



New Horizons Adult Day Program



Participant & Parent Handbook

Table of Contents

Page	Contents
3	Welcome Letter
4	Facilities & Program Locations
5	Mission & Philosophy Registration & Fees
6	Registration & Fees Continued
7	Registration & Fees Continued Refunds
8	Community Outings Weather Cancellations
9	Eligibility Requirements
10	Behavior Policy
11	Behavior Policy Continued Grizzly Den Rules
12 – 14	Program Specific Information
15	Program Specific Information Continued A Typical Day at New Horizons
16	Opening/Closing Procedures
17	Medication, Illness, & Emergencies
18	Emergency Contacts Additional Fees & Memberships
19	Communication
20	Communication Continued Transportation
21	New Horizons Staff
22	Fundraising
23	Notes Page
24	Save the Date – 2025 Meeting & Photos

Welcome

Dear New Horizons Participants & Parents/Guardians,

The primary goal of New Horizons is recreation, leisure, and social skills development. Our hope is that you are not only seeing your participants enjoy their time in the program, but that they show interest in new activities, show new skills at home, and are growing in social skills and independence.

This new year, we plan to continue to offer simplified lunches to show off the basic skills that many of the participants still need. We also plan on spending extra time focusing on a leisure life skill of the month, with the intention of continuing to teach some of the basic components of activities including laundry, grocery shopping, money management, street safety, and more.

The New Horizons handbook was created to provide the necessary information to help participants be as successful and independent while in the program as possible. Also, hopefully this handbook answers many questions you might have throughout the year. Participants are encouraged to actively take part in program activities, while growing and learning through recreation. While at New Horizons, skills presented will promote recreation, leisure awareness, social skills development, and independence.

New Horizons Instructors work diligently at getting to know participants and are looking forward to seeing their growth in 2026. Please feel free to communicate with staff members and share specific skills for your participant to focus on while in the program. We will make every effort to accommodate those requests and encourage further personal growth.

If you have any questions, ideas, requests, or concerns throughout the year, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

I look forward to working with you all!



Sean Cramer, CPRP
Special Recreation Supervisor
Office: 815-547-5711 x601
Cell: 815-391-4010
Email: scramer@belviderepark.org

A large, stylized graphic of the word "Welcome!" in a bold, black, cursive font with a yellow outline. The exclamation point is also stylized and yellow.

Facilities & Locations

New Horizons Adult Day Program is located at the Belvidere Park District (BPD) Special Recreation Facility – 6581 Revlon Dr, Belvidere, IL. Alternative BPD facilities and community locations are used to carry out program activities, which are listed below. This list is not all encompassing, but rather those that are frequently visited.

Belvidere Park District Facilities

Site: **Special Recreation Facility**
Program Site Phone: 815-209-6239
Program Cell Phone: 815-209-6239
Program Site Phone: 815-547-5711 x605
Address: 6581 Revlon Dr, Belvidere, IL
Parking: Please park and pick-up/drop-up in the north parking lot.
Program Hours: 9:00am – 4:00pm
participants may not arrive earlier than 8:50am, daily.
Registration Hours: Monday – Friday: 3:45pm – 6:00pm (Year-Round)
Monday – Friday: 7:00am – 9:00am (Mid-May thru Mid-August)
Registration Phone: 815-547-5711 x603



Site: **Aberdeen Park**
Phone: NONE; contact NH program cell phone
Address: 1343 Orth Rd, Belvidere, IL

Site: **Rivers Edge Recreation Center (Gymnasium)**
Phone: 815-547-5711 x202
Address: 1151 W Locust St, Belvidere, IL
Registration Hours: Monday – Friday: 9:00am – 5:00pm



Site: **Doty Park Pavilion/Riverside Ice Arena**
Phone: 815-547-5711 x500
(Ice Arena – ONLY & during hours of operation)
Address: 365 W Locust St, Belvidere, IL
Hours of Operation: Visit <https://www.belviderepark.org/parks-facilities/riverside-ice-arena/> for specific hours of operation.



Community Locations

Site: IDA Public Library
Phone: 815-544-3838
Address: 320 N State St, Belvidere, IL



Site: YMCA of Rock River Valley – Northeast Family YMCA
Phone: 815-885-6852
Address: 8451 Orth Rd, Loves Park, IL



"like" us on
facebook

Search: Belvidere Park District Special Recreation

Mission & Philosophy

WHAT IS NEW HORIZONS?

New Horizons is an adult day program for individuals 21 and older with disabilities. The primary goal of the program is to encourage independence through leisure life skills-based activities. New Horizons is a year-round program that meets 5 days a week, 9:00am – 4:00pm. Participants register for a 2 days per week session with an optional 3rd day of attendance through a Community Outing (typically on Monday's). New Horizons participants engage in a variety of activities geared towards building skills sets and providing them with community resources to further community independence.

PROGRAM MISSION

It is the mission of New Horizons Adult Day Program to enrich and empower the lives of our participants by providing activities that focus on leisure life skills, which allows an individual to become independent and confident members of the community.

PROGRAM VISION

The vision of New Horizons is to provide a caring environment that is committed to program quality, personal growth, and overall safety through meaningful and fulfilling leisure life skills activities.

TIME OFF FOR 2025:	
Weeks:	Days:
5/25 – 5/29	4/3, 6/19, 7/3
8/10 – 8/14	9/7, 11/11
12/21/26 – 1/4/27	11/26, 11/27

Registration & Fees

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES & FEE INFORMATION

New Horizons has a substantial impact on the BPD Special Recreation financial position, which means that the revenue and expenses for the program undergo regular review. The financial stability of New Horizons is critical to the BPD Special Recreation's ability to offer this type of comprehensive adult day program. At this time, the following procedures have been set forth to accommodate the continued success of New Horizons.

