



SUMMER CAMP PARENT HANDBOOK



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Whether it is learning a new skill, splashing in the pool, or exploring nature, summer camp at the Y provides an opportunity for children to build meaningful relationships and gain important life skills.

ACCESS FOR ALL

As a non-profit organization, the YMCA is committed to providing equitable opportunities for people of all income levels to access healthy living and youth development programs like summer camp.

Participants requesting financial assistance for summer camp, please visit our website for more information.

ABOUT OUR CAMP STAFF

Day camp staff are selected based on their experience, attitude, skills, and their ability to accept and demonstrate the YMCA core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. The Y executes an extensive screening process which includes undergoing a behavioral interview to determine the best candidate possible, as well as extensive employment and reference checks.

YMCA Buffalo Niagara establishes standards for key aspects of camp operation, program quality, health, and safety of campers. All camps have staff that are certified in CPR, First Aid, and Responding to Emergencies on duty during all camp hours. In addition, all lifeguards hold their current Lifeguard/First Aid Certifications, CPR, and Oxygen Administration Certification.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY

Your involvement with the YMCA Summer camp program and cooperation with its policies and procedures is essential. Please take some time to read and understand the policies contained in this handbook. Take every opportunity to talk with YMCA staff about your child and ask your child about the program each day.

It is the responsibility of the primary parent to be available by phone in case of an emergency or incident during program hours. Please notify the Program Director if an alternate person should be contacted in lieu of the primary parent. It is the responsibility of the parent to update contact information (phone number, etc.) in their YMCA account in the instance that the number changes.



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WHAT TO BRING

Campers must bring their own lunch and beverage in a labeled bag each day unless attending a camp where lunch is provided (please check with your branch). Bag lunches are kept with the camper's belongings, so please pack accordingly. All clothes and belongings that come to camp with your child must be labeled. Also, please note any food allergies during registration.

- Bagged lunch (depending on camp)
- Water Bottle (labeled with name)
- Swimsuit and towel
- Sunscreen-labeled with your child's name
- Bug spray (DEET free)
- Comfortable clothing that can get a little messy
- Backpack
- Sneakers
- Raincoat if necessary
- Change of clothes (Required for Young Explorers)

DAILY DRESS AND GEAR

Please label all belongings with your child's name and phone number. Please make sure your child dresses according to the weather each day. Campers will be outdoors most of the day unless it is raining. No flip flops or open-toe shoes.

Depending on the camp your child may be required to bring their gear from space to space. Please ensure all items fit in a backpack.

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND SUNSCREEN

We encourage all campers to come to camp wearing sunscreen. We encourage application several times each day. While we cannot apply the sunscreen on the campers we will monitor and assist them in applying it themselves. Each day campers should bring labeled sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, and wear light colored, protective clothing.

DROP OFF AND PICK-UP

A parent/guardian or Authorized Pickup will be required to sign the child out every afternoon. Photo I.D. is required for sign-out to ensure the safety of program participants. No child will be released to an adult that is not listed on the authorized list. All authorized pick-ups must be over 18 years old.

CAMP DETAILS

Bathroom

All children must be able to use a bathroom facility independently and be completely potty trained. Pull ups or diapers are not permitted at camp.

The staff understands that accidents may occur, therefore please bring a change of clothes for your child. Your child should be able to change themselves independently. If your child has an accident and does not have a change of clothes, you will be called and asked to come to the YMCA with new clothes.

Illness

A sick child should be kept at home, both for his/her sake and that of others. Please inform us of the nature of the illness, especially if it is a communicable disease. Credits can be issued on a case by case basis.

Medication

If your child needs to take medication while in the YMCA program, medication must be brought to the YMCA staff, directly by a parent or guardian, and accompanied by a Medication Form that can be obtained from a staff member. The medication must be in its original container and labeled with the child's first and last name. Written instructions specifying the quantity and time to be administered, the name and phone number of your doctor, and other instructions must accompany the medication. All medicine is stored and handled by the camp director who will dispense the medication as per the medication consent form. Any inhalers or Epi-Pens that are needed when a child exerts him/herself will be kept with the senior counselor in charge of the group.

Injuries

In case of minor injuries, YMCA staff will administer first aid and you will be informed of the incident when you pick your child up. If your child is seriously injured, the YMCA office will contact the designated person listed on the child's registration form. If we cannot contact a responsible party, we may call an ambulance or paramedic and have your child taken to a hospital accompanied by a staff member. Please make sure that the information on your emergency contact form is current and accurate.



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Personal Belongings

Please make sure your child's belongings are labeled. We discourage children from bringing any toys, electronics, trading cards, etc. to camp.

Lost and found

All items that are left by campers will be placed in a Lost and Found box inside the YMCA camp facility.

