



**SUMMER
ORGANIZED
ACTIVITIES AND
RECREATION
(SOAR)
PARENT HANDBOOK
2025**



**Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center
305 South Dogwood Drive
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
(540)433-2474**

Table of Contents

Our Program: Objectives, Hours of Operation, Enrollment, Staff, Fees Page 3

Program Components , Daily Schedule Sample, Arrival and Departure Procedures, AttendancePage 4

Policy: Personal Belongings, Dress Code, Food Policy,Swimming & Evaluations, SunScreen Page 5

Policy: Field Trip , Playgrounds & Parks, Illness & Severe Injury PolicyPage 6

Policy:Medications, Asbestos Notification, Child Abuse and Neglect, Payments and Enrollments Page 7

Behavior Management Policy , Discipline Policy, Expectation of ParentsPage 8

Quick Reference Fact SheetPage 9



Our Program

Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation's S.O.A.R. (Summer Organized Activities and Recreation) Program is a recreationally based program for City of Harrisonburg residents. The program is open to students who have completed kindergarten until their 12th birthday.

(Children over age 12 are eligible for a teen membership at the Community Activities Center)

Program Objectives

- Promote personal and character skills such as: safety, good health, respect, responsibility, caring, fairness, honesty, trustworthiness, and citizenship.
- Promote social and interpersonal skills such as cooperation, conflict resolution, and acceptance of others.
- Provide participants access to leisure service opportunities while providing a safe, engaging, environment.

Hours of Operation

The Summer Organized Activities & Recreation program runs from 7:30am-5:30 pm beginning on the 3rd Monday in June until the last Friday before Harrisonburg City Public School resumes.

Summer 2025 closures*:

- June 19th
- July 4th

*The SOAR program does not prorate tuition for closures

Enrollment

All children must be registered by a parent or legal guardian. Registration information shall include parent/guardian phone numbers, emergency contact information (2 individuals other than parents), and any pertinent health information. All forms must be completed in their entirety before the registration process is complete, along with any outstanding balances and the first week of attendance paid.

Our Staff

All SOAR program staff members are subject to a criminal background check as well as alcohol and substance abuse testing. Staff will be knowledgeable and responsible for the conduction of emergency preparedness procedures and will use a positive approach to behavior management at all times.

All staff members are required to maintain current training in first aid and CPR, bloodborne pathogens, mandated reporting, and playground safety. Additional trainings in behavior management, youth programming, and early childhood development will also be offered on an ongoing basis.

Release and Hold harmless

Harrisonburg Park and Recreation does not condone or encourage its employees to care for children outside of the Cecil F Gilkerson Community Activities Center.

By enrolling your participant in the Summer Organized Activities and Recreation you as the guardian agree to release and hold harmless Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation and its employees, from any accident or harm that may occur should you retain the services of any Harrisonburg Park and Recreation employee for the care of your child(ren) outside the Cecil F Gilkerson Community Activities Center.

If you retain the services of any Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation employee in such capacity, Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation has no responsibility and is held harmless from any incident which may occur.

Program Components

Participants will be divided into 3 groups for most activities: Completed Kindergarten -Completed 1st , Completed 2nd and Completed 3rd, Completed 4th - age 12.

Program activities include recreational free and organized play, craft, swimming, community visitors, and fieldtrips. There will also be set times during the day for snack and lunch.

Sample Schedule

The SOAR program will loosely follow a daily schedule. Our schedule is flexible to allow for the individual needs of all participants and is subject to change

- 7:30am - 9:00am** Free time in classrooms during drop off
- 9:00am - 12:00pm** Rotation between morning snack, activity, craft, and free play
- 12:00pm - 2:00pm** Lunch, Movie, Field trip, Community Visitor or Swimming
- 2:00pm - 4:00pm** Rotation between afternoon snack, gym or game room free time
- 4:00pm - 5:00pm** Afternoon activity and outdoor play
- 5:00pm - 5:30pm** Classroom free time until pick up

Sign In/Sign Out

Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation has established the following standards to ensure the safety and well-being of children attending the S.O.A.R. program regarding drop off and pick up procedures:

- Parent(s) or guardian are required to escort their children in and out of the facility including before/after signing their child in and out of the S.O.A.R program
- Parents must sign their child out of the program each day and record the time
- Parents may designate in writing alternate designees to pick up their child if necessary. Changes to designees can be made at any time and will be verified by the program coordinator
- Any alternate designees must be at least 16 years of age and must be able to provide proof of identification

All participants should arrive to the program no later than 9:00am with the exception of summer school, scheduled appointments, etc. If a participant arrives after that time, they may miss out on activities specific to that week's theme. A staff member will be stationed at pickup/drop off location at key times (7:30AM-9:00AM & 4:30PM- 5:30PM) to assist children with locating their group.