YEARLY REGISTRATION FEE		
2 Days Per Week 12-Month Option	Tuesday/Thursday – OR – Wednesday/Friday	\$4,200

Program Fee Includes, but is not limited to: daily lunch, daily snack, monthly themed/cooking snack, craft supplies, leisure magazine subscriptions, Special Olympics sports training and competition, library visits, Rivers Edge recreation time, transportation to and from community locations, gardening, 4-H participation, swimming at various locations, special in-house events, 1-short sleeved t-shirt, 1-long sleeved t-shirt, 1:6 staff to participant ratio, and program space usage.

Registration & Fees

CURRENT PARTICIPANT INTAKE PROCEDURE

New Horizons participants must complete the following documentation to register and attend the program. Much of this information is in the form of an online data collection system called ePACT. The following is what participants are expected to complete:

- Annual Information Form (ePACT)
- Medical History (ePACT)
- Authorized Pick-up List (ePACT)
- Climbing Wall Waiver (ePACT)
- Handbook Acknowledgement Form (ePACT)
- Medication Dispensing Forms (if applicable)
- Annual Eligibility Assessment – completed by Special Recreation Supervisor at end of each program year.
- Special Olympics Information
 - Handbook Acknowledgement
 - Registration Form
- Sledding/Winter Sports Waiver
- Belvidere School District #100 Background Check/Form
- 4H Participant Registration Form

NEW PARTICIPANT INTAKE PROCEDURE

Participants who are new to the program will follow the same procedures as above. However, the participant and parent/guardian **MUST** initially meet with the BPD Special Recreation Supervisor – Horizons to complete an intake/eligibility assessment. This must also be done prior to completing any portion of the registration process.

PAYMENT PROCEDURE

1. Payment Plans

- Automatic Payment Option: Yearly fee is split into 12 monthly equal payments.
 - Complete a yearly “Belvidere Park District Credit/Debit Authorization Form”
 - Payment 1 will automatically be initiated by BPD on Friday, January 2nd.
- Pay in Full Option: Yearly fee is paid in full prior to attendance.
 - The fee will be discounted 2% if the yearly fee is paid in full on January 2nd.

2. Initial Payment Compliance

- In compliance with EMV*, initial phone payments will not be taken. If you would like to pay by credit card over the phone – you must present the card, in person, for it to be manually swiped and saved in the system. After the initial swipe of a credit/debit card, subsequent phone payments or requests via email will be accepted.

3. Prompt Payment

- Prompt payments are essential to BPD Special Recreation programming, the participant, and their family. Making a late payment or missing a payment instantly puts the individual behind, making it difficult to catch up on an outstanding balance that grows considerably each month. **If payment is not prompt, a late fee will be issued.**

4. Late Payments

- 1-Day Late: an invoice will be sent via email (please make sure your email is current in RecTrac - BPD Registration Software).
- 5-Days Late and/or Payment is Rejected (Bounces): participant will be suspended from New Horizons until the outstanding balance is paid and a late fee will be issued. Participant’s spot will be held during this time.

Registration & Fees

PAYMENT PROCEDURES CONTINUED

4. Late Payments Continued...

- Late Fee & NSF Fee: A late fee will be assessed once a payment is 5 days late and/or rejected (bounced). If payment is late, **you will be charged a \$25.00 fee**, which will be added to the current payment due. If a payment is rejected at any time, **you will be charged a \$35.00 NSF fee**. All fees must be paid before a participant can return to the program.
- Payments must be taken during registration hours (subject to change):
 - Rivers Edge Recreation Center (1151 W Locust St, Belvidere)
Year Round 9:00am – 5:00pm Monday thru Friday
 - Special Recreation Facility (6581 Revlon Dr, Belvidere)
Mid-August thru Mid-May 3:45pm – 6:00pm Monday thru Friday
Mid-May thru Mid-August 7:00am – 9:00am Monday thru Friday
3:45pm – 6:00pm

5. Removal & Reinstatement

- 10-Days Late and/or Payment is Rejected (Bounces): participant will be removed from program and their place will be forfeited to the next individual on the waiting list. Removal may be deferred up to 3 months, pending account review and Supervisor approval.
- New Horizons Reinstatement: if a participant requests reinstatement, the following must occur:
 - All outstanding balances must be paid in full.
 - 3 monthly payments must be submitted and clear the bank, up front. The 1st payment will be applied to the current month and the others will be applied to the last 2 payments for the year.
 - Monthly payments begin immediately; in line with the current payment schedule and **MUST** be through the automatic payment option.
 - Consideration for reinstatement will be on a case-by-case basis and **ONLY** if space is available.

*EMV is an acronym for Europay, MasterCard, and Visa, the three companies that created a secure payment standard for credit, debit, and prepaid cards. EMV refers to the use of a chip embedded in payment cards to increase security and reduce fraud. The chip stores cardholder information and creates a unique transaction code each time the card is used.

Refunds

REFUND PROCEDURE

New Horizons does not offer refunds or credits given for missed days; including personal vacation time off and program suspensions due to behavior. If a participant misses or plans to miss a significant amount of time, they are responsible for payment. On a case-by-case basis, refunds may not be given if discounts were previously applied to tuition.

- Exception 1: will be given with a written doctor's note stating that the participant was ill for an extended period of time and under the care of a physician.
 - Doctor's note must be presented to the Special Recreation Supervisor for any refund to be considered.
- Exception 2: will be given to an individual who decides to remove themselves from the program before the calendar year concludes.
 - If this occurs, a refund will be issued for the time the Special Recreation Supervisor receives notice through the pre-payment period.
 - If this occurs and a participant wishes to rejoin the program, they will be welcomed to register at the start of the new year and only if there is space available.

