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**Rockland
After
School Programs**

**Parent
Handbook**

2009-10

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* All about RASP *

A Brief History of RASP

RASP is a non-profit organization that started in 1983. Our first after school program opened in Lime Kiln School and then expanded to four sites covering the entire East Ramapo elementary school population. In 1988, RASP began Kindergarten Club – a program specifically designed to meet the needs of five year-olds in after school care. In 1991 RASP expanded to the Nanuet School District where we have two after school programs and a before school program. In 2000, RASP opened The Summer Spot and in 2002, we opened a program in Sloatsburg Elementary School.

RASP's Philosophy and Mission

RASP's mission is to provide high quality school-age care that will enhance children and youth's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development in a positive, supportive environment. RASP's philosophy is that children's time out of school is a vital part of their lives that can be positive and productive *if* they are in an environment that supports their growth. We believe that before and after school programs have a unique opportunity to reach the "whole child". Children are natural, enthusiastic learners and doers, but they learn and do in many ways, at different paces and when they are ready. At RASP, children have time – time to learn about themselves and about other people, about what they can do well, what they'd like to try, what to do when hard things happen, how to be friend. RASP is a place where staff have high expectations for children, where children develop life skills and develop a shared sense of community.

RASP is dedicated to creating an environment where children explore, discover and PLAY! What's so great about play? When kids play they are learning to cooperate, negotiate, learn new skills, sharpen old skills, create, make decisions, accept responsibility and initiate activities. WOW!

Activities

Our goal is to create a warm, safe, stimulating environment that will support our philosophy and then let the children grow and explore in it. All children have unique needs and interests which we help them pursue. For all children, our goal is that while they are involved in activities (including all kinds of play) they will develop:

- * Excitement about informal learning
- * Sportsmanship, teamwork and fair play
- * Positive values
- * Self-confidence, self-reliance
- * Good peer relationships
- * Physical, intellectual and social skills

Each program has a routine that is consistent and stable yet flexible. Every day children have the opportunity to choose from a variety of activities such as the arts, organized games, cooking, dramatic play, outdoor play, constructive play, mind play, large and small muscle activities. Children may choose to play alone or in large or small groups. They may choose vigorous or quiet play. They can participate in staff-led or child initiated activities. In many ways, RASP is like a neighborhood...a neighborhood that offers a rich variety of resources and a talented staff that is there to guide your children, set limits, respond with caring and concern and – sometimes – just stand back and let great things happen. The structure of a typical day after school at RASP includes:

Arrival – unwinding: 15 – 45 minutes

During this time children make the transition from school to RASP. Children may prepare snack, go outside, play in the gym, sit and talk– whatever helps them change pace and unwind from their school day. Children wash up and have a healthy snack during this time.

Activity time: 30 – 45 minutes

Children are presented with a choice of staff-led activities (art project, cooking, or a hike, for example). Children may choose not to participate in a staff-led activity as long as they stay in a supervised area and are productively occupied for the duration of activity time.

Free play – homework: 60 - 90 minutes

Children have the opportunity to choose freely from among many available materials, games, and equipment. They may play in any of the supervised areas and are encouraged to initiate and organize activities. During this time, children with homework can do it in a quiet place with help from staff (30 – 60 minutes).

Unwinding – clean up: 30 minutes

Many children are being picked up at this time. The room is put back in order for the following day. Parents should plan on giving their child sufficient time to clean up before they leave.

Discipline

Children at RASP must be able to consistently function within the basic guidelines set by staff. These “bottom lines”:

- **Children must stay within designated areas**
- **Children must respect other people’s bodies and things and RASP’s things**

are designed to assure the safety of the children and to create a positive place for them. All children enrolled in RASP must be able to manage their behavior in a way that does not compromise the emotional and physical safety of the other children in the program. There is no tolerance for unprovoked violence or evading supervision. We believe in discipline that is based on group and individual needs, respect and that gives children the opportunity to learn from their actions, both positive and negative.

Children are expected to be responsible for their behavior and to learn from the logical consequences of that behavior. Our staff teaches children to use conflict resolution to solve problems. Parents are expected to support the positive discipline methods used at the program. If your child's behavior is unacceptable, we will talk together to work on a plan to help your child. Occasionally, we have a child who cannot function successfully at RASP and has to be withdrawn from the program. Children have sometimes returned to the program when they are able to function cooperatively within our "bottom lines".

Parents as Partners

RASP works best as a partnership between parents, staff and kids. Parents are welcome to visit the program *at any time*. We benefit from your input about your child, the program, and the staff. Parents may request a conference with their child's Site Supervisor at any time. Staff will communicate with you informally at pick-up time on a regular basis. We will discuss your child in his or her presence *only* if she or he is to be included in the conversation. Otherwise, we'll find a private spot to talk.

