

Program and Activity Definitions

The mission of the Melwood Recreation Center is to ensure that every participant receives a quality individualized recreational experience, which provides supports for success in the least restrictive environment possible. Participants' growth and development should be documented and evaluated. Activities should be planned with clear objectives, benchmarks, and measurable outcomes. All activities should be inclusive for individuals with varying abilities, allowing each individual to feel cognitively, emotionally, and physically included.

The Melwood Recreation Center is proud to offer the following Program Areas: Aquatics; Sports, Challenge, and Adventure; Visual and Creative Arts; Nature Exploration; and the Equestrian Program. Each Program Area, and its corresponding activities are described below.

Aquatics - The Aquatics program includes swimming and canoeing. Aquatics provides participants a balance of fun, physical movement, and growth and challenge.

Swimming - Participants have the opportunity to swim in our zero-entry pool in warm weather (April through October) conditions. Participants in residential and overnight Kamp A-Kom-Plish have the opportunity to swim at least once a day. At least one lifeguard is present and on-duty at all times. Equipment (which can be used recreationally or adaptively) includes pool noodles, inner tubes, life vests, snorkels, goggles, balls, a water polo net, floating goal posts, a poolside basketball net, and water squirters. During their time at the pool, participants can be involved in free swim, pool games, swimming challenges, etc.

Canoeing- We are lucky to have access to an onsite pond at the Melwood Recreation Center. Its size, accessibility, and proximity to the main road of camp make it an excellent area of beginner canoe enthusiasts. The pond is home to several species of fish and wildlife, and provides a tranquil area for participants of all ages. The canoe can also be used for challenges and team-building exercises.

Sports, Challenge, and Adventure - Since the mission of the Melwood Recreation Center places such a large focus on skill development and individual growth, we are please to have a climbing wall, High and Low

Ropers Course, archery range, volleyball net, basketball court, and abundant sports fields. These areas can all be set-up for team-building exercises, skill development drills and games, and team sports. Facilitators for archery, ropes course, and the climbing wall must be trained according to ACA and Melwood Recreation Center standards.

Challenge Wall and Ropes Course- The Challenge Wall and Ropes Courses require strategic activity planning and accommodation to become accessible for participants of varying ability levels. The Wall and Ropes Courses can be done as a stand-alone individualized activity, or as part of a larger team-building exercise.

Archery - Archery, at the Recreation Center, is an activity that allows for easy and quick adjustments to adapt to participants' varying ability levels, and skill development. By adjusting target height and placement, trained instructors can facilitate an activity that is skill-appropriate for a group of varied participants, and continuously adjust that skill to increase difficulty from the beginning to the end of the lesson. Along with learning the basic shooting skills, the overall nature of archery provides participants with lessons of safety, responsibility, patience, and focus.

Field Games - There is lots of wide open space at the Recreation Center for Field games including soccer, football, baseball, Frisbee Golf, tetherball, and basketball. Participants of all ages and ability levels can engage in large and small team sports that encourage skill development, teamwork, strategic planning, coordination, and physical exercise. Recreation Center staff is specifically trained to facilitate sports games that balance competitiveness, equal participation, and skill development for all participants.

Water Games- Water games provide participants all the benefits of the Field Games listed above, with the additional benefit of staying cool during summer months! Water squirters, water balloon tosses, sprinkler activities, and puddle jumps are all included as Water Game activities. Like any other activity at the Recreation Center, these games can be modified to provide a great experience to participants of all ages and ability levels.

Visual and Creative Arts - The Recreation Center Visual and Creative Arts Program combines activities related to creativity, expression, and performance. These activities include arts and crafts, drama, individual and

small group music and rhythm experiences, cooking, and journalism. Like all other Recreation Center activities, the Visual and Creative Arts Program offers programming that has clear expectations, goals, and plenty of fun. Participants are encouraged to express their creativity through tangible crafts, music, art, and performance. The Recreation Center focuses on tangible crafts that are relevant, reusable, and authentic. Within the Visual and Creative Arts program, staff encourages participants to value experience of completing the activity as well as the finished product.

Arts and Crafts- Specific activities within the Arts and Crafts programs are designed to be appealing to participants of varying ages and abilities. This program provides structure so that participants have the materials, resources, and accommodations needed to feel successful, while also leaving room for participants to show their individuality and personal expression. The Recreation Center focuses on tangible crafts that are relevant, reusable, and authentic.