Community Outings

WEEKLY COMMUNITY OUTINGS (ONLY open to current New Horizons participants)

Participants are invited to register for New Horizons Weekly Community Outings! Outings might include shows/plays, seasonal attractions, museums, and much more! Participants have the option to attend New Horizons for a 3rd day in the form of a trip, which is typically held on Monday of each week. Choose your own adventure throughout the year and hang out with friends from both participation options!

- If an outing is not on a Monday – participants will attend New Horizons on Monday in place of the trip day.
 - For example – a Community Outing will be on Wednesday for that trip. Wednesday/Friday Option participants will then attend New Horizons on Monday instead of the typical Wednesday attendance day, regardless of registration for Community Outing.
- All outings include lunch and vary between full-service restaurants, counter service restaurants, or packed (by New Horizons participants) lunches.
- NOTE: Please prepare for the outing by wearing appropriate clothing, shoes, swimwear, sunscreen, etc.
 - Don't forget to wear your program shirt on Community Outings.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES & FEE INFORMATION

Community Outing information will be distributed quarterly through email - except for the 1st quarter. In this case, they will be released at the yearly parent meeting and registration for those trips will open on January 1, 2026.

- Registration can be done online or in-person.

Time: 9:00am – 4:00pm*
Minimum: 8 participants per outing
Maximum: 30 participants per outing – may be less depending on transportation & location. Any deviations will be noted in the quarterly flyer.

Location: Depart/Return to Special Recreation Facility

*Some trips may occur outside of normal program hours, but will be noted on the outing flyer distributed quarterly.

Community Outing Fees*	
January thru March	\$50.00 per outing
April thru June	\$52.00 per outing
July thru December	\$54.00 per outing
*Lunch is included in fee.	

Weather Cancellation

WEATHER CANCELLATION PROCEDURE

The BPD Special Recreation makes every attempt to run programs as scheduled. However, weather circumstances beyond our control may prohibit a program from running. Occasionally, inclement weather may make it difficult and unsafe for participants and staff to travel to/from program locations.

- New Horizons will align its weather closing instances with that of the BPD. If park district activities are cancelled, New Horizons will be cancelled.
 - The exception to this is when the school district cancels school – we will not cancel New Horizons in this situation. The school district cancels for a wide variety of reasons – some of which do not affect our programming.
- If New Horizons is cancelled, participants will be notified by Remind and through social media.
You will only be notified if the program is cancelled.
- No refunds/credits will be issued if the program is cancelled due to weather-related cancellations.

Eligibility Requirements

NEW HORIZONS PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Individuals who wish to attend and participate in the New Horizons Adult Day Program must meet the following guidelines and expectations (with minimal assistance) to participate. These guidelines are set forth to ensure a successful experience for everyone involved in the program. Safety for participants and staff is of utmost importance for the duration of the program. All situations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with the participant's best interest at the forefront of discussion.

- Participant to Staff Ratio: participant must be able to function on a 1:6 ratio at all times of programming. The New Horizons program is not staffed or equipped to accommodate any individual who requires 1:1 assistance on a consistent basis. Functioning must be dependent on all unknown factors that may arise for the duration of the program.
- Independent Living Skills: participant must be able to perform independent living skills with minimal assistance which is at the discretion of the BPD Special Recreation Supervisor.
 - What are independent living skills?
 - The participant's ability to function independently during most everyday situations; with minimal accommodations. This may consist of personal, physical, vehicle and travel safety, interpersonal and socialization skills, time management, etc.
- Self-Care: participants must show the basic self-care principles independently or with minimal assistance, which is at the discretion of the BPD Special Recreation Supervisor.
 - What is Self-Care?
 - Individuals take responsibility for their own health and well-being, with minimal support from staff.
 - Self-Care Principles:
 - Participants make informed choices to manage their self-care needs.
 - Participants effectively communicate individual self-care needs.
 - Participants are able to manage their self-care needs.
 - Self-Care Examples:
 - Personal appearance, hygiene, toileting, relaxation, time management, meal management, etc.
- Following Group Direction and Instruction: participant must possess the ability to always stay with the group and not wander/stray.
 - Participant must be able to demonstrate willingness to participate in daily program activities within reasonable accommodation.
 - Participant must be able to follow simple 1 – 2 step directions, independently.
 - Participant must be able to complete tasks that may be undesirable to participant's likes and interests but are necessary for leisure life skills activities.
 - Participant must demonstrate the ability to wait and transition to activity with minor staff assistance.



Behavior Policy

BPD BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

All participants in BPD programming are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times and guidelines for discipline. They have been developed to ensure programs are safe and enjoyable for all participants. Additional rules may be developed for specific programs as deemed necessary.

BEHAVIOR CODE OF CONDUCT

All participants shall:

- Show respect to all participants, staff, and volunteers.
- Follow program rules and take direction from staff.
- Refrain from using abusive or foul language.
- Refrain from threatening or causing bodily harm to self, other participants, or staff.
- Refrain from eloping.
- Show respect for equipment, supplies, and facilities.
- Not possess any weapons.

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

A positive approach will be used regarding discipline. Staff will periodically review rules with participants during the program session. If inappropriate behavior occurs, a prompt resolution will be sought specific to an individual's situation. The BPD reserves the right to dismiss a participant whose behavior endangers their safety or that of others.