Please check the parent area and your child's mail box for notices. Parents are often tired and anxious to get home at the end of the day, but we urge you to come and spend a few minutes with your child at pick-up time. Children are often very pleased to have this time to share something they did or made or to play a game. We've noticed again and again that a few minutes spent together can help make the transition at day's end happier for everyone.

Homework

Families will complete a Homework Contract so that we all understand your expectations. We try hard to accommodate each family's individual wishes about homework. Children are given an appropriate place for homework and support if they need it. However, we do not attempt to coerce children to do homework.

Snack

Children are offered a healthy snack every day. The menu includes fruit and vegetables, whole grains, milk and juice, cheese, and other nutritious foods. We limit children's intake of sugar, salt and fat. Children are introduced to new foods during the year. Please advise us of dietary restrictions your child may have so that we can be sure he or she has an appropriate snack.

Health and Safety Policies +

Health and safety issues help determine our “bottom lines”. Our health and safety policies are available for you to read at your child’s site. State law requires that we maintain up-to-date health records. Children who are feeling sick are provided with a quiet place to rest.

New York State has mandated regulations about Medication Administration Training (MAT). Under the new regulations, only trained staff can give your child any medication which means that in the event that a MAT trained staff person is not available, alternative arrangements will have to be made in order for your child to be given medication. You have received information about these regulations. Please read the information carefully and discuss any concerns with the Site Supervisor or the RASP office.

Children at RASP are encouraged to participate in a minimum of a half hour of time for exercise each day. We go outside to play in all but very cold or rainy weather. Parents requesting that their child stay inside under certain circumstances are asked to provide a letter from their doctor explaining the child’s condition and limitations on activities.

RASP has a student accident policy, which pays for expenses not covered by your own insurance policy. You will need to submit bills with proof of what has been paid by your insurance company to the office: RASP, 465 Viola Rd., Spring Valley, NY 10977.

In the event of an emergency the following procedure will be followed:

1. If the child needs *immediate medical attention, staff will notify the police* who will call an ambulance.
2. *Staff will call the parents first*, then call emergency contacts if parents can’t be reached.
3. The *Supervisor stays with the child and accompanies* him/her to the hospital *bringing the Parent Consent Form and Physical*.
4. Staff continue to try to reach the parents. Failing that, the medical staff at the hospital will make medical decisions.
5. The Supervisor assigns a staff person to be in charge in her/his absence.

* Practical Matters *

Sites

East Ramapo: Children from all primary elementary schools are bused to the **Ramapo Freshman Center**. Children from all intermediate elementary schools are bused to **Elmwood Elementary School**. **RASP programs** are open until 6:30 P.M.

Nanuet: RASP programs are located in **Miller Elementary School** (3 – 6 P.M.) and **Highview Elementary School** (3–6 P.M.). Breakfast Club is located in **Highview School** (7-8:30 A.M.).

Ramapo Central, RASP is located in **Sloatsburg Elementary School** (3:10–6:10).

Who can Attend RASP? †

In the East Ramapo School District, any child who is a resident in grades K-7 may apply. In the Nanuet School District any child who is a resident in grades K-4 may apply. In Ramapo Central any child who is a resident in the Sloatsburg Elementary School zone may apply. Children are accepted on a first come, first served basis with priority given to children of full-time working parents.

Yearly Schedule

RASP follows the East Ramapo, Nanuet and Ramapo Central School District Calendars. The program is open every full school day and one site is open for all RASP children during some school holidays. Whenever possible, RASP in East Ramapo and Sloatsburg offer half-day coverage on teacher-parent conference and staff development days. Sign up is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Snow days and Emergency Closings

RASP will be closed when school is cancelled in the morning or when school is dismissed early for snow or any other emergency. Breakfast Program will be closed in the event of a delayed opening. ***Please be sure you have a plan for your child in the event of an early closing.*** If school is in session for the whole day, we will be open, regardless of weather conditions. Please plan to pick your child up as early as possible in hazardous driving conditions. Our staff has to get home safely as well.

Pick up – Late Pick up 🕒 🕒

The parent or authorized pick-up person MUST come into the RASP room to sign out the child. Your child will not be able to participate in the program if he/she is not being signed out reliably. Children may not sign themselves out. Please be sure a staff person knows that you are taking your child. Only the people you have authorized on your Parent Agreement Form will be permitted to take your child. Please notify your Site Supervisor in writing or by phone if someone other than an authorized person will be picking up your child. He or she should be prepared to show photo ID.

We greatly appreciate your efforts to arrive on time. It is difficult for both the staff and your child when you are late. Late fines will be charged when the child is picked up more than five minutes late. Late fines will be \$5.00 for the first ten minutes and \$5.00 for every ten minutes thereafter.

