

Frequently Asked Questions

We know it is important for parents to gather all the information they can to make an educated decision in finding the right summer camp for their children. Here are some of our most frequently asked questions from parents just like you.

How many campers per program? Each program can have up to 16 campers enrolled, with the exception of the National Building Museum Sampler and Woodshop for Kids, which are capped at 10 campers each.

What is the camper to counselor ratio? Nine campers to two counselors (8:2). During off camp excursions, we send an additional 2-3 adults with the group depending on age group and the nature of the trip.

Can I sign my child up for a program outside of his/her grade range? We advise against this because our program content is specifically designed for the listed grade-range. We want our campers to have the best experience possible, and one way we do this is by pairing campers with their peers and instructors trained in working with their age group. Younger campers will find the programs for 5th and 6th graders too challenging, and older campers will find the programs for 3rd and 4th graders too basic.

Will my child get to play with LEGO? Yes.

Do you provide lunch? No. Campers must bring a bag lunch that does not need to be refrigerated. The National Building Museum will provide one nut-free snack in the mornings, and have additional snacks available for those campers signed up for Extended Care.

Do you have early-morning drop off? Drop off for campers is between 8:30-9:00 am. Please do not arrive before 8:30 am as camp staff will not be available to greet you.

Do you take field trips? Where to? How do you get there? Do I have to pay extra for trips? Most programs will take at least one off-site trip. We take off-site trips because one of our commitments to youth education is to allow campers to experience the world around them and learn to become good citizens. Past field trips have included a visit to the Smithsonian National Zoo, a walking tour of the neighborhood, and the National Museum of the American Indian. We either walk, take Metro train, or charter a school bus to get to our destination. Parents are informed in writing prior to the start of camp what the planned trips will be. You do not have to pay extra for trips - they are built into the cost of the program.

What kind of camp are you? Will my child get to do sports and other outdoor activities? We are a museum camp, so the majority of time is spent inside at the National Building Museum. On weather-appropriate days, we'll take eat lunch outside and spend time playing games and running around.

What happens in Extended Care? Since it is the end of the day, we try to have activities that are more relaxed. We set out game stations, building blocks, Legos, snack stations, and a reading area. Once a week will have a movie afternoon with popcorn. Campers can also work on projects. We might go outside or play games in the Museum's Great Hall.

What is your policy on electronics? No electronics of any kind are not allowed at camp including video game consoles, tablets, eReaders, and cell phones. If you wish to send your child to camp with a cell phone, please contact the camp director to discuss an exception.

Can my child bring their own toys to camp? No. Anything valuable or precious should be left at home. If your child would like to bring a building toy, a book, or a card game with them to camp, they may do so, however the item should remain in their backpacks during the day and only used during the lunch hour or in aftercare.

Will my camper get to visit the Summer Block Party installation? Yes, all campers will visit the Summer Block Party installation at least once.

Do you have scholarships? Yes. Scholarships are needs-based for children who live in Washington, D.C. You can contact smerianos@nbm.org for more information on scholarships.

Can you make sure my child is placed in the same group as his or her friend/sibling? Each camper can request one camp buddy on his or her forms and we will do our best to accommodate that request.

Is it worth joining as a Family Member? Yes! Besides saving on Summer Camp, you can save on Birthday parties, get free admission the Museum's exhibitions, save on programs during the year, and receive a discount in the Museum Shop.

Do you offer a sibling discount? No.

