



Summer Camp 2024 FAQs

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A. REGISTRATION, RATES & FEES

1. What are your rates?

We no longer have registration fees. Camps regular rates are \$100 per slot. For example, if you signed your child up for two camps, at the regular rate that would be \$200 total.

2. How long is each camp?

Each camp runs five consecutive weekdays, Monday through Friday. Morning camps run from 9 am - 12 pm, then we take an hour break (during which time children are in the care of staff), and then afternoon camps are from 1 - 4 pm. Children may take up to two camps per day. That would mean they are at camp from 9 am – 4 pm.

3. How do I know my child is registered?

Upon registration via the Internet you should get an automated email confirming your online purchase. Once you have made your payment, and filled in, signed & turned in the registration pdf, your child's registration is complete. If you are paying by mail, we will ask that you mail in your child's registration form with your payment. Before camps begin, you will receive an orientation letter, including all information and details about the camp, drop-off, pick-up, etc.

4. Once my child's registration is complete, including payment, when (and what) should I expect to hear from the IFCI next?

If necessary, we will send out an email informing you of

any updates, important announcements, or concerns; however, expect to hear from us around a week before the start of camp, when we will send you an orientation letter outlining any special things you need to know about the camps for that session.

5. Do I need to turn in a hard copy of the registration and medical release forms?

(Only applicable to in-person camps) Yes, PLEASE bring a completed hard copy of the 2 page registration form with you on the first day of camp. We must have this form in order for your child to attend the camp! They can be downloaded from the website . Please be sure to sign and date these forms with all the information filled in, including the medical release, liability release, video/photography release, and field trip release portions.

6. What happens if I don't bring completed registration and medical forms with me on the first day of camp?

(Only applicable to in-person camps) We need completed, signed, and dated copies of these forms in order for your child to participate, so if you do not have them with you on the first day of camp, PLEASE be prepared to fill them out at the IFCI upon you and your child's arrival on his or her first day of camp.

7. Can I use the same registration form for more than one child enrolled in summer camp?

(Only applicable to in-person camps) No, each child needs to have their own registration and release form. Children attending multiple camps may use the same form for all sessions, but parents of campers from last year need to fill out the new 2024 IFCI Summer Camp Registration form.

8. Are you only taking registrations through the Internet this year?

We prefer to conduct as many registrations online through our website as possible, but we can also register through mail or in person, if you so desire. Please go to our registration page to download the form for in-person camp registration.

Mailing address: IFCI, Summer Camps 2024, 5006 Penn Ave, Pittsburgh, Pa 15224. Or email Sheila Ali, IFCI Director sheiladali@irmafreeman.org

9. If I am planning on applying for a financial aid scholarship for my child (or children), should I still go ahead and register online?

Yes, if you are applying for a scholarship, you still need to fill in the registration form. After we have a chance to review your scholarship application form, we will inform you as to whether or not we can grant the full scholarship award. We request that you do not apply for more than 2 camp scholarships (equal to one full week of camp) per child,

as there are 2 camps per day: one for each time slot). If your child is awarded a scholarship, we will also inform you of the scholarship amount and provide email approval from the IF Center Director, Ms. Ali. At that time we will ask you to pay your copay to hold your child's spot, and will provide any special instructions.

10. I noticed a camp on the flier that is not listed online, or vice versa. Which is correct?

It's possible that changes could be made to the schedule after the fliers are printed, so you should look online for the most up to date information. (Remember, however, that you *will be informed directly* if we need to change or cancel a camp that your child is already registered for. See information on camp cancellations.)

B. SESSION HOURS, DATES, & CONTACT INFORMATION

1. What are the dates of your 2024 Summer Camps?

- 1) July 8 - 12 (Monday - Friday)
- 2) July 15 - July 19 (Monday - Friday)
- 3) July 22 -26 (Monday - Friday)
- 4)July 29 - August 2 (Monday - Friday)
- 5) August 5 - 9 (Monday - Friday)

2. What hours are your camps?

There 2 camps available per session for children ages 6 - 13 years.