BEHAVIORAL PROCEDURES

BPD Staff will determine the severity of action and immediately take steps to correct the unwanted behavior. Action steps may include, but are not limited to:

- A verbal warning.
- Supervised time-out from the program. The type of time-out will vary according to the situation.
 - For example – observational: from sidelines of an activity; exclusion: away from the group, but within view of the activity; seclusion: time-out area with staff member present, away from view of the activity.
- Physical Restraint.
 - If a situation escalates where physical restraint is necessary, the Handle with Care Behavior Systems Policy will be followed.
- Police Contact will be initiated if:
 - a participant makes a direct threat of hurting themselves and a parent/guardian is not immediately reachable.
 - a participant becomes overly aggressive and violent.
- A suspension from the program for a designated period of time.
 - Time will depend on severity of actions, length of program or activity, any past behavior issues with the participant, and their willingness to improve unwanted/inappropriate behavior.
- Transfer to another program where inappropriate behavior may be less prone to occur.
- Limited/reduced timeframe a participant is allowed to attend the program.
- Dismissal from program or activity.
 - If inappropriate behavior persists or the behavior completely disrupts the program, removal may be necessary.
- Appeals should be directed to the Special Recreation Manager first, the Superintendent of Recreation second, and finally the Executive Director.

Behavior Policy

HANDLE WITH CARE BEHAVIOR SYSTEMS POLICY:

The Handle with Care (HWC) Behavior Management System is a program that provides training techniques in crisis intervention and behavior management and will be utilized in specific instances when other de-escalation tactics have failed. Select employees are trained in the HWC philosophy, which allows them to use physical interventions when encountered with individuals who pose an imminent risk to themselves and others while participating in District programming. Employees are provided with HWC Verbal Intervention training and a select few are trained in the Physical Intervention portion of the program.

While the District utilizes HWC program techniques (manual restraints), it is the policy of the District to promote and maintain an individual's independence and embrace their dignity. This will be accomplished using appropriate and safe interventions when encountering unsafe behavioral situations that include verbal and physical interventions in the least restrictive manner as possible.

Special Recreation Staff who are trained in HWC:

- Full Time and Part-Time Employees over 18 years of age.
- Part-time employees must be a minimum of a 2nd year counselor/instructor.

All applicable employees will be trained annually in accordance with HWC program techniques. If the training requirement is not complete, identified employees will not be allowed to perform physical restraints. All employees are prohibited from using corporal punishment, seclusion, and prone restraint.

Grizzly Den Rules

The following rules are posted in the New Horizon's program space, the Grizzly Den, to remind participants of the expectations for behavior:

1. Be Responsible
 - Participate in all activities.
 - Take turns with others.
 - Complete daily responsibilities/tasks.
2. Be Respectful
 - Use good manners.
 - Listen when friends and staff are talking.
 - Follow directions.
 - Always be honest.
3. Be Safe
 - Keep hands, feet, and object to ourselves.
 - Walk, don't run!
 - Ask before leaving the room.
 - Use equipment wisely.
4. Be Caring
 - Use kind words.
 - Help others.
 - Share with our friends.
5. Be the Best You Can Be
 - Be positive.
 - Be pleasant.

Program Information

DROP OFF/PICK UP TIMES

Monday thru Friday – all participants should be dropped off at the BPD Special Recreation Facility (6581 Revlon Dr) inside the sliding doors/lobby.

Drop-off Time:	9:00am <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please be prompt, but do not enter the facility prior to 8:50am.• Someone must sign a participant into the program upon arrival to ensure they are safely in the care of a staff member.• If a participant utilizes public transportation, they will be received off the bus no earlier than 8:50am and signed in by a staff member.• On Community Outing days, vehicles will not wait longer than 10 minutes for participants who are late to the program – except for days where parents are adequately informed of a prompt 9:00am departure time.
Pick-up Time:	4:00pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If a parent/guardian or public transportation is late picking up a participant, they will be charged a late fee.• Please refrain from picking participants up early on a consistent basis as it interferes with the continuity of programming.• On Community Outing days, the program return may be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances or the nature of the trip. If an outing return is delayed, parent/guardians will receive a text message via the Remind App. Staff at the Special Recreation Facility will also be notified of the late arrival.

ABSENCES

If your participant will be absent for any reason – please contact the program cell phone at 815-209-6239. If no one answers, please leave a message. If a parent/guardian does not contact the program cell phone, staff will call 15 minutes after the program has begun to make sure they are not attending for the day.

EARLY DROP OFF/LATE PICK UP

Some Community Outings may require an early drop off time and/or late pick-up time. This will be indicated on the Monthly Community Outing Calendars and Monthly Activity Calendars. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to be conscious of when there are adjustments in program times and to arrange transportation accordingly. Staff will remind parents/guardians the day before of a particular outing that has an adjusted program time.

PARKING

Utilize the north parking lot when dropping off/picking up participants. The south parking lot is reserved for staff parking. Please **DO NOT** park in any grassy areas.

WHAT TO WEAR AT NEW HORIZONS

New Horizons activities are constantly moving about and also active within the community. It is recommended and highly encouraged that all participants wear comfortable clothes and shoes when attending the program. All participants are encouraged to participate in all activities. Staff will do their best to aid participants in keeping their clothes free of debris. However, program activities can sometimes get a bit messy. Keep this in mind while dressing for the day.

Rivers Edge Days: on days that the program is scheduled to utilize the gymnasium – all participants **MUST** wear or bring athletic shoes.

Program Information

WHAT TO BRING TO NEW HORIZONS

Please clearly label everything that is brought to New Horizons with the participant's name. A lost and found box will be kept at the Special Recreation Facility Front Desk. Items will only be kept for two weeks at the end of the year. After this time, all items will be donated.

KEEP AT NEW HORIZONS	BRING TO NEW HORIZONS DAILY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full change of clothes (keep in mind the weather/season conditions)• Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher)* – lotion only and label with participant's name. Please do not provide aerosol sunscreen.• Insect repellent (containing deet)• Toothbrush & toothpaste• Deodorant• Feminine hygiene products; if needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swimsuit & towel (Winter/Spring & swimming outing days)• Sweatshirt, light jacket, or coat (depending on weather and/or daily activities)• Closed toed shoes – no sandals. Please wear shoes appropriate for daily activities.• Any necessary forms and information from home.