Late fines are meant to encourage you to arrive on time and to compensate the staff person who has stayed with your child for the inconvenience your lateness has caused. Plan to pay your late fine when you arrive. If this isn't possible, please sign the late sign out sheet and pay the staff person at your next pick-up. Repeated lateness may result in withdrawal from the program.

Tuition 💰

RASP's budget is based on the cost of providing care for your child per day times the number of full calendar days in the school year. The total cost is divided into ten equal monthly payments. A limited number of openings for reduced tuition are available. Some families may be eligible for partial or full tuition assistance through the Day Care Subsidy Unit of the Rockland County Department of Social Services.

Tuition payments

The parent(s) registering the child will be responsible for tuition payments. The tuition you paid at registration is for your June tuition. The September tuition is due the first day that your child attends RASP. *Thereafter, tuition payments are due by the 5th of the month.* At the Freshman Center, tuition should be put in the box in Room 107. At Elmwood, tuition should be put in the box outside Rooms 100 and 101. In Nanuet and Sloatsburg, tuition should be placed in the tuition envelope located in the parent area. On the check or money order, please write your child's first and last name and the month for which you are paying. We cannot accept cash. Checks received at the program after the 20th of the month must include a \$25 late fine. ***Please do not let your tuition payments fall behind without contacting us.*** Families who fall more than two months behind and who do not make payment arrangements with the office will be withdrawn from the program. Reinstatement will depend on space availability. We very much appreciate your cooperation. A fee of \$40 will be charged for returned checks.

Custody issues

RASP will release a child to either parent unless we have on file a valid Court Order which directs us to do otherwise. In that case, we will follow the court order without exceptions. We cannot refuse to release a child to a parent without a valid Court Order.

Changes of enrollment or withdrawal:

Requests for changes in enrollment or withdrawal must be made to the RASP office. After the first request, there will be a \$25 charge per child for each request. The best time to call the office is between 10 AM and 1 PM

- If you withdraw your child during the month, no tuition for that month will be refunded. If you wish to re-enroll your child, you will need to go through the entire enrollment process through the RASP office.
- If you reduce your child's enrollment in the program during the month, a corresponding reduction in tuition will begin the following month.
- If you increase your child's enrollment during the month, you will pay for the extra days on a per day basis until the following month when the tuition adjustment is made.
- Tuition refunds will be made within 45 days after the date of withdrawal.
- If you wish to add **occasional** extra days, please make the request to the Site Supervisor who will approve the day(s) and give you a brief form explaining daily rates. Tuition for extra days is to be paid on the extra day the child attends.
- Tuition adjustments for vacations, snow days or absences are not made.
- Tuition for Holiday programs and half-day programs is in addition to your monthly tuition.
- Your June tuition is refundable up to March 31st.

Important Reminders ◀

- ▶ ***Please inform us immediately of any change in:*** address or place of employment
work, home or cell phone number
emergency phone numbers
authorized pick-up person
custody requirements
child's health needs
- ▶ ***It is extremely important that we be notified when your child will be absent from RASP. This is for your child's safety.*** You can notify us by leaving a message at your child's RASP site before the program starts. Messages about absence left at the RASP office may not reach your child's program that day. The program suffers when staff have to spend time tracking down missing children.
- ▶ Before you take your child home, ask the staff if he or she has a clean-up job to do.
- ▶ Please share with us information that you think would be helpful to us in understanding your child and making his or her time at RASP happy.

- Please keep safe at home valuables or toys that you or your child would be upset to have broken or lost.
- If you have any concerns, please let us know so that we can work on them together. If you are happy with the program, let the world know! You are our *best* advocates!

Notes

2000-10 Staff and District Phone Numbers

RASP office at Ramapo Freshman Center (845 area code)

Executive Director	Triny Hertzberg	577-6138	khertzberg.rasp@gmail.com
Administrative Coordinator	Alice Franolich	577-6141	afranolich.rasp@gmail.com
Financial Administrator	Adele Holdsworth	577-6141	aholdsworth.rasp@gmail.com
Special Programs Coordinator	Max McClintock	577-6141	macc70@yahoo.com
RASP Office Fax #		577-6389	

RASP Sites

East Ramapo

Junior 1 Site Supervisor
Junior 2 Site Supervisor

Freshman Center

Alice Franolich
Barbara Domini

577-6100 follow prompts
577-6100 follow prompts

Elmwood

Senior 1 Site Supervisor
Senior 2 Site Supervisor

Max McClintock
Dianna Millien

577-6100 follow prompts
577-6100 follow prompts

Nanuet

RASP Site Supervisor
 Breakfast Supervisor

Highview

Jamie Morrison
Jamie Morrison

627-4070
627-4070

G W Miller

Site Supervisor

Harvey Gold

627-4891

Ramapo Central

Site Supervisor

Lori Cohen

753-2720 X106

Summer Program

The Summer Spot
 Director

Max McClintock

577-6141