Cell Phone Policy

Campers are not permitted to have or use personal cell phones or smart watches while at camp. In case of emergency, please contact the YMCA Camp phone number. If a camper has a phone or smart watch with them at camp, the parent will be called to return to camp to retrieve it.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather, the camp will be moved inside until it is safe to resume outdoor activities. In case of camp closure parents/guardians will be contacted by YMCA staff.

CAMPER CONDUCT

YMCA Day Camp is geared for fun, exploration, and adventure! Day campers are broken out into age specific groups to ensure that all activities are focused on their specific interests and abilities. Your child's success at YMCA Day Camp requires their ability to independently, safely, and cooperatively:

- Exhibit appropriate behavior without excessive individualized attention
- Function within a group of campers (with staff supervision)
- Be responsible for personal belongings such as backpacks, water bottles, etc.
- Contribute to the overall enthusiastic atmosphere of the camp community.

Behavior Management

The Y is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for children in our care so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Our first step in discipline is prevention. We provide clear, reasonable limits for children's behavior and maintain them. We reinforce positive behaviors and redirect negative behaviors. We help children recognize and identify their feelings as valid and acceptable. If a child's behavior is harmful to him/herself or to others, we will intercede.

We make every effort to communicate and solve individual behavior challenges; however, if a problem persists, we reserve the right to remove a child temporarily or permanently.

The safety and well-being of each child in our care is our number one priority. When behavior expectations are not met, YMCA staff will implement our behavior management policy to help correct the undesired behavior. We require collaboration with parent/guardian to address behavior in the context of our program.

Extreme Behavior Issues

In extreme cases, a child's behavior may warrant immediate suspension or expulsion from the program. Such cases include the use of profane or abusive language or any aggressive behavior which threatens or causes physical harm to other participants or staff. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. That is, any use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person (including, but not limited to, physical, emotional, verbal, sexual) is not tolerated.

PARENT CONDUCT

Any parent/guardian exhibiting misconduct towards or in the presence of staff and/or program participants (e.g. threats, harassment, or pick-up violations) may be required to make arrangements for a different authorized person to drop off/pick-up the child. If the situation is severe or the behavior continues, it may lead to the termination of your child from the program.



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SWIMMING (Check for onsite swimming)

At the Y we value your child's safety in the water. We teach progressive swimming lessons as part of the summer camp experience at many locations. If applicable, your child will have scheduled swim times during their camp day. If a pool is not available, water games will be planned daily. Please help ensure that your child comes prepared each day with a swimsuit and towel. You do not need to provide a flotation device for your child. Swim lesson plans are developed by the YMCA Aquatics team and implemented by swim instructors. We comply with NYS Department of Health Swim Ratios. All lifeguards have met the requirements for employment at the YMCA including current Lifeguard/First Aid Certifications, CPR, and Oxygen Administration Certification.

All campers are expected to independently change for swimming or water play. Please practice changing at home so your camper is ready for fun when they get to camp!

FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Deposits

When registering, you have the choice of paying the camp fees in full or paying a \$30 non-transferable/non-refundable deposit per week, per child for all weeks your child(ren) will attend. This \$30 deposit will be deducted from the weekly camp balance.

2025 CAMP BILLING SCHEDULE

Payment Due Date

Full payment is due on the Monday two weeks prior to the week your child is scheduled to attend camp.

Any billing questions please call (716) 565-6000 x120 or email: childcare@ymcabn.org

Membership pricing

To qualify for the member discount, applicant must be an active member in good standing at the time of registration, and throughout the camp season.

Attendance Policy

If your child does not attend camp on a particular day, there will be no refund or credit for that day.

Cancellations

We understand that things may come up and you may need to cancel or change your camp weeks selections. Please notify our Childcare Billing Department as soon as possible when needing to cancel or make changes. Please note that many camps fill up quickly and changes to your child's schedule may not be able to be accommodated.

CREDIT CARD DRAFTING OR EFT

All camp fees will be paid automatically through credit card drafting.

Returned Drafts or EFT

If a credit card or EFT draft is returned to the YMCA, a fee of \$20.00 will be assessed.

Past Due Accounts

Any parent/guardian owing a past due balance may not continue to register their child for additional weeks of day camp or other YMCA programs until their account balance has been paid in full. The YMCA reserves the right to suspend camp or other services for accounts 2 or more weeks in arrears. Returned payments will be assessed a minimum fee of \$20.

Late Pick-Up Charges

If you know that you may be late in picking up your child, please contact the YMCA office as soon as possible. Please note, if your child needs to be picked up after 6:00 pm, a late fee of \$20 per child will be applied to your bill. If we find this to be a consistent pattern, we will address this concern with you to avoid having your child dismissed from the program.

Refunds

In the case of illness or injury, all paid fees (less the non-refundable deposit) will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Payment Summaries

Payment history summaries for tax purposes will be available on your YMCA Daxko account. Our tax identification number is: 16-0743231.