*All participants must bring sunscreen (labeled with name) which will be left at the program, solely for their use. Please only send lotion sunscreen – NO aerosol/sprays. Staff will alert a parent/guardian if the participant's supply is running low. Sunscreen **MUST** be applied prior to arriving at New Horizons and staff will assist with reapplication throughout the day (when activities are being held outdoors). Any participant who does not provide their own sunscreen, it will not be reapplied during the day.

PERSONAL ITEMS FROM HOME

All personal items such as toys, books, electronics, cell phones, etc. are to be kept at home. There may be instances in which a participant may need or benefit from bringing such an item (i.e., cell phone for use on public transportation or tablet for therapeutic benefit). Please communicate with the Special Recreation Supervisor regarding the need to bring personal items prior to bringing that item to New Horizons. **BPD cannot be responsible for items brought from home that are lost, stolen, or damaged.**

LUNCH

The New Horizons program fee includes daily lunch for all participants. A monthly menu will be distributed at the end of the month for the following month via email communication. The goal of menus is to help participants prepare for what they will eat on any given day of attendance. Participants are actively involved in the menu planning process and prepping lunches.

- If a participant chooses not to eat what is on the menu, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide a packed cold lunch. There is no refrigerator available for storage.
 - All participants are encouraged to try the meal of the day, but will not be forced to eat.
 - If a participant chooses to eat the packed cold lunch, they will only eat that lunch. They will not receive 2 meals.
- Birthday Celebrations – all participants will have an opportunity to choose a meal which will be included on the monthly lunch menu during their birthday month.
 - Participants are welcome to bring a special snack to share with the group if desired.
- Community Outings – lunch is included in each outing. Information and details about lunch will be included in the description of the outing on the quarterly flyer.

SNACKS

A daily snack will be distributed typically between 2:30 and 3:00pm. Occasionally, on long trip days or when lunch is eaten late, an additional snack will be provided to participants. Twice per month, participants will take part in the preparation of a themed snack to enjoy.

Program Information

NEW HORIZONS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

- Daily Responsibilities: participants will be given one daily responsibility that they are expected to complete on the days they attend New Horizons. Examples of these responsibilities include washing dishes, sweeping, putting supplies away, setting tables for lunches, etc. Daily responsibilities are given to participants via the New Horizons job chart. All participants will rotate through the responsibilities regularly so that everyone is exposed to each task. The goal is to provide participants with the skills needed to complete these life skills tasks on their own, furthering encouraging their independence.
- Grocery Shopping: New Horizons visits local grocery stores at various times per month to purchase necessary ingredients for their meals and snacks. Participants assist with creating a list of needed supplies, shopping for those supplies, comparing prices, and learning how to navigate the store. The goal is to provide participants with skills necessary to independently navigate a store, gain better understanding of what they will need to purchase versus what they want to purchase, and budgeting.
- Lunch Preparation: this is a large part of the day-to-day activities in New Horizons. All participants will take part in some aspect of lunch preparation. Participants will gain skills such as reading a recipe, measuring ingredients, operating appliances, cutting, mixing, etc. The goal is to provide all participants with the skills necessary to create easy meals on their own or with limited assistance.
- Snack Preparation: each month, New Horizons participants will have the opportunity to create yummy snacks. These snacks are different from the typically provided daily snack, and are fun and often new recipes for the participants to make together and experience. The goal is to help participants gain skills in recipe reading, measuring, and preparation which expands on skills learned during lunch preparation.
- Office Duties: participants will occasionally perform office duties around the BPD Special Recreation Facility and other areas of the park district. Duties can be, but are not limited to, paper shredding, paper stocking, organizing, mailings, etc. The goal of office duties is to encourage helping others, as well as independently completing assigned tasks.
- Fitness/Meditation: New Horizons incorporates a 30-minute fitness component into the daily program. Videos, stationary bikes, yoga mats, kettle bells, free weights, the outdoors, etc are utilized during fitness activities. The goal is to provide participants with fitness skills for their use in personal time, as well as encouraging a healthy lifestyle. In addition to fitness, the program will include a daily form of meditation.
- New Horizons Community Garden: is maintained by New Horizons participants with assistance from the Boone County Master Gardeners. The goal of the garden is to help participants gain basic gardening skills to be used in their leisure time such as weeding, watering, planting, harvesting, and general eating habits from home grown produce.
- D100 Preschool Visits: once per month, each attendance group will visit the D100 preschool programs located at Caledonia Elementary School and Washington Academy. Activities will include things such as reading with the children, completing crafts, or playing group games. NH participants are required to complete a D100 volunteer background check each August.
- Surrounding Community Libraries: each month, New Horizons utilizes a local library to visit and browse the stacks of books available to the public. The group spends their time engaging in leisure reading. The goal is to provide participants with a community resource as well as encourage reading during leisure time.
- Rivers Edge Recreation Center: all participants will have access to the Rivers Edge during program hours. The Rivers Edge is a BPD property that features a gymnasium, climbing wall, and meeting/activity spaces. The goal of utilizing the Rivers Edge is to encourage healthy lifestyles, create community awareness of fitness opportunities, and to further expand fitness interests and abilities.