If you will be picking up/dropping off outside of those times, please email the program director:

amber.craig@harrisonburgva.gov. or call 540 433 2474.

Failure to notify program staff of changes in drop-off or pick up times may result in your child not being able to attend that day or a late pick-up fee.

Attendance

Reasons why your child may not be able to attend the S.O.A.R. Program:

- Failure to make payments
- Failure to comply with program policies and procedures
- Child has a fever or communicable disease (please see medication, illness, and injury section for our exclusion criteria)

Policy and Procedure

Please consult the following list of policies and expectations for both participants and parents/guardians as well. These policies and expectations ensure that all participants have access to a safe and enriching summer program experience.

Personal Belongings

Please be sure to label all items with your child's first and last name. We encourage children to leave sentimental and valuable items at home to avoid the risk of items being damaged or lost. We do not allow electronics or cellphones. The ASA program is not responsible for damage to or loss of personal items.

Dress Code

Children should be dressed comfortably and practically for various activities. Due to various crafts and activities during the day individuals may want to bring an extra set of clothes with them. Tennis shoes are required for participation in all activities. **No open-toed shoes are allowed for your child's safety. Flip flops/crocs may be brought with your child on swimming days for use at appropriate time.**

Food Policy

Parents must pack a morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack for each child. A water bottle should be sent for use throughout the day as well.

- All lunches must be labeled with child's name.
- All lunches should be placed in cooler packs with ice blocks; be sure to pack utensils.
- Please include a drink with your child's lunch.
- NON-MICROWAVEABLE ITEMS ONLY.
- Please do not pack any glass containers or GUM.

Swimming/Swim Evaluations

A certified lifeguard will be on duty and will not count towards the staff/child ratio. Staff will have designated supervision areas they are responsible for while at the pool. General swim rules will apply when attending Westover Swimming Pool Complex. Westover Pool requires each child to complete a swim evaluation to gauge swim levels prior to the child's first pool day. If a parent states a child may swim in the deep end but does not have the ability based on the evaluation, they will be limited to the pool's restrictions.

If the swim evaluation deems an individual's ability as greater than the parent's request, the parent's restrictions will be honored.

Based on the swim evaluation AND permission slip, children will be given color coded wristbands to designate where they are permitted to swim.

Sunscreen

As a recreationally based program, we spend a large amount of time outside as well as at the pool. Please be sure your child is wearing sunscreen prior to drop off. On pool days they **MUST BRING** their own sunscreen to apply prior to swimming at the pool. Children will be responsible for applying sunscreen themselves; however staff are able to assist when necessary.

Policy and Procedure cont.

Field Trips

Transportation

The SOAR program will participate in walking field trips. Appropriate staff to participant ratios will be maintained on all field trips, with additional assistance from the Harrisonburg Police Department and/or Harrisonburg Fire Department on some field trips. Parents will not be permitted to pick up their child from a field trip location unless previous arrangements with the department/program coordinator have been made.

Written Permission

All field trips will require a signed permission slip that will include the destination, date, and an approximated amount of time of arrival to the field trip location.

If you elect for your child not to participate, an alternative activity will occur at the Community Activities Center.

Attire

Different field trips may require specific attire based on location or activity. The Recreation Department will communicate needs for specific field trips as necessary. Please make sure your child is wearing comfortable clothes for walking including closed toed shoes. **No croc/sandals will be permitted.**

Playgrounds & Parks

Playgrounds utilized will meet all current ASTM publication F 1487-01, and CPSC Handbook for Public Playground Safety. Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation's certified playground safety inspectors inspect park playground equipment on a regular basis.

Illness and Injury

Program staff will maintain a first aid kit on site, as well as portable kits for field trips and special events. City issued radios with the capability to reach emergency services will be used daily.

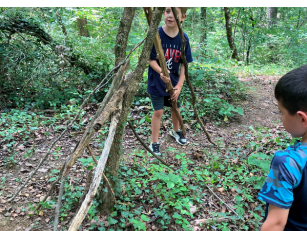
Parents will be required to pick up their child within at least one hour of notification by SOAR program staff should their child become ill or injured while attending SOAR. Sick or injured children will be kept comfortable and isolated from the group until pick up.

Parents must inform the program coordinator within 24 hours if their child or any member of the immediate household develops a communicable disease, except for life threatening diseases which must be reported immediately.

A child will not be allowed to attend SOAR for the day or within 24 hours of being picked up for the following:

- A temperature over 101°F
- A contagious skin rash
- A contagious eye infection
- A communicable disease
- Recurrent vomiting or diarrhea

Children may return to the SOAR program when they have been 24 hours symptom free without the use of over-the-counter medications, or with a doctor's note indicating that they are not contagious.



Policy and Procedure cont.