Camps are each 3 hours long. Please see the daily schedule below for more details:

8:45-9:00 AM **Morning Sign-In**

9:00-12 PM **CAMP 1**

12 PM **CAMP 1 PICK UP**

12:00-1:00 PM **Lunch (in the care of IFC staff)**

12:45 - 1 PM **Afternoon sign-in**

1:00-4:00 PM **CAMP 2**

4:00 PM **CAMP 2 PICK UP**

3. How early can I bring my child to camp?

You may bring your child up to 15 minutes prior to camp start time.

4. What if I'm late picking up my child?

Except Fridays (when we may invite parents and families to special events), we expect you to pick up your child at the end of the camp(s) in which they are enrolled. The final camp ends at 4:00 pm each day. At that time, your child will be ready and waiting for

you at the front gallery or near the back door entrance, depending on your designated pick up. We understand that something unforeseen may happen that makes it impossible for you to pick up your child on time on a given day. If you are going to be late you should call us immediately at **412-924-0634**. If you are more than 15 minutes late picking up your child more than once, there will be a \$10 fee for each subsequent time you are late (after the first), which will be due by the following morning. This fee may increase \$10 every fifteen minutes, depending on the situation. Please be courteous and pick up your children on time, as we all have places to go and families that need us to be on time.

5. Can my child stay for lunch/break time following camps that end at 12 PM, even if they are not enrolled in the next camp (starting at 1 PM)?

Yes we have no objection to having your child dine with us! However, you would need to make these arrangements with us at the beginning of the day, and they would need to be picked-up no later than 12:45 PM, so that they do not cause transition difficulties for the incoming campers and the start of the next camp on the schedule. Also, be sure to pack them their own lunch, snack and water bottle labeled with your child's name.

6. Who do I contact if I need to speak with my child?

Our office number is **412-924-0634**. Someone will be in the building at all times throughout the day while camps are in session. If the campers are out for a walk, or at another location that day, we will be able to contact the teacher using his or her cell phone, if necessary.

7. Who do I contact if I have further questions?

Please contact our Director, Sheila Ali, via email (sheiladali@irmafreeman.org). If your concern is urgent and you do not hear back quickly enough, please call our office and leave a message at 412-924-0634 if no one answers. When Ms. Ali is out of the building, or unavailable, our Assistant Director or one of our other staff members should be able to help you.

C. CAMP PROGRAMMING

1. Have you made any changes this year?

We now are back to in-person camps. We are also proud to say that we are an official partner of Pittsburgh Public Schools, which will increase our outreach to children in the Pittsburgh area. We look forward to having some of the same wonderful camps and teachers from last year, but with some great changes. These include adding great new

teachers, and new camps and collaboratives. Look on our website for more information about new teachers and camps. We also now provide special services that cater to the specific needs of parents and teachers, where groups of four or more children can create their own workshops, special events, parties, tours, etc.

2. How are children grouped by age?

Children will be grouped 6 – 8 or 9 years old and 8 or 9 – 13 years old, which run from 9:00 am – 4 PM, unless otherwise noted, such as Acro Yoga and Capoeira, which will be grouped 6 – 13 years old. If you are concerned that your child will not be around other kids his or her own age, we *suggest* signing up with a friend. We are a small organization and we cannot guarantee or refund your money depending on what ages will predominate a camp. You may also write to the director to check on enrollment. In some camps, certain tasks may only be available to the older children, which are deemed age appropriate. If your child is in the older group, they may be given the opportunity to mentor or help younger children with challenging tasks. This would be at the discretion of the teacher, and the interests and capabilities of the individuals concerned, as well as the age appropriateness of the activity or task.

3. How does your schedule work with regard to off-site programming?

Mostly, we will also be going to Friendship Park (a few minutes walk) on some days and for regular walks, depending on the camp. Some specific camps have regular off-site programming. Some examples are Bike Adventure, Acro Yoga, Slacklining, and Juggling. Bike Adventure and Intro to skateboarding takes place in our workshop but includes outside guided bike/skate rides through the neighborhood.

