



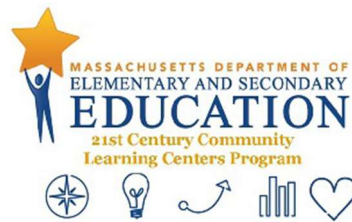
# FAMILY HANDBOOK

**Program Dates:  
July 1, 2024 – August 9, 2024**

**\*\* No program July 4, 2024 \*\***

**Monday – Friday  
8:30 AM – 3:00 PM**

**\*\* Late pick-up fees will apply after 3:00 PM \*\***



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## Welcome

Thank you for completing the registration for your child in the Springfield Park and Recreation Division's Summer Programs. We are committed to providing innovative programs, and learning experiences for participating children. The Summer Programs are designed to introduce children to several new opportunities and activities that build upon the skills they learn throughout the school year. With this in mind, our programs have been carefully planned and developed for your children. **Parents and guardians should note that these programs are not drop-in programs**, but rather with a specific schedule and sequential activities planned for the six weeks of programming.

When families and staff build positive, trusting, working relationships and communicate regularly, children benefit. We hope that this *Family Handbook* will help build an understanding between you and our staff. Most importantly, there needs to be good two-way communication between us. We will keep you informed about your child's experiences, achievements, new skills, and any special concerns or problems. We welcome your feedback and involvement in your child's Summer Program.

## Who We Serve

The Summer Programs are open to Springfield residents ages 6 to 13. Children must turn 6 by July 1, 2024, and cannot turn 14 until on or after July 1, 2024, to be eligible to participate. If a participant's age is questioned, we reserve the right to require a copy of the birth certificate, to confirm the participant's age within 48 hours, in order to attend the summer program.

## Days of Operation

- All programs run Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM
- Monday, July 1, 2024, to Friday, August 9, 2024
- **All programs will be closed Thursday, July 4th, 2024, in observance of Independence Day.**

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## Registration

Registration for all Summer Programs are completed online. The registration page can be accessed through <https://www.springfield-ma.gov/park/>. If you need to update any information (*pickup information, phone numbers, etc.*) for your child/ren, please log in to your account to make these changes.

## Camp Star Registration ONLY

Each participant must have a copy of their physicals and immunizations submitted by **Friday, June 14 at 1:00 PM**. They can be returned to the Recreation Office located in Forest Park or mailed to Camp STAR, Attention Lena Cisero, 200 Trafton Road, Springfield MA 01108. If you would like to email them, please send them to [lcisero@springfieldcityhall.com](mailto:lcisero@springfieldcityhall.com) or by fax at 413-787-6624.

**You will not be registered for Camp Star until all information and forms are received.**

## Waitlist Information

Each site has 10 waitlist spots during registration. If a spot becomes available, we will be in contact with any waitlisted participant before the start of the program.

## Proof of Residency – MUST be a Springfield resident

If a participant's residency is questioned, we reserve the right to require a copy of the participant's home address, within 48 hours, in order to confirm they are a Springfield resident.

### **Drop-Off and Pick-Up Information**

On the first day of the program parents/guardians will be notified of the drop-off/pick-up procedures for their program site. Please note: At many of our sites the main entrance to the building is not used by our program, so it is important to check -in with the site staff on the first day to identify the drop-off and pick-up area.

#### **Drop-Off**

8:30 AM – 8:45 AM

- Parents/guardians are required to accompany the child(ren) each morning to check in with staff, with the exception of children who walk to the program. Children dropped off after 8:45 AM will not be allowed into the program that day. **Doors will close at 8:46 AM**

#### **Pick-Up**

2:40 PM – 3:00 PM

- Individuals picking up children must report to the designated pick-up area during dismissal time each day and complete the sign-out sheet.
- During dismissal (2:40 PM -3:00 PM) children will only be released to individuals identified on their registration form, which is signed and authorized by a parent/guardian. Said individual must be age 18 or older and must present a valid picture I.D. Staff must be informed in writing of any changes to children's pick-up information. Dismissal policies are strictly enforced and there will be a fee for late pick-up.