Medication Policy

Due to the Drug Control Act specifications about medication administration by non-health care providers, the S.O.A.R. program cannot administer short or long-term medications. We will only hold and administer medications for life threatening illnesses and emergencies (EpiPens, Albuterol, Inhalers, etc.).

Asbestos Notification

The Community Activities Center was built in 1977 and contains some building materials that have been identified as containing asbestos. In 1995 these materials were identified in ceilings and floors and removed, encapsulated or action was taken to abate any risk to human health; and periodic surveillance inspection by a licensed inspector is conducted.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Section 63.2-1509 of the code of Virginia requires any person providing full or part-time participant care to report any suspected participant abuse or neglect within 24 hours.

The S.O.A.R. program begins at 7:30am and ends at 5:30pm. Any child dropped off before 7:30am or if a child who is attending the program has not been picked up by 5:30pm, repeated attempts to contact the parents have been made with no success, and no one comes to pick up the child by 5:45pm, this is considered child neglect, and will be reported to social services.

Payments and Enrollment

The registration fee covers the first week of attendance. All further payments are due the Tuesday before the week of enrollment. **If a payment is not made by the due date either in person or online, the participant will be withdrawn on Wednesday and the next person on the waitlist will be contacted.** If you are on the waitlist, you will be contacted on a Wednesday and will have until 5pm Thursday of the week prior to enrollment to pay in person or online and secure your child's spot.



Behavior Management

Behavior management at the S.O.A.R program takes place in the form of positive guidance. This means that we take a proactive approach to managing behavior with measures such as preparing the environment so as to minimize conflict, reflecting feelings, redirection, and through both logical and natural consequences. Our staff members may also utilize written discipline forms and/or behavior plans as needed.

It is our expectation that all participants know and follow basic rules while at S.O.A.R.

These include:

- Demonstrate respect for self, others, and all materials and equipment at all times through words and actions
- Safety First
- Keep all body parts to yourself
- Follow instructions
- Use indoor voices when indoors
- Have a positive attitude
- Have fun!

In the event that certain behaviors begin to cause significant disruptions, staff reserves the right to call a child's parent or guardian to pick up their child from S.O.A.R. Additional disciplinary actions may also be taken for repeated behavior infractions, and a disciplinary form may be written documenting the behavior.

Discipline Policy

- 1st and 2nd Disciplinary Action = Warning
- 3rd Disciplinary Action = Parent Conference
- After the 3rd Disciplinary Action = Suspension/Dismissal from the program

The following is a list of behaviors and incidents that will automatically be subject to immediate disciplinary action:

- Use of profanity
- Inappropriate touching
- Disregard for program rules or staff directions
- Disrespect for authority and other participants
- Displaying obscene gestures or inappropriate attire
- Possession of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia or weapons
- Defacing Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation property
- Theft or unauthorized possession of another participants property
- Theft or unauthorized possession of Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation property
- Acts or threats of violence or bodily/physical harm directed toward staff or other participants.

Expectations of Parents

To ensure your child's safety and success we require that all parents and guardians:

- Review this handbook's basic rules of safety and conduct with the child.
- Ensure that both themselves and participants are aware of and understand all rules and expectations
- Understand the behavior management policy

Both parents and participants are expected to address staff respectfully. Parents are not permitted to reprimand other children in the program. Any use of profanity or obscene gestures will not be tolerated. In the event staff need to call parents for pick up if a child is unable to comply with these rules, the parent must pick up the child immediately.

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

Payment/Fee Information

Weekly Fee- \$50 due the Tuesday prior to attendance

There is no program June 9th - 13th		
Week	Payment Deadline	Canc. Deadline
June 16th - June 20th (Closed 6/19)	Registration Fee	June 2nd
June 23rd - June 27th	June 17th	June 9th
June 30th - July 3rd (Closed 7/4)	June 24th	June 16th
July 7th - July 11th	July 1st	June 23rd
July 14th - July 18th	July 8th	June 30th
July 21st - July 25th	July 15th	July 7th
July 28th - August 1st	July 22nd	July 14th
August 4th - August 8th	July 29th	July 21st
August 11th - August 15th	August 5th	July 28th

Payments are due the Tuesday before the week of enrollment with the registration payment covering the first week of attendance.

If payment is not made by close of business on Tuesday before the week of enrollment either in person or online the participant will be withdrawn on Wednesday and the next person on the waitlist will be contacted.

If you are on the waitlist you will be contacted on Wednesday and have until close of business Thursday of the week prior to enrollment to pay in person or online

Payment/Fee Information

- In Person: Cash, Check, Visa/MasterCard/Discover
- Online: www.harrisonburgva.gov/online-registration log in and select the week to pay for in your shopping cart and proceed to payment (instructions on back of this page)
- By Mail: Checks Payable to: "Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation."

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