4. What happens to my child in between camps?

Children staying for more than one camp will be eating lunch from 12:00 - 1:00 PM and will be under the supervision of the camp staff. Parents concerned that the camps are too long, remember all kids have to eat and take a break. Moreover, should you arrive at the interim times, be aware that kids will be in a less structured environment, which is designed for eating, getting to know each other, playing games and having free time. We also encourage kids to practice social distance and use masks whenever appropriate. Kids wearing masks will be allowed “mask breaks” individually. However, all campers, parents and teachers, should be prepared for camps to start and end promptly. If you find this is not the case, please feel free to voice your concerns to the Administrative staff, or on one of our surveys provided at the end of every camp, as we at the IFCI Summer Camps utilize your feedback in order to improve and enhance our programming.

5. Why do you have collaborators?

Collaborations allow us to offer the community extraordinary programming from a variety of local organizations and institutions at a fraction of their usual cost to your family. We are often able to bring these organizations to our venue for your convenience, but in other cases we are able to take our campers to their unique facilities, such as the Pittsburgh Glass Center. Sometimes our artists' staff may do off-site programming such as at the Carnegie Museum, or the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, for a special event. For example, every year our director, Sheila, was invited by the Maker Faire to do special activities for several years. Whether here or there, we find the IFCI and our partners both are able to expand our offerings through collaboration, rather than competition, to broaden our reach within the community and around the world! Ask about our Make & take workshops, field trips and other possibilities of collaborating with your school or organization.

6. Who are your collaborators?

Look on our website for this year's list of IFCI collaborators. Also check out our *past collaborators and partnerships* webpage. We have participated in over fifty collaborations with all sorts of places—everywhere from the Carnegie Library to the Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse. This year the IFCI is partnering with the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Carlow University, Point Park University, the Waldorf School, Radio Skate Shop, Bantha Tea Bar, ASSEMBLE, and Kraynick's Bike Shop!

7. How do you handle classroom management and discipline?

We are happy to say we have had few disciplinary problems in the past, probably because children are so engaged, and really want to be involved in our activities, and also **we maintain a 6-to-1 student to teacher ratio or better**. All of our teachers and both supervisors have degrees in teaching and/or extensive training and experience in classroom management. This is summer camp and we want all children to have fun, but we need order and cannot tolerate disruptive misconduct or dangerous behavior. We follow the three Rs: "Respect for yourself, Respect for others and Responsibility for all" (the Dali Lama). We will also go over camp guidelines, basic rules, and expectations will be explained to the children on the first day of camp. In addition, as a gallery, we also have specific rules about how to conduct yourself in a gallery, where you are surrounded by art. ***No verbal or physical aggression, or destruction of property, will be tolerated.*** This kind of behavior will be evaluated on a **case-by-case basis**, and may have consequences ranging from a time-out, missing a day of camp to dismissal without compensation. We count on the support of parents to help avoid any disciplinary problems by talking to your child about our rules and appropriate and inappropriate behavior. In most cases, we allow a child time to reflect, to talk to the

director, or call home to talk to a parent. **For this reason, we ask that you do not force your child to do a camp, but let them participate in choosing one that sounds fun to them, so they can join us of their own free will.** This is the best remedy to avoid disciplinary problems, and, moreover, rather than incurring resistance from your child, instead, he or she will be able to experience the joy and enthusiasm that most kids feel when attending our summer camps.

D. LOGISTICS & PRACTICAL INFORMATION

1. Where are you located?

We are located at 5006 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh 15224, between South Winebiddle and South Gross.

2. Where do I pick up or drop off my child?

We will have camp counselors both in the front of the building (on Penn Ave.) and sometimes at the back of the building (on Comrie Way, between South Gross and South Winebiddle, where parents might be able to pull into our parking lot.) However, we ask that when checking your child in or out that you walk into the front gallery, as there will be only one sign-in/sign-out sheet (in order for us to keep careful track of who has arrived and who has left throughout the day). When picking up your child, depending on the number of kids in the camp, you may be able to park temporarily in our back lot. There is also street parking right on Penn Avenue in front of our building. **Do not leave the building without checking with a staff member** to let them know you have signed your child (or children) in or out, and are dropping them off or picking them up. This is of paramount importance in order to avoid any safety issues, or unanswered questions or concerns for the day.