**We ask that parents/guardians be punctual in both the drop-off and pick-up times because daily agendas are carefully planned to accommodate the day's many activities.**

### **Attendance and Participation**

Children are expected to attend the Summer Program every day. All programs are thematic and include sequential activities; therefore, if participants are absent for a week or more, they will not fully benefit from the program. If a participant must be absent, program staff must be notified in advance in writing. **No children will be allowed to attend a partial day due to the nature of the program. Children are expected to attend the program 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM.**

During registration parents/guardians should tell staff if they are planning a summer vacation during the program. If your child(ren) is going to miss a week of the program, the site staff **must** be notified in advance; **if not, the child may be dropped from the program.** If a participant does not meet the attendance requirements they may be dropped from the program.

We encourage all children to take part in every aspect of the program. It is our belief they will grow from the experience. No child will be forced to participate but he/she must attend and be respectful of those who choose to participate.

### Program Staff Contact Information

Please use the numbers below if you need to contact the Summer Program.

*Site phones will be answered Monday through Friday starting July 1<sup>st</sup> to August 9<sup>th</sup>, 8:15-3:00 PM*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Forest Park (ECOS) Summer Program</b>  <b>Site Cell: (413) 335-2097</b>  <b>ECOS Landline #: (413) 886-5469</b> <i>(no text messages)</i>                  Address: 293 Sumner Avenue, Springfield, MA, 01108</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chiarina Sarno, Educational Coordinator</b>                  Cell: (413) 313-1355                  Email: <a href="mailto:csarno@springfieldcityhall.com">csarno@springfieldcityhall.com</a></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Kiley Summer Program</b>  <b>Site Cell: (413) 335-5381</b>                  Address: 180 Cooley St, Springfield, MA, 01128</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Carmen Melendez, Program Coordinator</b>                  Cell: (413) 426-5639                  Email: <a href="mailto:cmelendez@springfieldcityhall.com">cmelendez@springfieldcityhall.com</a></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Van Sickle Summer Program</b>  <b>Site Cell: (413) 335-1466</b>                  Address: 1170 Carew Street, Springfield, MA, 01104</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Angela Parisi, Program Coordinator</b>                  Cell: (413) 355-6229                  Email: <a href="mailto:aparisi@springfieldcityhall.com">aparisi@springfieldcityhall.com</a></p>

<p><b>If you cannot reach your Program Coordinator, please call the Educational Coordinator:</b>  <b>Chiarina Sarno</b>                  Cell: (413) 313-1355   Email: <a href="mailto:csarno@springfieldcityhall.com">csarno@springfieldcityhall.com</a></p>
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### Camp Star Contact Information ONLY

<p><b>Lena Cisero, Camp Director</b>                  Cell: (413) 313-5457   Office: (413) 787-7779                  Email: <a href="mailto:lcisero@springfieldcityhall.com">lcisero@springfieldcityhall.com</a></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Camp Star Summer Program</b>  <b>Site Cell: (413) 313-6333</b>                  Address: 300 Trafton Road Springfield, MA, 01108</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lena Cisero, Camp Director</b>                  Cell: (413) 313-5457    <a href="mailto:lcisero@springfieldcityhall.com">lcisero@springfieldcityhall.com</a></p>

### Other Contact Information

<p><b>Randy Piteo</b> (413) 750-2711</p>	<p><b>Recreation Office</b> (413) 787-6434</p>
<p><b>Website</b>  <a href="http://www.springfield-ma.gov/park/">http://www.springfield-ma.gov/park/</a></p>	
<p><b>Facebook</b>  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/City-of-Springfield-Parks-Recreation-Afterschool-Program">https://www.facebook.com/City-of-Springfield-Parks-Recreation-Afterschool-Program</a></p>	

### Walking Policy

Children, age 10 and older, are permitted walk to the program each morning and home from the program at dismissal if a parent or guardian has signed the waiver as part of registration releasing the City of Springfield and the Department of Parks, Buildings and Recreation Management (DPRBM) of all liabilities. Participants of the program, age 10 and older, may also accompany a younger sibling walking if the parent/guardian has signed a waiver for that child as well. Children who walk to the program must check in with staff during the designated drop-off time (8:30 AM – 8:45 AM) and must sign out during dismissal time before leaving the program.

