



VERMONT

Recreation & Parks Association

SUMMERAMA
2023
Schedule



**BURLINGTON
PARKS
RECREATION
WATERFRONT
VERMONT**

A TRAIL MAP TO OUR FUTURE

Together toward success

For over 40 years, the Vermont Parks & Recreation Association has hosted Summerama, a camp-specific training program for new and seasoned counselors and recreation staff. The purpose of this workshop is to supplement in-house staff orientations with a robust schedule of hands-on education sessions lead by regional camp professionals. Summerama is the first step toward training your staff and initiating a strong team bond that'll pull through the season.

Bring your training to the next level!

The Summerama schedule includes sessions covering a wide variety of camp topics. With a mix of interactive and informational, long and short time blocks, and material suited for all levels of experience. Every member of your staff can customize their training with selections that pique their interest.

Lasting benefits...

Joining Summerama and the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association family will open your team to a vast network of opportunity. Connections with neighboring camps is a great way to share resources and provide a sense of belonging in the greater camp community. Your staff will leave feel empowered and eager to kick off a great season!

Making the most of Summerama

We recommend splitting up to cover the most ground. Debriefing as a team during your regularly-scheduled orientation following the event is the best way to share information and nurture team bonding further. Some sessions will be limited to one or two participants from each organization.

All sessions are open to anyone! If you're not sure where to begin, use this guide to understand the target audience for each workshop. Although content in most of the sessions could be relevant to all, some speakers have geared their discussions toward certain experience levels. The session guide is merely a suggestion, so your team should arrange sessions in a way that best fits their personal and professional goals. Sessions labeled as "TPO" are limited to two attendees per organization.



Entry Level/First Time Counselor



Mid-Level/2-3 Year Counselor



Upper Level/Management

"Summerama is the first step to a great summer."

**ROBERT MILLER
COMMUNITY CENTER**

FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 2023

8:30AM - 4PM

**130 GOSSE COURT
BURLINGTON, VT**



A Message

FROM OUR

Chair

Summer camp is a time for the youth in our communities to experience new opportunities, build confidence in themselves and make new friends along the way. The staff that oversee these programs are such a special and important piece of the overall summer camp experience. Camp counselors and administrators are the glue that hold our summer programs and third spaces together. Summerama is a chance for summer staff to come together and learn from local professionals about inclusionary practices for campers and staff, managing groups of campers, the best of camp crafts and so much more. Each year the conference committee works to ensure a rich and diverse program. This year we have brought "Camp for Counselors" back which is a hands on camp experience to share tips and tricks of the average day camp day from the perspective of the campers we serve in our varied programs. Thank you to the Burlington Recreation department and the Miller Center for sharing their space with us.

-Jazmin Averbuck
Summerama Chair



Camp for Counselors



"Camp for Counselors" is a chance for you, the counselors, to experience program tips and tricks from the viewpoint of the campers you will be working with.

Find your assigned counselor, meet your fellow "campers" and see what camp is all about.



Entry Level/First Time Counselor



Mid-Level/2-3 Year Counselor



Upper Level/Management

Schedule

8:15-8:30 Welcome

9-11:30 **Camp For Counselors**
("Monkey Bars" room)

11:30-12 **Let's Talk About "Camp"**
("Monkey Bars" room)

12-12:45 Lunch & Director's Round Table

1-1:40 Camp Crafts 101 ("Swing Set" room)

1-1:40 Director's Roundtable: Working w/ Families & Caregivers ("Monkey Bars" room)

1-2:30 Strengthening Relationships with Families and your Community ("Sandbox" room)

1-2:30 Youth Voice & Empowerment in Daily Programming ("Twirly Slide" room)

1:50-2:30 Processing Winning and Losing at Camp (Swing Set)

1:50-2:30 Director's Roundtable discussion - Staff Management ("Monkey Bars" room)

2:40-3:20 Deep Dive: A Study Of Water Safety In Vermont ("Twirly Slide" room)

2:40-3:20 Let's Get a Bit Silly ("Monkey Bars" room)

2:40-3:20 "Help I'm new to this!" ("Swing Set" room)

2:40-3:20 Director's Roundtable discussion - New Directors ("Sand Box" room)

3:30-4 Endnote & Ice Cream ("Monkey Bars" room)

Sessions

8:15-8:30

Welcome

9-11:30 Camp for Counselors (all)

Summerama participants (campers) will find their pre-assigned "counselor" to experience a morning of camp as a camper.