Program Information

NEW HORIZONS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES CONTINUED:

- Swimming: during the winter/spring months, New Horizons utilizes the YMCA of Rock River Valley – Northeast Family YMCA pool for swimming – located in Loves Park, IL. The goal of swimming at the pool is to provide another community outing resource, encourage recreational activities, and remain physically active.
 - Swimming days will be indicated on monthly activity calendars.
 - Participants should wear shoes and socks (no flip flops) on these days, as we will be walking throughout other times of the day. However, flip flops may be brought, but will only be worn during times at the pool – in the locker rooms and on the pool deck.
- Giving Back to the Community/Volunteering: New Horizons enjoys giving back to the community that gives so much to our program. This is accomplished by volunteering in the community, as well as within the park district programming. The goal of volunteering is for participants to give back to others and gain skills in a variety of community related tasks.
- Special Olympics: there are 5 different sports competition offered to participants during New Horizons program hours which are – basketball skills, track & field, bowling, bocce, and snowshoeing. Through sports instruction, participants have the opportunity to experience lifetime sports while learning new skills, rules of sports, and competitive play. Participation in the sports instruction is a part of the program, however it is not a requirement to compete in tournaments.
 - Registration is required for tournament participation.
 - For more information – see the Special Olympics Athlete/Parent Handbook included at the Annual Parent Meeting.

“A Typical Day”

A TYPICAL DAY AT NEW HORIZONS

9:00am – 9:15am	Check-in & Coffee Talk
9:15am – 9:30am	Current Events/News
9:30am – 10:00am	Health Matters/Fitness
10:00am – 11:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesdays/Wednesdays: Group Activities/Crafts/Special Activities • Thursdays/Fridays: Group Activities/Crafts/Monthly Themed Activities
11:30am – 12:15pm	Lunch Prep/Lunch
12:15pm – 12:45pm	Daily Responsibilities/Tasks
12:45pm – 3:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesdays/Wednesdays: Group Activities/Crafts/Special Olympics/Swimming (summer) • Thursdays/Fridays: Group Activities/Crafts/Special Olympics/Swimming (summer)
3:00pm – 3:30pm	Snack/Coffee Talk
3:30pm – 4:00pm	Wrap-up/Communication/Reflection of Day

Opening/Closing Procedures

OPENING/CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

The BPD Special Recreation Facility main entrance (sliding doors) will be unlocked promptly at 8:50am and will remain unlocked while staff are present in the facility. The New Horizons staff will be available during this time for any questions or concerns from parents/guardians. Participants may enter the building independently but those dropping off should ensure that participants are checked in with a staff member prior to leaving them in the lobby.

Parents/guardians are asked to refrain from entering the New Horizons program space during program hours to ensure the quality of programming and consistency for participants. If you would like a tour of the facility, please contact the Program Supervisor. Also, if there is an emergency or you need to pick up a participant from the program early, always feel free to contact the program staff via the program cell phone.

CLOSING/CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

Participants will be released to the BPD Special Recreation Facility lobby at 4:00pm, where a parent/guardian must sign them out. Parents/guardians are welcome to come into the lobby prior to 4:00pm but are kindly asked to hold off on retrieving them until they are released from the program. Please only pick participants up early if there is a true need, as early pick-up compromises staff to participant ratios and cuts into planned programming.

In the event that a participant needs to be picked up early, please contact the program cell phone at 815-209-6239 with at least 10 minutes notice – prior to pick-up and when you arrive. This will allow for a smooth transition and minimal program disruption.

If a participant departs on their own via public transportation, an independent departure form must be completed.

Sporadically throughout the year, pick-up locations might be at a location other than the BPD Special Recreation Facility. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance through email and/or Remind. It is the responsibility of each parent/guardian to communicate pick-up locations to their designated pick-up person. If program locations change due to weather, parents/guardians will be notified via Remind only.

LATE PICK-UP PROCEDURE

If a participant is picked up late, they will be issued a late fee. A written warning will be given for the first offense of the calendar year of New Horizons participation. The second offense and any other offense thereafter will result in a late fee of \$10.00 for every 15 minutes of tardiness. For example, New Horizons ends at 4:00pm; 4:01 – 4:15pm is a \$10.00 charge, 4:16 – 4:30pm is a \$20 charge, etc. Participants who are consistently picked up late will be removed from the program. The fee will be added to the total cost of New Horizons and required to be paid prior to registration for the next year or any other district program.

LATE DROP-OFF PROCEDURE

If a participant will be arriving late to New Horizons, please call the program cell phone at 815-209-6239 to notify a staff member. If the program is not at the BPD Special Recreation Facility, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to bring them to the location of the group. Please be as prompt as possible. The program will not wait to begin the days activities for late participants.

Community Outings: the program typically departs **NO LATER** than 9:15am, unless otherwise indicated on activity calendars. If a participant is not at the BPD Special Recreation Facility by 9:15am – the group will leave. It is then the parent/guardian's responsibility to get them to the outing site.

Medication, Illness, & Emergencies

MEDICATION

- Prescription & Non-Prescription Medications: there may be times where it may be necessary to administer medications to a participant while in New Horizons. This is permitted with written permission from the parent/guardian. There are specific rules that **MUST** be followed when dispensing medications to participating.
 - A Medication Administration Form and Dispensing Log **MUST** be completed and signed in order to dispense medication to any participant. The medication information on the Dispensing Log **MUST** match the original container/label.
 - BPD Full Time Staff, New Horizons Lead Staff, or an appointed staff member are the only staff allowed to administer medication.
 - All medications must be current and not expired.
- To ensure proper dispensing of prescription medications:
 - All medications **MUST** be in original container, with participant's full name clearly visible on the label.
- To ensure proper dispensing of Non-prescription Medications:
 - All medications will be administered according to the medication package instructions, regardless of parent instruction. If staff is to deviate from these instructions, directions from a doctor must be submitted, in writing.
 - Write the participant's name on the medication package/bottle.

ILLNESS

For the protection of everyone at the Special Recreation Facility, participants should be kept home if they show any of the following symptoms: **temperature, diarrhea or vomiting, rash, nasal discharge, or discharging of the ears or eyes**. Parents/guardians should exercise every precaution and keep their participant home for a at least 24 hours upon showing symptoms of illness. Participants should be well enough to participate in all regularly planned activities upon returning to the program from an illness.