Participants who are signed up as walkers will be dismissed each day with the walkers unless the parent/guardian provides written documentation in advance, or in extenuating circumstances the parent or guardian calls the site cell phone and speaks to the Site Supervisor to notify them that the child will be picked up that day. In this case, the child will not be dismissed as a walker, and regular pick-up policies apply. Pick-up policies include being picked up during dismissal time, 2:40 PM – 3:00 PM and fees apply for late pick-up.

### Walking Policy - CAMP STAR ONLY

Children, of all ages, are not permitted to walk to the program nor walk home at the end of the program.

### Late Pick-Up Policy

All participants must be picked up no later than 3:00 PM each day. If a child remains in the program after 3:00 PM the site staff will contact the parents/guardians listed on the registration form. If the site staff is unable to get a hold of the parents/guardians the site staff will contact the emergency contact and the authorized pick-up agent. It is of the utmost importance that **parents/guardians provide current contact information** for themselves, emergency contacts, and pick-up contacts and that the site staff is able to get a hold of someone and ensure the child will be picked up from the program.

### Late Pick-Up Fee

**There will be a late fee charged for any child picked up after the dismissal time of 3:00 PM. Fees are to be paid in cash only at the time of pick-up or no later than sign-in the following day. This fee is per child.** Parents/guardians must accompany their child(ren) to camp for sign-in if a late fee is owed. Children will not be allowed to attend the program until the late fee is paid. There are no exceptions to this fee. **Parents/guardians, who regularly violate the pick-up time policy, could jeopardize their child's continued participation in the program.** Written documentation of each occurrence will be provided.

**\*\*\* After 3:30 the Department of Children and Families will be contacted if we are unable to reach anyone \*\*\***

Time of pick-up	Late Fee Charged	Time of pick-up	Late Fee Charged	Time of pick-up	Late Fee Charged
3:01 PM	\$10.00	3:13 PM	\$34.00	3:25 PM	\$58.00
3:02 PM	\$12.00	3:14 PM	\$36.00	3:26 PM	\$60.00
3:03 PM	\$14.00	3:15 PM	\$38.00	3:27 PM	\$62.00
3:04 PM	\$16.00	3:16 PM	\$40.00	3:28 PM	\$64.00
3:05 PM	\$18.00	3:17 PM	\$42.00	3:29 PM	\$66.00
3:06 PM	\$20.00	3:18 PM	\$44.00	3:30 PM	\$68.00
3:07 PM	\$22.00	3:19 PM	\$46.00	3:31 PM	\$70.00
3:08 PM	\$24.00	3:20 PM	\$48.00	3:32 PM	\$72.00
3:09 PM	\$26.00	3:21 PM	\$50.00	3:33 PM	\$74.00
3:10 PM	\$28.00	3:22 PM	\$52.00	3:34 PM	\$76.00
3:11 PM	\$30.00	3:23 PM	\$54.00	3:35 PM	\$78.00
3:12 PM	\$32.00	3:24 PM	\$56.00	<i>Fees continue to accrue until the child is picked up. *All fees are per child.</i>	

### **Health Related Information**

The DPBRM is not equipped or staffed to administer medication to children. Children must be able to administer their own medication and the medication must be in its original bottle with the original label that includes the child's name. During registration parents/guardians must complete a permission form to self-administer medication for any medication the child needs to have during the program day. Please see the program staff regarding medication storage.

Campers should stay home if they are sick until at least 24 hours after their fever (temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius or higher) is gone. The temperature should be measured without the use of fever-reducing medicines (medicines that contain ibuprofen or acetaminophen).