9:00 - 9:25

Welcome to Camp

Introductions with our Summerama Committee chair, Jazmin Averbuck (Bubbles)!

9:25 - 9:35

I'm new to Camp

Nature games, ice breakers and songs

9:35 - 10:00

Wheels on the Bus

Making field trips and bussing fun and engaging

10:00 - 10:10

I Don't Wanna!

How to engage campers who may not want to change activities

10:10 - 10:35

Learn to Dance in the Rain

Rainy day activities, indoors and outdoors

10:35 - 10:45

Camouflage

Emergency response drill

10:45 - 11:20

Sunscreen, Camp Buddies, and Your Why

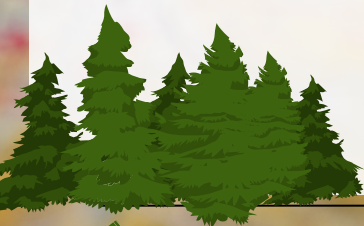
Discussion about health, safety, and leadership at camp

11:20-11:30

From Point 'A' to point 'B'

Lines, Blobs, and everything in between.

*"Summerama
taught me how to
be a good counselor
by making me feel
like a camper."*



Entry Level/First Time Counselor



Mid-Level/2-3 Year Counselor



Upper Level/Management

11:30-12:00

"Camp For Counselors" Debrief



Take what you learned from your "camp for counselors" group and discuss how others perceived the experience and how you can take what you learned and bring it back to your own staff.

12-12:45 Lunch & Director's Round Table

Counselors will have the chance to head outside for pizza and check in with the staff they came to Summerama with.

1-1:40 Education Session 1

Camp Crafts 101

Jazmin Averbuck



Summerama Committee Chair

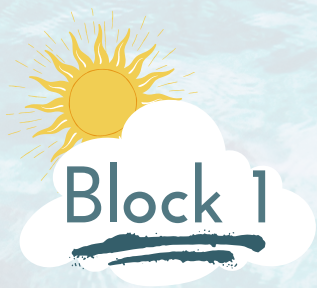
Children love to play outside and explore nature. These hands-on activities and crafts will guide participants on a journey of exploration, education and imagination through our natural environment. Prior to this session participants should go outside and collect nature (rocks, sticks, leaves, flowers, pine needles, etc...) and bring with you to discover new ways to create art in the outdoors.

Director's Roundtable Discussion - working with families & caregivers



*Jordan Cotto - Program Manager -
Alzheimer's Association*

Directors and administrative staff will come together to discuss working together with campers' families and caregivers. The discussion will form around questions you have regarding communicating with various caregivers; parents, grandparents, state staff and other guardians.



Entry Level/First Time Counselor



Mid-Level/2-3 Year Counselor



Upper Level/Management

Strengthening Relationships with Families and Your Community

Katie O'Shea



Vermont Afterschool

In this workshop we will discuss and learn about the importance of relationships with families and the community. We will also explore the benefits of strengthening those connections in order to enhance program quality. Participants will learn strategies on how to communicate with, and support the families of the children in their program. Participants will also leave with strategies on how to use available resources to benefit the program, the families, and the community.