If a participant becomes ill while at New Horizons, they will be placed in a separate room, under the care of staff member, and the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick the participant up immediately.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

All BPD Special Recreation Staff are Medic First Aid/CPR/AED certified. New Horizons always carries a fully equipped first aid kit with them. In the case of minor injuries; the injury will be assessed, first aid will be administered, and an agency accident report will be completed.

In the event a participant is seriously injured at New Horizons, parents will be immediately notified and staff are required to call emergency medical service. They will then transport the participant to a hospital of choice or the nearest hospital (if a parent/guardian cannot be reached). Staff are not allowed to transport participants, but they will accompany the participant to the hospital.

Your authorization for BPD Special Recreation staff to take whatever emergency medical measures deemed necessary is understood to be part of this agreement.

Emergency Contacts

EMERGENCY CONTACTS & PICK-UP

The parent/guardian is required to provide at least two emergency contacts, at the time of registration. These contacts **MUST** be listed under participant's Emergency Contact/Pick Up information in ePACT. These individuals will be contacted when parent/guardian is unavailable and your participant is sick, injured, or still at New Horizons after the program ends. The parent/guardian will be called first and foremost – the people listed will only be contacted if a parent/guardian is unreachable.

- The emergency contact person **MUST** show a state issued photo ID when picking the participant up for the first time – or unrecognizable to New Horizons staff.
- No one other than emergency contacts listed will be able to pick your participant up from New Horizons.
- If there are to be any changes to the emergency contact information – it **MUST** be updated via ePACT.
 - If you need assistance making changes to ePACT, contact the Special Recreation Supervisor.
- These procedures are implemented for the safety of participants and staff.

Additional Fees & Memberships

SPENDING MONEY

All fees are included in the New Horizons annual program fee. Occasionally, Community Outings will allow for participants to bring small amounts of spending money. Participants are responsible for handling their own money. On a case-by-case basis, staff will accept money for participants who are unable to handle their own spending money. Please inform the Special Recreation Supervisor prior to an outing to accommodate this request. Staff are not responsible for lost or stolen money.

LIBRARY CARD

Participants that live within Belvidere Township are able to obtain a library card without incurring any additional fees. Those that do not live within the township boundaries may purchase a library membership, if desired. If participants are residents and members of the Rockford Public Library, their cards are valid for use at the IDA Public Library. A library card is required for a participant to check out books from the IDA Public Library. Occasionally, the group will visit other area libraries – parent/guardians will be notified in advance for the rules pertaining to the specific visit location.

IT IS NOT REQUIRED TO HAVE A LIBRARY CARD TO ATTEND THE LIBRARY VISITS ON DESIGNATED DATES. The library cards are only necessary for those wishing to check out books.

Communication

Communication is very important to the success of New Horizons. All of us – participants, parents/guardians, staff, etc. work together to ensure everyone involved has a positive while participating in the program. This can only be achieved through effective communication.

NEW HORIZONS UTILIZES THE FOLLOWING METHODS OF COMMUNICATION:

Clipboard: all participants will be signed into the program via the program clipboard. A staff member will check everyone in as they enter the lobby and prior to them entering the program space. This is also the same location to sign participants out each day. Be on the lookout – program announcements may also be placed on this clipboard for an added layer of communication.

Email: all flyers, activity calendars, menus, and any other pertinent information regarding New Horizons will be regularly sent out via email. Please make sure the Special Recreation Supervisor has a current and working email and it is also updated in RecTrac (BPD registration software) & ePACT. If you prefer to receive paper copies of anything emailed – please notify the Special Recreation Supervisor.

Special Activity/Menu Flyers: flyers, special activity notes, and monthly menus are distributed once per month. The Community Outing flyers are distributed quarterly. These flyers include information about upcoming trips, Community Outings, special activities, and lunch plans for the entire month. The goal is to help prepare participants and their parents/guardians for the month's activities.

Progress Reports: are written, as needed, to let parents/guardians know more formally about the participants' progress – both positive and negative. When a Progress Report is written, a staff member will explain the day's occurrence, ask the parent/guardian to sign the report as an acknowledgement, and then be provided with a copy for their records.

Phone: a parent/guardian may call at any time during the day to check on their participant's progress or leave a message. The phone number of the program cell phone is 815-209-6239. If no one answers, please leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible, during program hours. If you call during non-program hours – a staff member will return your call as soon as the phone is retrieved for the next program session.

Drop-off & Pick-up: face to face communication is the preferred method of communication. Staff are available during drop-off and pick-up times to answer any questions or address concerns.

Website: check out www.belviderepark.org for additional information about the park district and its services, upcoming events, and to register for programs.

Facebook: find us on Facebook – search Belvidere Park District Special Recreation. Hit the like button to stay updated on programs, events, and program photos.



Parent Meetings/Socials: an annual parent meeting is held in December, to effectively pass along updates for the new year. Also periodically, there are social events held to get to know families better throughout the year.

Communication

NEW HORIZONS UTILIZES THE FOLLOWING METHODS OF COMMUNICATION CONTINUED:

Remind: a text service to specifically communicate pertinent program information in real time. Download the app on your smartphone to stay updated with New Horizons happenings, along with easy to find reminders. Downloading the app is not required, but helpful.