### **What to Wear**

All children need to wear clothing that is appropriate for an active summer program with activities taking place primarily outdoors, indoors, and in various weather conditions. Children should wear the following:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Mask - optional</b>                       | <b>Baseball cap or hat (to be worn outside only)</b> |
| <b>Shorts (must be mid-length or longer)</b> | <b>Light jacket or sweatshirt - if needed</b>        |
| <b>Socks</b>                                 |  |
| <b>Sneakers</b>                              |  |

### **What Not to Wear**

Sandals, flip-flops, **Crocs**, open-toe shoes, revealing clothes (short-shorts, belly shirts, spaghetti strap tank tops, bikinis), and any clothing with inappropriate words or images that are not suitable for young children, nor for participating in a summer program with outdoor activities. **Bikini bathing suits are not allowed. Children who are dressed inappropriately will be sent home.**

### **What to Bring**

Children should bring a backpack or bag **each day** with their name clearly written on it.

Backpacks should contain:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Towel</b>                                  | <b>Reading Books</b>                                |
| <b>Change of Clothes</b>                      | <b>Reusable water bottles</b>                       |
| <b>Personal care items (no sharing)</b>       | <b>Frozen Water Bottle (to be brought each day)</b> |
| <b>Appropriate Bathing Suits (no bikinis)</b> | <b>Sunscreen (no sharing)</b>                       |
| <b>Water Shoes</b>                            |   |

\*\*\* Personal supplies from staff and campers (i.e., hats, brushes, towels, and bags) and drinking containers (i.e., water bottles) must never be shared with others. \*\*\*

### **What Not to Bring**

Children should **not bring expensive items** to the summer program. This includes cell phones, toys, iPods, iPads, hand-held game systems, and jewelry. **The City of Springfield Park is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

Children should not bring food to the program unless the parent has completed a special diet form.

**No peanuts, nuts, or nut products of any kind are permitted.**

### **Vehicle Entrance - ECOS ONLY**

Parents and guardians dropping off their children will need to pay the vehicle entrance fee to Forest Park for ECOS. Vehicle entrance fee is \$3.00 per day for in-state vehicles OR purchase a Park season pass for \$13.00 for Springfield residents at the Information Center located in the front of Forest Park. *There are no exceptions to this vehicle entrance fee policy.*



### **Parent/Guardian Contact Information**

Parents/guardians **must provide working phone numbers** for themselves and emergency contacts which include cell phone numbers. The numbers provided must be for someone who is **18 years of age or older** and can be reached **immediately** in the event of an emergency or to pick the child up from the program.

Parents/guardians **must also provide working phone numbers** for the authorized pick-up agent listed on the registration form. These individuals will be contacted in the event the child is not picked up during the designated dismissal time. Failure to provide working phone numbers could result in the child's removal from the program.

If you need to update any information (*pickup information, phone numbers, etc.*) for your child/ren, please log in to your account to make these changes. See Page #3.

### **Swimming - if applicable**

Due to funding, swimming may or may not be available to campers. A water activity schedule is available at the site (the schedule is subject to change). **One-piece bathing suits and nylon/mesh shorts are the only acceptable swimwear for girls and boys. Female participants are only permitted to wear a one-piece, non-revealing bathing suit with no cutouts.** Only white-colored cotton material, such as a t-shirt, is permitted in the pool. Nylon swim shirts are permitted.

If swimming is available children who choose to participate in swimming will be required to complete a swim test with the lifeguard on duty on the first day of swimming. Participants will only be allowed to swim in designated areas as assigned by the lifeguard as a result of their swim test. If a child does not wish to participate in swimming, alternative activities will be provided.

Coast Guard Certified Life Vests are available at all swimming locations in various sizes. Parents/guardians can note on the registration form that their child requires a life vest and **one will be provided to them. Life vests brought from home must be Coast Guard Certified and must fit properly.**

### **Rainy Day Policy – CAMP STAR ONLY**

Camp is held rain or shine. If rain is expected, we may relocate to the Cyr Arena inside Forest Park. The Camp Director will make this decision and will have it announced on the answering machine at 413-313-5457 or 413-787-6434.