Youth Voice & Empowerment in Daily Programming

Matt Wolfe



Vermont Afterschool - Youth Voice Coordinator

Come learn foundational youth empowerment principles and explore simple frameworks for engaging and utilizing youth voice in every day interactions and programming. Youth are more invested in activities when they have a voice that genuinely influences how that programming progresses. This also helps them build deeper connections with staff resulting in staff having a stronger impact on the lives of these youth. This workshop will give participants simple tools to enhance everyday interactions and foster their youths' engagement in their programs.

"Summerama is an amazing opportunity for learning and professional growth at any level. It sets the tone for an awesome summer and the training was essential for me to become a better camp counselor."

Processing Winning and Losing at Camp

Alex Mihavics



Recreation Program Coordinator - Williston Recreation and Parks

In this session we will answer the question of how to best teach our campers to be good sports. Strategies on dealing with sore winners and losers as well as how to debrief an activity to develop empathy will be covered. This session will include group discussions as well as everyone's favorite...role-playing!

Director's Roundtable Discussion - Staff Management

Todd Goodwin



Williston Recreation and Parks Director

Are you new to upper management at camp or want to discuss management difficulties you've faced in the past? Stop by and discuss your questions and learn from seasoned camp management successes they've had that you may be able to bring back to your staff this summer to ensure an even more engaging staff experience.





Block 3



2:40-3:20 Education Session 3

Deep Dive: A Study of Water Safety in Vermont



Abby Beerman - VT Safe Kids

Jess Lukas - YMCA

Members of the Water Safety Action Plan Committee will review the history of water safety in Vermont, describe results of a survey on current practices and discuss goals and initiatives for state wide improvement for aquatic professionals and the communities they serve.

Help! I'm New To This



Todd Goodwin

Williston Parks & Recreation Director

Are you a new counselor, or are you looking for ways to interact with your campers positively? If so, it starts with being prepared and setting the expectations. In this session, participants will learn the do's and don'ts of working with groups of children and how you can create the most enjoyable summer for you and your campers starting from the very first day.

Let's Get a Bit Silly



Jazmin Averbuck

Summerama Chair - VRPA

Who said you couldn't have fun while learning exciting games and activities to bring back to your program and your campers. Once you join in the fun you better be ready to be a camper favorite on those rainy days or free time programming.

Director's Roundtable Discussion - New Director's



New Director's

Are you new to upper management at camp or want to discuss management difficulties you've faced in the past? Stop by and discuss your questions and learn from seasoned camp management successes they've had that you may be able to bring back to your staff this summer to ensure an even more engaging staff experience.

3:30-4:00 Endnote

"A great place to meet campy people."

We want your feedback! Surveys are the primary tool we use to develop this program each year. Please take a moment to reflect on your day and leave thoughtful ideas and suggestions to help guide our program in 2023. Want to join the Summerama Committee? Contact Jessica Brodie at jessica@VRPA.org or (802) 952-0030.



Entry Level/First Time Counselor



Mid-Level/2-3 Year Counselor



Upper Level/Management

Speakers



Tricia Pawlik

In her role at Vermont Afterschool, Tricia supports professionals on the afterschool professional pathway and quality improvement initiatives. Tricia also co-leads Vermont Afterschool's Leadership Exploration and Development Program (L.E.A.D.) for young professionals looking to earn a micro-credential in leadership, as well as provides training on various topics. Her passion is coaching and mentoring, so you can frequently find her traveling the state to work with staff and programs to support their work on STARS, licensing, program quality assessment (YPOA), and grant administration. Her overarching goal is to support program quality and improvement, collaboration among professionals, and advancement in the afterschool field.



Alex Mihavics

Alex started as Rec. Coordinator with Williston in June of 2023. Prior to that he has worked for 4 years as Assistant Director at Bristol Recreation and has six years of experience working in Outdoor Education and Summer Camps in Southeast Wisconsin as well as the Adirondacks.



