of safety as an [American Camp Association accredited camp](#), our group sizes range from (10-18 campers per group), and we follow a strict rule of "3 or more" at all times, ensuring that staff are never alone with campers and that campers are never alone without a staff member present.
- SSDC operates as an Organized Camp regulated and permitted by the Bucks County Department of Health. This means we pass an annual inspection ensuring safe operation in a variety of health and safety related categories.
- We review your child's medical history, allergies, health concerns, behavioral notes, and any other applicable information immediately prior to each session. Your child's Senior Counselor and Camp Supervisor will each know this information and be able to meet your child's needs throughout the session.
- We complete extensive background checks prior to hiring our staff. This includes a state criminal history check, child welfare abuse check, FBI fingerprinting and obtaining driving records for our drivers. In essence, we "hand-pick" each of our staff very carefully.
- Each of our nurses and pool staff are trained and certified in American Red Cross First Aid and CPR.
- Our staff training, held prior to camp, includes comprehensive sessions on emergency procedures, crisis management, positive discipline, and child development, all designed to prepare our staff as thoroughly as possible to provide the safest environment for each child in our care
- Our counselor to camper ratio is at least 1:4 at all times.
- Our directors carry two-way radios, and are able to communicate with our office, at all times.
- Our staff training mantra is "sunscreen, shoes tied, water, count your kids!". We keep kids safe from the hazards of the sun, make sure they are safely dressed, hydrated, and closely supervised at all times, all day.

Emotional Safety

- **At SSDC we want each of our campers to be a valued part of a group.** We make sure each child is "known" by at least one or more of our staff: that he/she is greeted by name each day, and that our staff get to know that camper over the course of the summer.
- SSDC is a group-centered camp. Senior Counselors create a group name, and begin practicing for our Bunk Talent Show. This creates a powerful opportunity for belonging, which is an outcome we value highly from the quality camp experience.

- When any of our campers “have a hard time”, our counselors and directors are carefully trained to acknowledge first, challenge second. We do not give up on children. Our approach works, especially at camp, and campers typically “opt-in” to more successful behaviors during the course of camp.
- We partner with parents and place a high priority on open, consistent communication. We invite two-way feedback at all times.
- We’ve found that “bullying” is an area of intense focus by many today. Behavior potentially related to bullying or resembling bullying is quickly and effectively addressed by our entire staff.

Group Safety and Child Behavior

- Because our camp is group-centered, we respond to challenges related to individual camper behavior (e.g., aggression, negative language, unwanted behaviors) by addressing both the camper’s needs and the needs of the other children in the group.
- When a child demonstrates negative behavior, we work with the child to adjust their behavior. If the behavior is serious or repeated, a director will step in to provide additional support.
- **Parents will not receive phone calls** about minor, typical, and easily resolved behaviors.
- **Parents will be contacted** when a behavior is serious in nature, not easily resolved, repeated, or affecting the whole camp group.
- Parents are welcome to call the office to discuss behaviors or situations mentioned by your child. We will provide clarification and context and make an appropriate plan if needed.
- We ask parents to please approach your child’s stories with appropriate skepticism (based on their respective age) as children often leave out other perspectives and alternative viewpoints – which is developmentally typical. Children are also often unaware of what is already being done to resolve a behavior or situation as we attempt to address camper issues privately when possible.
- Participation at Southampton is a privilege, and we believe that all children have a right to a physically and emotionally safe environment. If a child repeatedly demonstrates inappropriate behavior at SSDC, we will work to resolve the issue. If it becomes a larger issue, Southampton Day Camp reserves the right to remove the child from the program.

SPECIFICALLY:

- It is necessary, for physical and emotional safety, to maintain our aforementioned staff: camper
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- ratios. Therefore, if one child's behavior consistently requires one on one attention thus changing the ratios and quality of the program, and the behavior is not improving with reasonable effort from staff and directors, the child may be asked to leave camp.
- If a child's behavior consistently and negatively impacts their group, and is not improving with reasonable effort from staff and directors, the child may be asked to leave camp.
- If a child demonstrates a serious negative behavior that is not likely to improve and is detrimental to the group and camp culture, the child may be asked to leave camp immediately.
- If your camper is asked to leave camp due to negative behavior that has not improved after camp support, a refund will not be offered for the current camp season.