Again, we will be meeting all parents and campers at the main entrance in the front gallery (Penn Ave side). Please be sure to let us know at the beginning of the day if you have any special instructions, like early pick or if you are having another person pick up your child, and be sure to write these instructions on the sign-in sheet so that we can avoid any confusion. All students must be signed in and out of camp.

3. Who is responsible for signing my children in and out of the camp?

YOU must sign your children in and out of the camp on the daily attendance sheet, marking the time with your initials, unless you choose to have another (authorized) person to do so. Anyone other than you must have a photo ID and be named by you (on the registration form) as an authorized person to pick up your children.

4. Who will make sure my kids get to their camps?

All children will be assigned to a camp counselor responsible for their whereabouts for each camp, and may be assigned a different counselor for lunch and snack. If the camp counselor is not available, your child's teacher or one of the supervisors will make sure your child is accounted for and goes where he or she has to go throughout the day and upon arrival and dismissal.

5. Do you provide snacks or juice?

Children are expected to bring their own masks, snacks, juice and water bottles. Please mark your child's name on their lunch and belongings, such as a jacket, backpack, etc.

6. What should I pack for my child's bag?

Please be sure to include anything your child needs for his or her safety, such as an Epi-Pen, but **make sure you inform us of any medications needed**. Please also **pack sunscreen** for when we go outdoors. If your child cannot be in the sun, please inform us of this, and provide a hat and long sleeves to prevent sun exposure, as we plan to take daily walks. Also, please inform us if he or she has any medical condition we need to know about. For specific camps (like Bike Adventure and Into to Skateboarding) there may be requirements like a helmet, knee pads and elbow pads. If you are unable to provide such things please let us know as soon as possible so that we may obtain them for you. (See the *Medical Release form*)

7. Can my child bring electronics to camp?

Unless we specifically ask your child to bring electronics (e.g., for a special activity), we ask that your child leave all electronics at home. If they bring a device such as a phone, they will need to ask permission to use it, and otherwise keep it in their backpack. We CANNOT be responsible for lost or stolen devices, and would like to avoid the possibility of any such occurrence by keeping them out of sight, or at home. We appreciate your support in this matter.

8. What happens if my child is sick or has a contagious condition?

As the Covid 19 Pandemic unfolds, there are updated standards for health and safety that we must follow to open our in-person camps. Safety measures include: an emphasis on sanitation and hand washing, postponing high-contact camps, and **campers staying at home if not feeling well**. These policies align with CDC guidelines, and have been put in place to help IFCI stay committed to keeping a safe and healthy space for your children this summer. We will keep parents informed on any developments.

Important Notice: We will be requiring children who have any contagious conditions to have a doctor's note to re-enter camp. Missed days will not be reimbursed. You will be expected to pick up your child immediately if they are ill during camp.

E. POLICIES & CANCELLATIONS

1. What if I want to cancel a camp that I have registered my child for?

For reimbursement or cancellations, we need to receive notification via email or mail at least one (1) week prior to camp start day; otherwise, we cannot reimburse you.

2. When will I know if you cancel a camp? Do I get a full refund?

If we need to cancel a camp in which your child is enrolled, we will notify you at least one (1) week prior to the first day of camp, and give you a full reimbursement, or a chance to reschedule, if you'd prefer.

3. What happens if the camp my child would like to attend is full?

We will do our best to accommodate you in such a situation. What we can do is put your child on a waiting list. If enough children sign up for the waiting list, two different things could happen, depending on the particular camp, teacher availability, and so on:

1. We may be able to add a teacher to expand the number of kids we take into the camp.
2. If we cannot get your child into the same camp, we may be able to at least add a different camp during the same dates and times that you preferred.