Tuesday/Thursday Option: TEXT @nhth to 81010

Wednesday/Friday Option: TEXT @nhwf to 81010

Transportation

BPD TRANSPORTATION

The BPD Special Recreation does not provide transportation to participants to and from New Horizons. The district will, however, provide transportation for all Community Outings and all other activities which are not held at the BPD Special Recreation Facility. The following guidelines have been implemented to ensure the safety of participants and staff during transportation to and from activities:

- All passengers must be seated and buckled at all times.
- All wheelchairs must have brakes and be in working order.
- Participants riding in Amigo-type wheelchairs must be able to transfer into appropriate seating and be always buckled into the seat.
- It is the responsibility of the driver to determine whether it is safe to transport a participant. If the driver feels conditions are not appropriate for transport, they may refuse transportation to any participant at any time.
- *Belvidere Park District reserves the right to refuse transportation to any participant.*

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Many New Horizons participants take advantage of public transportation to arrive and depart from the BPD Special Recreation Facility, which can often be unpredictable. New Horizons begins at 9:00am and ends at 4:00pm, daily. Late arrivals due to transportation may interfere with the program and its structure. We do not alter New Horizons or its activities to accommodate any type of public transportation. There are times when public transportation arrives at the BPD Special Recreation Facility prior to 4:00pm and leaves on their own accord – without picking up participants because they are not ready to leave. If this occurs, it then becomes the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pick up their participant and cover all late fees incurred.

New Horizons Staff

BPD SPECIAL RECREATION STAFF

Staff are your most important means of communication. Staff members are busy, but will always make time for questions, concerns, suggestions, and of course, compliments. Please hold all questions and comments until the conclusion of the program or before the program begins. If you have an emergency, please contact the Special Recreation Supervisor immediately. These guidelines will ensure and maintain the quality and staff ratios of New Horizons.

STAFF TO PARTICIPANT RATIO

New Horizons utilizes a 1-staff to every 6-participant ratio, but will lower on an as needed basis. For example – during swimming activities if a participant has a seizure disorder, they require a 1:1 ratio while in the water.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is a list of staff positions at New Horizons as well as a brief description of their typical duties.

- Special Recreation Manager (Katie Humphrey) – responsible for year-round operations of the Special Recreation department. Along with the Special Recreation Supervisor – assists participants, staff, and parents/guardians, as necessary.
- Special Recreation Supervisor (Sean Cramer) – directly supervises staff and organizes New Horizons on a daily basis. BPD Special Recreation is fortunate to have a qualified and experienced staff in this position. The supervisor is experienced in working with the participants and excited to work with program staff and patrons.
- Horizons Coordinator – works closely with the Special Recreation Supervisor to ensure all aspects of New Horizons are running smoothly. The coordinator will bring ideas and create meaningful activities while maintaining the quality and safety of New Horizons. They will also work closely with other staff and participants to make sure plans are being carried out accordingly.
- New Horizons Instructor – works directly with participants. Instructors are responsible for the direct safety and well-being of participants. They will plan and implement various activities to ensure purposeful and fun experiences.

STAFF TRAINING

Training is the department's most useful tool for ensuring a professional, prepared, and caring staff. Training topics include safety, dealing with challenging behaviors in a positive manner, program/activity planning, emergency procedures, positive communication, disability awareness, and more. All staff are Medic First Aid/CPR/AED trained. Additionally, select seasoned staff are trained in Handle with Care Behavior Management techniques. Staff attend monthly (weekly in the summer months) in-service trainings as throughout the year. If any additional training is administered, procedures are reviewed and problems with solutions are discussed, and information disseminated at weekly (or monthly staff meetings).

Fundraising

HUG AN ATHLETE 5K

Join BPD Special Recreation for the 13th Annual 5k Walk/Run/Roll! Individuals of all abilities have the opportunity to participate in this great event, for even greater cause! All proceeds from the Hug an Athlete 5k benefit the BPD Special Recreation's SO Athletes and used to assist with registration fees through scholarships, purchase of uniforms & equipment, the annual athlete banquet & parade, and much more!

New Horizons participants are encouraged to help at the race in any capacity, but mostly as Huggers! Huggers are on site to give hugs (handshakes, high fives, & fist bumps are ok too!) to the walkers, runners, and rollers that cross the finish line. Giving hugs are not only a special treat for the 5k participants, but also allows 5k supporters a chance to see and interact with the athletes they are supporting and helping to raise funds. So, come on out, give a hug, and drink some hot cocoa!

Date:	Sunday, February 22, 2026
Time:	1:00pm (race start)
Location:	Doty Park, Belvidere

For more information about the following, please contact the BPD Special Recreation Staff listed:

- Volunteering at the 5k or to sign up to be a Hugger – contact Gina Ruvalcaba at gruvalcaba@belviderepark.org or 815-547-5711 x602.
- Registering to be a walker/runner/roller – Katie Humphrey at khumphrey@belviderepark.org or 815-547-5711 x600.
- Sponsorship opportunities: contact Sean Cramer at scramer@belviderepark.org or 815-547-5711 x601.

NEW HORIZONS RUMMAGE SALE

New Horizons hosts 2 rummage sales each year – one in the summer and one in the fall. All proceeds from the sales are used to help participants take part in special community outings and purchase program supplies. You can help make the rummage sales a huge success by contributing through item donations that the participants can sell – or – by stopping by the sale to find some new treasures of your own!

The program accepts donations for the bi-annual sales by appointment ONLY and no earlier than the first of the month prior to the month of the sale. New Horizons does not have space to store items for longer periods of time. Please contact the Special Recreation Supervisor, Sean Cramer, at scramer@belviderepark.org or 815-547-5711 x601 to arrange donation drop off or with any other questions.

Mark your calendars for the 2026 Rummage Sale dates and times:

Spring Sale:	May 7-8
Fall Sale:	September 3-4

Keep an eye out! There may also be other various fundraisers throughout the year. Your support means the world to all of us here at the BPD Special Recreation and New Horizons!

2026 MANDATORY PARENT MEETING

December 1, 2026

4:30pm – 6:30pm



AGENDA

- 1. Participant Prepared Dinner & Registration Open** 4:30 – 5:30 pm
- 2. Meeting** 5:30 – 6:30 pm
- 3. Paperwork & Registration Open** 6:30 – 7:00 pm