Please note entrance through 200 Trafton Road is free of charge during drop-off and pick-up times. **Entrance through the main gate on Sumner Avenue will require a vehicle fee.**

### **Program Cancellations**

In the event of an emergency, program cancellations will be posted on the Recreation Division's office phone at 787-6434. In addition, cancellations and other important announcements will be posted on the Springfield Parks and Receptions Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/City-of-Springfield-Parks-Recreation-Afterschool-Program](http://www.facebook.com/City-of-Springfield-Parks-Recreation-Afterschool-Program)

All of our programs include a variety of activities that occur outdoors in various weather conditions. **If a parent/guardian thinks it is too hot on a particular day to send their child to the program, please contact the site to notify them the child will not be attending that day due to the weather.** This will count as an excused absence and will not be penalized.

### **Project-Based Learning (PBL)**

The Summer Programs offer fun-filled, challenging, hands-on, project-based enrichment. The staff follows a specific PBL curriculum that is based on the interests and abilities of the children in the group. Children are



engaged in active and inquiry-based learning through hands-on identification and response to a question. In all, our program's literacy is an important focus area.

Other activities offered during the summer program include team building, games, athletics, swimming, arts, social-emotional skill building, and literacy.

### **Summer Reading**

Reading is an important component of our Summer Program. Each day, participants will have approximately 20 minutes of reading time. We have a variety of books offered at each site for children of all reading levels. Children are also encouraged to bring books from home. If children do not wish to participate in reading, they will be asked to sit quietly for 20 minutes, so they do not disrupt others who are reading or will have the option to write in a journal during this time.

Additional reading opportunities will also be provided including read-a-loud, group reading, readers theaters, and other literacy activities.

The Springfield Parks and Recreation Summer Programs are a partner of the Springfield Reads to Build a Better World Summer Reading Initiative.

### **Food Service Safety**

The Parks and Recreation Summer Program is committed to ensuring that all participants get a nutritious breakfast and lunch daily. We have partnered with Sodexo to provide breakfast and lunch each day at no cost to participants. The food service staff can make some modifications based on your child's needs as completed during the registration; for example, if they cannot have tuna fish due to an allergy, then on the day tuna is served an alternate lunch will be provided for the child.

### ***Exceptions:***

Children may be permitted to bring food from home if they have food allergies or special dietary needs (*must be noted on the registration form*). If a child requires dietary modifications, the parent/guardian must complete an additional form during registration noting their dietary needs. The Summer Program is not able to provide food storage for meals brought from home. Meals brought from home must meet the program standards of being a healthy and nutritious meal. Meals brought from home must follow all program guidelines and be kept in the child's backpack.

**No peanuts, nuts, or nut products. No exceptions. Some participants have life-threatening allergies.**

### **Parent Suggestions**

Your questions, suggestions, and concerns are important to the success of the Summer Programs. If your child enjoyed a particular event or activity or you appreciate something special at the program, please email or call the staff. Parents/guardians should also notify the staff of any questions or concerns they have. They can notify staff in person at the site or by calling the site.

We appreciate your suggestions and feedback and look forward to working collaboratively to make this a positive experience for your child.

### **Positive Youth Development**

The Parks and Recreation Summer Program Positive Youth Development plan is set in place to provide all participants with a positive experience. In order to ensure the quality of this program and the safety of participants and staff, **we expect all participants** to adhere to and follow all program rules and norms. The Positive Youth Development system is in place to protect each participant's freedom to learn and have fun as a valued member of our Summer Program.

Please note we are a separate entity from Springfield Public Schools and do not have access to any medical or behavioral records. Parents/guardians should share any information that will help provide programming for your child. This includes strategies for behavior management and redirection for the child. While we are not staffed or equipped to provide one-on-one programming and behavior management, we will make every attempt to work with the parent and the child, within our program limits, to address and redirect unacceptable behavior.

