



## TOWN OF CHESHIRE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT 06410  
Telephone (203) 271-6690 FAX (203) 271-6626



Dear Parent,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for having your child participate in our youth programs and weekend activities. One of the goals for our youth programs/activities is to establish an enriching environment where children can participate in positive social interactions, create new friendships, build their self-esteem, and ultimately have fun. In an effort to maintain the safety and inclusion of each child we have decided to have a no cell phone & ipod policy. These devices create isolation and interfere with children positively interacting with others students and Yellow House Staff. Another area of concern is that most cell phones have cameras and GPS features which pose a major privacy concern such as your child having their photo taken by another student and posted innocently online without your permission, as well as “checking in” to the Yellow House on websites such as Facebook, and people knowing your child’s whereabouts.

Our “No Cell Phone/Ipod Policy” has been in effect since March 2, 2012 and has proven to be a beneficial decision for both staff and participants. We kindly encourage parents to not send your child with a cell phone, ipod, MP3 player, or handheld video games for our 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade afterschool or weekend activities including trips. If your child brings his/her cell phone to an activity we will ask them to put their phone on vibrate and place their phone in a cell phone “parking lot” when entering the house. The cell phone “parking lot” will be in a secure location and children will be able to ask a staff at any time to use their phone to call a parent only. At the end of the program we will hand back all of the collected cell phones.

There is a landline at the Yellow House that can always be used by the children to contact a parent or a parent is able to call that line anytime to speak with their child. The Yellow House phone number is (203) 271-2769. Senior staff will have a town issued cell phone on them during 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade trips taken as a group, that number is (203) 439-1175, parents are encouraged to call that number if they have an important message to relay to their child or our staff regarding a change in pickup details or in the event of an emergency while we are off premises.

The no cell policy is also in place for our all Summer trips and activities. On our trips children are divided into groups with at least one Yellow House staff member who carries his/her cell phone with them for the duration of the trip. The Supervisor on the trip will also have the above cell phone so that any child, parent, or staff may contact them in case of an emergency.

This new policy has increased individual social interactions and created a more positive environment where healthy friendships develop. I encourage parents to contact me with any concerns or comments. Please don’t hesitate to call or email me.

Kind Regards,

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