4. When will I know if my child is able to get into a camp that has a waiting list?

We will inform you as soon as possible by telephone, and via email to give you the opportunity to register via the Internet once we have contacted you. If you do not register within the given amount of time, you may lose your child's spot on the waiting list.

F. CORPORATE STATUS, INTERNSHIPS, VOLUNTEERING & OUTREACH

1. Is your organization a non-profit?

Yes and no. We earn no revenue for most of our activities, including Summer Camps, as we try to pay our staff a decent wage, far above what most camps pay. In a way we are a *not-for-profit*, rather than a non-profit. We have a fiscal sponsor for any grants received

and on as needed basis (which is currently the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation), but mostly we are funded privately.

2. How can I exhibit, play music or create my own class or event at the IFCI?

For information on exhibitions or playing music on a First Friday, email Director, Sheila Ali (sheiladali@irmafreeman.org). For all other inquiries involving rentals, monetary donations, or other events contact Office Manager, Jack Ball (jackball@irmafreeman.org) For art materials and similar donations, contact our director, Sheila.

3. Can I intern at the Irma Freeman Center for Imagination?

We are sometimes able to arrange internships, yes. We may even be able to set up credit with your college (such as through Chatham University or Edinboro University), or just give you lots of great job experience. We have a variety of skilled tasks or on-the-job-training for interns. For more information or to make an inquiry about an internship please email Sheila Ai at <sheiladali@irmafreeman.org>. If you are in high school and need community service hours, this is a great place to earn those hours doing awesome and exciting work in our summer camp program, in our gallery and/or community center. We also do creative work off-site, whether it's in a classroom, museum or festival setting.

4. Can I volunteer at IFCI?

There are a variety of opportunities to volunteer at IFCI depending on what skills you possess. If you are interested in working with children, you would first need to get standard Act 33 and 34 Pennsylvania Clearances, and Covid 19 vaccination. Please contact the director ahead of time about your special interests or talents so that we may best utilize your skills!

5. How can I spread the word about your Summer Camps?

We greatly appreciate your support! Word of mouth is the best form of advertisement. Please let your friends and colleagues know about us. We need you to help spread the word about our exciting camps so that we can continue to offer high quality programming to the Pittsburgh community at affordable rates! We will also be distributing fliers and summer camp emails. If you would like to help with distribution please call us or talk to us on site. We thrive on community networking! We are much obliged for any assistance you can give us in reaching out to special groups or even interesting places you might go to that would help us reach potential campers!

6. How else can I support the IF Center Summer Camps?

You can make a contribution to help support our camps and keep them affordable, and

also allow us to offer financial aid. If you are interested in making a large tax-deductible donation, please email our director directly

7. How can I express my concerns, offer suggestions, or just make a testimonial?

At the end of every camp we will offer you the chance to take a personal survey. We may also have surveys at the center for you and your child to fill out together. Your feedback is very important and instrumental to giving you the best service we can! Also, feel free to speak to our camp staff, email us or call us by phone whenever you feel you are concerned about a situation that needs attention, or even if you just want to share something with us! We want to get to know our summer camper parents and IFCI patrons, and welcome your feedback!

8. How can I arrange for a group to tour the IFCI gallery or rent your space?

For educational on and off-site make and take workshops, artist residencies, and tours, email Sheila Ali, Director sheiladali@irmafreeman.org. For rentals (including birthday parties, special events or receptions) contact Jack Ball jackball@irmafreeman.org.

G. ONLINE SUMMER CAMPS

1. When will online summer camps be running?

Our virtual summer camps are currently suspended. Inquire with the director if you are interested in online classes, for adults as well as children.

2. On what platform will virtual camps be held?

Camps will be held via Zoom.

3. How do I ensure my child gets the best online experience?

Depending on the camp, we may provide art packets to enhance your child's camp participation. Inquire with the director to see if your child's camp requires a packet, to be picked up at Bantha Tea Bar. Also be sure that your child has good internet connection, visibility, and sound controls. If you have any other questions about online camps, feel free to ask the teachers or the director.