Parents/guardians should also inform the staff if their child is having difficulty at the program. If the child is not following the norms, rules, or limits established for the program, the staff needs your input.

At each site, children will participate in the creation of site norms, rules, and limits, which will be clearly explained to the children frequently so that they understand them and feel secure that the adults care enough about their safety to enforce them. Appropriate methods of behavior management will be used in dealing with unacceptable behavior.

The following procedures will be implemented when children misbehave or do not follow program rules and limits. The summer program staff reserves the right to bypass one or more steps in the process if a situation warrants. The Positive Youth Development Strategies list also highlights ways in which positive behaviors will be acknowledged.

### **Positive Youth Development Strategies**

- Positive Behavior Intervention and Support reward system
- Shout-outs given by staff members or peers to recognize a participant's good behavior
- Gentle reminders, re-direction, and offered acceptable choices.
- Time away from the situation with a staff member to discuss what unacceptable behavior was demonstrated and identify alternate appropriate behaviors.
- "Think Sheet" to help the child reflect on their behavior and the consequences of their actions.
- After repeated reminders and discussions with a staff member the child will lose privilege in the program. The occurrence will be documented and requires a signature acknowledging notification from the parent/guardian.
- Repeated defiance of rules and behavior that threatens the physical and/or emotional safety of the child, other children, or staff (i.e., hitting, biting, kicking, throwing objects, or pushing) will result in **suspension (typically 1-4 days) or termination from the program**. The occurrence will be documented and requires a signature acknowledging notification from the parent/guardian.
- **Extremely violent/threatening behavior, housing a weapon, a child being seriously injured, or property being damaged will result in immediate termination** from the program. The occurrence will be documented and requires a signature acknowledging notification from the parent/guardian.

At no time will a behavior incident be dealt with in a demoralizing, humiliating, abusive manner. No child will be subject to neglect, cruel, unusual, severe, or corporal punishment including verbal abuse, ridicule, humiliation, or denial of food. **No staff member will be subject to verbal or physical abuse by a child enrolled in the program. This includes foul language.**

### **Bullying Policy**

The Summer Program does not tolerate bullying of any kind between participants and/or staff. Many of our participants attend the Summer Program to help build their social skills and friendships. However, this community building is to be conducted in a positive way and will not include taunts, threats, or physical violence of any kind.

### **Reporting Requirements**

In order to offer the Parks and Recreation, we have to meet state, and federal grant reporting requirements, including a Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes (SAYO) of students by their teachers and program staff. These assessments will not become part of your child's school record; they will be considered privileged and confidential information. They will be used to help individualize the summer program to better meet the needs of individual children and to evaluate the program's effectiveness.

### **Mandated Reporter**

All staff are mandated reporters as determined by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We are legally bound to report any incidents in which we have reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect of any child under the age of 18.

We have zero tolerance for abuse and neglect. If a camper comes to camp with apparent signs of neglect or abuse (soiled clothing, multiple cuts, bruises, bumps, etc.), the camp director will immediately investigate by contacting the parents to report and gather more information. Then the City's Law Department will be contacted with any suspected abuse cases, and it will continue through the chain of command. The camp shall cooperate in all official investigations of abuse and neglect.

### **Program Staff**

All staff members are employed by the City of Springfield DPBRM and are subject to successful CORI/SORI background checks before beginning employment.

### **Program Description**

Spend your summer exploring a variety of enrichment activities such as basketball, soccer, lacrosse, tennis, swimming, and yoga just to name a few! The fun continues off the field where participants will focus on qualities of an athlete like teamwork, sportsmanship, leadership, scholarship, and goal setting.

Health, wellness, and nutrition are also a focus. Participants will learn about healthy meals to fuel the mind and body. They will also learn about habitats, ecosystems, plants, animals, insects, and microorganisms through hands-on projects.

Enjoy a summer of adventure and exploration including nature walks and much more!

