

# Camps run the gamut for youths

There is no shortage of summer fun for children around the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Looking to the nearest recreation council, nature center, or museum can bring to light camps offering anything from outdoor sporting activities and arts and crafts to the experience of being studio artists or environmentalists.

“Our camps run the gamut,” said Marty Stoelting, chief of recreation services for Baltimore County Recreation and Parks.

She said each county recreation council offers its own camps.

Perry Hall Recreation Council, for instance, typically offers several camp options, said Maria Bieneman, one of the council’s community supervisors. Among them are week-long soccer and basketball camps, which run a few hours a day, and two tiny tots sessions running for two weeks each.

Perry Hall’s Summer Gators program, a day camp which runs Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for one month during the summer, gives kids the opportunity to participate in arts and crafts and to go on field trips, such as bowling. “The camp is set up each week for something different,” said Bieneman, who explained the kids might hear a speaker one week – for example, a naturalist showing turtles and frogs.

Costs for Perry Hall’s camps generally range from \$100 to \$400, she said, adding that more finalized camp information should be available in April.

Stoelting said the Baltimore County Recreation and Parks Web site lists the individual recreation council offices and their contact information. A search option is also available for looking up activities at the different councils.

Up in Harford County, the Eden Mill Nature Center offers educational camps from June to August grouped for ages 4 to 5, 6 to 8, 9 to 11, and 12 to 15, said Aimee Harris, the center’s naturalist. It is best to register over the phone – 410-836-3050 – for these camps.

“The camps for the little guys are one day for three hours a day from 10 a.m. to 1

p.m.," said Harris about the 4- and 5-year-olds' camp, which she said is \$25 a day for members and \$28 a day for nonmembers. She said these one-day camps offer a theme, like butterflies.

"All other age groups, except the oldest, meet five days a week from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.," she said, with a cost of \$150 a week for members and \$165 a week for nonmembers.

These camps are also themed. "There's a wet and wild week," said Harris. "One camp might be all about water. Campers will do experiments with water and water properties."

The naturalist said "the 6- to 8- and 9- to 11-year-olds get to go swimming in Deer Creek, and at the end of the week, they go canoeing."

As for the 12- to 15-year-old campers, one-day adventure camps offer them opportunities for canoeing and caving, Harris said. These camps are \$50 a day for members and \$60 a day for nonmembers.

"Usually, the younger kids are here to be outdoors and explore," she explained. "The 12- to 15-year-olds are interested in advancing their knowledge about the environment."

Harris said all campers, regardless of their age group, spend the entire time outside.

But other camps do offer their participants indoor enjoyment.

Emily Blumenthal, manager of family programs at the Walters Art Museum, said the museum is just beginning to advertise its summer programs for the budding artist. "Children entering grades one through 12 can sign up for weekly sessions running from July 5 to Aug. 13," she said.

First through fifth grade students attend "Summer Camp at the Walters" throughout the month of July for \$190 per week for members and \$320 per week for nonmembers.

"Each week, there is a different theme," said Blumenthal, adding the camps fill up

quickly. "One week in July is on ancient works of art."

The manager said first and second graders during that week will learn about "Temples of Treasure," while third through fifth graders will learn about "Ancient Art Kingdoms."

Blumenthal called the camps "art-centric" and explained, "With everything we do, there is an in-depth art project."

Along with going into the galleries in the mornings, students collaborate on group activities in the afternoons, such as dramatic art.

"Last year, campers wrote plays and made costumes for them," Blumenthal said. "They do some really creative things."

Sixth through twelfth grade students attend a camp titled "The Artist's Studio Experience" for two weeks in August. "The older kids are in the studio and focused on art-making," the manager said.

Blumenthal said "The Artist's Studio Experience" costs \$150 per week for members and \$280 per week for nonmembers.

She said both camps are taught by professional artists and educators familiar with the museum. Anyone interested in more information may call 410-547-9000.

*To find information on other summer camps around Maryland and elsewhere, check out [www.camppage.com](http://www.camppage.com) and [www.mysummercamps.com](http://www.mysummercamps.com).*