Jess Lukas

Matt has worked with youth and young adults in Vermont for over fifteen years - working to inspire & empower their leadership development and advocating for them in the VT system of care. He has been active in promoting young adult leadership & peer support work statewide, as well as, supporting staff to develop a strengths-driven approach to this population that often "straddles" the line between the children's and adult service systems. As Vermont Afterschool's Youth Voice Coordinator, Matt is taking his history with training, youth empowerment and systems building & coordination to a new broader level of work all across Vermont's public and private youth serving sectors.



Todd Goodwin

Todd is currently the Recreation & Parks Director for the Town of Williston. He has 42 years of recreation and camp experience from counselor to director. He has experience directing day camps and working at residential camps. He has been involved in running highly successful day camps for campers spanning ages 3 to 15 since 1991. He also taught Physical Education to Pre-school through 8th grade for 15 years and has coached on the High School level.



Katie O'Shea

LiAs the STEM and Career Awareness coordinator at Vermont Afterschool, Katie supports afterschool programs and other youth-serving organizations in helping young people develop their self-identities and interests through a focus on STEM, work-based learning, financial literacy, and college/career pathways. Her focus is on equity, breaking down barriers to STEM learning experiences, and promoting promising career pathways for all youth.



Jordan Cotto

Jordan joined the Vermont Chapter in October 2021, bringing a strong passion for recruiting, training, and education. Jordan is thrilled to be a member of the Vermont Chapter in the fight to cure Alzheimer's, a cause very near and dear to her heart.



Jazmin Averbuck

Professionally, Jazmin is the Manager of Outdoor Program for the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains where she trains volunteers and camp staff in outdoor skills such as backpacking, trekking, orienteering, campfire cooking, whittling and more. In her very limited down time she trains as a competitive strongman athlete and coordinates lifting events for Vermont Powerlifting.



Speakers

Matt Wolf

Matt has worked with youth and young adults in Vermont for twenty years - working to inspire & empower their leadership development and advocating for them in the VT system of care and Legislature. He has been active in promoting young adult leadership & peer support work statewide, as well as, supporting staff to develop a strengths-driven approach to youth empowerment and youth voice in program design across the state

Abby Beerman

Abby is an epidemiologist by training, and is passionate about reducing the rate of traumatic injuries for all Vermonters. She applies best practices to her own life so she can share her personal experience with the community the UVM Medical Center serves. As coordinator for Safe Kids Vermont, she loves working with community partners to implement injury prevention practices in new and unique ways.



Thank you

SUMMERAMA COMMITTEE

Jazmin Averback - Chair
Alex Mihavics
Kirsten Santor
Kelli Millick
Tricia Pawlik



VERMONT RECREATION & PARKS ASSOCIATION

The Vermont Recreation and Parks Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion, development, and improvement of all recreation and park services within the State of Vermont.

400+ members strong, VRPA is committed to providing education, resources, and networking opportunities to professionals and citizen volunteers to assist with their role as advocates for parks and recreation services.

We pride ourselves on providing personalized service. We strive to continuously update services based on the needs of members and develop strategies to advance our field. Member benefits include:

- Continuing Education
- Networking Opportunities
- Membership Directory
- Weekly Check-in e-newsletter
- Event & Program Discounts
- Professional Assistance
- Access to VRPA Resources
- Legislative Advocacy

Registration

REGISTERING YOUR TEAM ONLINE IS EASY!

*Vermont Recreation and Parks Association -
Summerama Camp Staff Training 2025*

- Log on to VRPA's website using the link above
- Register your organization and participant information
- Pay with card or print an invoice to mail payment later



Before Early Bird Deadline May 12

Members: \$30 per person
(\$25 if 10+ staff register)
Non-Members: \$40
\$30 if 10+ staff register)

After May 12

Members: \$40
Non-Members: \$50

Registration closes June 9th



Red Cross CPR, First Aid & AED courses are available separate from Summerama this year. More details are available on the VRPA website



CONTACT US

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VERMONT
Recreation & Parks Association