# Meningococcal Disease and Camp Attendees: Commonly Asked Questions

## ***What is meningococcal disease?***

Meningococcal disease is caused by infection with bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. These bacteria can infect the tissue (the “meninges”) that surrounds the brain and spinal cord and cause meningitis, or they may infect the blood or other organs of the body. Symptoms of meningococcal disease may appear suddenly. Fever, severe and constant headaches, stiff neck or neck pain, nausea and vomiting, and rash can all be signs of meningococcal disease. Changes in behavior such as confusion, sleepiness, and trouble waking up can also be important symptoms. In the US, about 350-550 people get meningococcal disease yearly, and 10-15% die despite receiving antibiotic treatment. Of those who survive, about 10-20% may lose limbs, become hard of hearing or deaf, have problems with their nervous system, including long-term neurologic problems, or have seizures or strokes. Less common presentations include pneumonia and arthritis.

## ***How is meningococcal disease spread?***

These bacteria are passed from person-to-person through saliva (spit). You must be in close contact with an infected person’s saliva for the bacteria to spread. Close contact includes activities such as kissing, sharing water bottles, sharing eating/drinking utensils or sharing cigarettes with someone who is infected; or being within 3-6 feet of someone who is infected and is coughing and sneezing.

## ***Who is most at risk for getting meningococcal disease?***

People who travel to certain parts of the world where the disease is very common, microbiologists, people with HIV infection, and those exposed to meningococcal disease during an outbreak are at risk for meningococcal disease. Children and adults with damaged or removed spleens or persistent complement component deficiency (an inherited immune disorder) are at risk. Adolescents and people who live in certain settings such as college freshmen living in dormitories and military recruits are at greater risk of disease from some of the serotypes.

## ***Are camp attendees at increased risk for meningococcal disease?***

Children attending day or residential camps are **not** considered to be at an increased risk for meningococcal disease because of their participation.

## ***Is there a vaccine against meningococcal disease?***

Yes, there are 2 different meningococcal vaccines. Quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine (Menveo and MenQuadfi) protects against 4 serotypes (A, C, W, and Y) of meningococcal disease. Meningococcal serogroup B vaccine (Bexsero and Trumenba) protects against serogroup B meningococcal disease, for age 10 and older.

## ***Should my child or adolescent receive the meningococcal vaccine?***

Different meningococcal vaccines are recommended for a range of age and risk groups. Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY) is routinely recommended at age 11-12 years with a booster at age 16 and is required for school entry for grades 7 and 11. In addition, these vaccines may be recommended for additional children with certain high-risk health conditions, such as those described above.

Meningococcal serogroup B vaccine (Bexsero and Trumenba) is recommended for people with certain relatively rare high-risk health conditions (examples: persons with a damaged spleen or whose spleen has been removed, those with persistent complement component deficiency (an inherited disorder), and people who may have been exposed during an outbreak). Adolescents and young adults (16 through 23 years of age) who do not have high-risk conditions may be vaccinated with a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine, preferably at 16 through 18 years of age, to provide short-term protection for most strains of serogroup B meningococcal disease. Parents of adolescents and children who are at higher risk of infection, because of certain medical conditions or other circumstances, should discuss vaccination with their child’s healthcare provider.

## ***How can I protect my child or adolescent from getting meningococcal disease?***

The best protection against meningococcal disease and many other infectious diseases is thorough and frequent handwashing, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette. Individuals should:

1. wash their hands often, especially after using the toilet and before eating or preparing food (hands should be washed with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand gel or rub may be used if hands are not visibly dirty);
2. cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and discard the tissue in a trash can; or if they don’t have a tissue, cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve.
3. not share food, drinks, or eating utensils with other people, especially if they are ill.
4. contact their healthcare provider immediately if they have symptoms of meningococcal disease.

If your child is exposed to someone with meningococcal disease, antibiotics may be recommended to keep your child from getting sick.

You can obtain more information about meningococcal disease or vaccination from your healthcare provider, your local Board of Health (listed in the phone book under government), or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Divisions of Epidemiology and Immunization at (617) 983-6800 or on the MDPH website at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/school-immunizations>.

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