Drama and Music- From puppet shows in the Activity Center, to songs around the campfire, to skits and talent shows performed in our "Chapel by the Woods", participants involved in Drama and Music are encouraged to share their talents with the community. Songs are a great ice-breaker for newly forming groups, and can be either spontaneous "repeat after me" styles, or more planned out song and dance routines that celebrate multiculturalism, pop culture, and showcase individual and group talents. Puppets shows and short skits give participants the chance to plan, develop, and present a finished product to the camp community. These performances allow participants to enjoy the challenge and rewards of planning and development. Talent shows allow participants to work together or individually, and promote self-esteem, courage, and public speaking skills. Any of these activities can be adapted to meet a variety of ages and ability levels. The Recreation Center is also proud to offer teambuilding activities that focus on rhythm, through the use of basic instruments and/or sounds or motions. We find this activity to be especially beneficial in inclusive environments where some or all participants may be nonverbal.

Cooking - By giving participants the chance to combine basic ingredients and create a finished product, the cooking program at the Melwood Recreation Center allows participants to gain daily life skills, build confidence, become familiar with and practice healthy eating habits, and practice and explore basic math and science skills. Whenever possible, the ingredients are gathered from gardens within the Recreation Center, or purchased from local farms.

Journalism- The Journalism program at the Recreation Center is designed to develop a sense of community, give participants the chance to gain reading and writing skills, and allow participants to become involved in a process that requires planning and structured time management, while resulting in a final finished product. Participants also have the chance to practice and gain experience in word processing skills, and gain comfort working in other Windows programs. Participants that want to improve their verbal and public speaking skills have the opportunity to perform interviews in person or over the phone.

Nature Exploration - The Melwood Recreation Center is proud to offer a Nature Exploration Program that provides participants with activity opportunities related to nature. These include; hiking, gardening, outdoor cooking, outdoor camping, and fishing. Nature Exploration can combine resources from other areas, like Arts and Crafts to become cross-disciplinary and provide participants with a holistic curriculum. During several months in the fall and winter, the Recreation Center provides the facility for the Nanjemoy Creek Environmental Center. Recreation Center staff trains with this great County school outdoor education program, and is proud to offer some of its lessons.

Hiking- Hiking on the trails that cover the Recreation Center's 108 acres provide hikers with the chance to observe natural flora and fauna, historic areas, engage in physical exercise, and develop basic orienteering skills.

Gardening- Participants involved in gardening at the Recreation Center have the opportunity to see fruits of their labor and find ways that gardening can connect to daily life. Participants will have the opportunity to grow fresh herbs to be used in as a part of food services, flowers for decorations, and observe the growth and development of plants. Gardening is a naturally inclusive activity that can be easily and effortlessly adapted to reach participants of varying abilities and ages. Gardening pulls together educational skills including math, science, and history and geography, as well as life skills including patience and record-keeping.

Outdoor Camping/Cooking- Recreation Center staff is excited to be able to support participants who have an interest in exploring a more rustic lifestyle. Pulling in lessons in history and folklore, and survival and culinary skills,

participants will have the opportunity to experience a more rustic and self-sufficient lifestyle, in a safe and comfortable environment.

Fishing- Participants interested in spending more time at the pond can also be engaged in the Recreation Center's fishing program, which teaches participants basic fishing skills (including hooking the bait and casting the line) as well as fish identification and basic anatomy. Participants of all ages will enjoy standing by the pond, observing wildlife, taking in the sounds of the water, and waiting for a good bite! Our pond is known to have turtles, snakes, and striped bass!

Equestrian Program—Participants in the Equestrian Program are provided with a mix of basic equitation and horsemanship skills. When not mounted, participants of all ages and ability levels will have the opportunity to strengthen their understanding of how to care for horses and the importance of safety around these animals. All mounted instruction will be paced to the rider's needs and comfort level. All participants will receive individualized riding instruction from our experienced and certified staff of riding instructors. The Equestrian Program provides a wide range of safe and educational year-round programs including: General Horsemanship Lessons, Therapeutic Riding Lessons, Pony Kindergarten Classes, Inclusive Overnight and Day Camps, Weekend and Retreat Programs, Pony Birthday Parties, and Team-Building opportunities.