



WELCOME TO THE YMCA'S SUMMER DAY CAMP!

Summer of 2023 will offer campers a chance to choose their own adventure in ways never before seen at the Birmingham YMCA Day Camps! Campers will experience daily opportunities to select which games, crafts, or activities they participate in. Not only will they get to follow their own interests, but they'll make their own path throughout the summer.

Being part of our summer day camp program goes beyond silly songs and games. Camp is about learning who you are, becoming what you want to be, developing new skills and healthy habits, reaching goals and building relationships. Our summer day camp helps kids gain self confidence, build character, and focuses on the whole child in spirit, mind and body.

This Parent Manual provides information to help you and your child have a successful experience. Please read everything carefully, and let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We're looking forward to the best summer ever.

We take pride in our programs. If your experience is not a positive one, please contact your Summer Day Camp On-Site Director.

For billing and account information, please email childcare@ymcabham.org.

CAMP HOURS

7:00am-9:00am Morning Extended Care

9:00am-4:15pm Program Time

4:15pm-6:00pm Afternoon Extended Care

****Morning and afternoon extended care is included in the weekly fee.***

COMMUNICATION

YMCA staff will provide you with periodic updates about your child's participation at the Y. We strive to communicate effectively about our programs through newsletters, email and staff communication during drop off and pick up. We encourage all families to sign up for Remind 101. Parents will receive an email invitation to join and a code will be provided in camp communications. If you have questions, please contact your Summer Day Camp On-Site Director

EMAIL ADDRESS ON FILE

Be sure to update your online account with an accurate email address. The Friday prior to your child's first day, you will receive an email with important information for the week. The email will let you know what is planned for each week including dress-up days or special activities.

CUSTODY

Please alert the YMCA of child custody arrangements. It is imperative that official, current court documents are maintained in your child's file if custody or visitation is a concern. Without court orders, we cannot withhold a child from his/her parent. Based on the information that you share with your director, he/she will tell you if additional documentation is required.

The parent(s) who register the child for the summer day camp is responsible for payments. We cannot subdivide fees.

WRITTEN NOTES

Parents should write a note or send an email in instances of:

- Early pickup
- Medication needs (Please review the "Health & Safety" section.)
- Modified activities, extra help or additional support for your child

WHAT TO WEAR

- Dress appropriately for the outdoors, play and the weather.
- All shoes must be closed-toe and have a closed heel. Sneakers are recommended. Crocs are not permitted.
- A cap or hat for sun protection is advisable.
- All belongings should be clearly marked with the child's first and last name.

WHAT TO BRING

Campers should bring the following daily in a backpack

- Lunch and 2 snacks daily (more detailed information below)
- Refillable water bottle
- Sun screen (children must be able to self apply sunscreen)
- Swimsuit and towel

Toys, personal listening devices, portable game devices, cell phones, trading cards, stuffed animals, pets and money **should stay at home.**

The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items.

LUNCHES AND SNACKS

- Participants should bring a nutritious lunch, beverages/water bottle and two snacks.
- We recommend small, cooler-type lunch boxes, clearly marked with the child's name.
- Non-perishable items are recommended since refrigeration is not available.
- Children do not have access to a microwave.
- Healthy snack options include fresh fruit, raisins, pretzels, small granola bars and 100-calorie snack packs.
- Water, sugar-free beverages, and six-ounce servings of 100% fruit juice are healthy beverage options.
- Participants are not allowed to purchase items from the vending machines.
- We make accommodations for children with food allergies.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

At the YMCA, we believe in reinforcing good behavior and teaching our campers the importance of our four core character traits: respect, responsibility, caring, and honesty. We recognize good character at camp by pointing out children who display these traits throughout the day through incentive programs like bead necklaces.

Devotions are a daily time for campers to reflect on goals, experiences and positive behaviors. If you have questions about this part of our day, please talk with your child's Summer Day Camp On-Site Director.

SWIMMING PROCEDURES

Campers will be required to take a swim test weekly on their first swim day regardless of the previous week's test.

Swimmers **EARN a GREEN BAND** when they can:

- Jump into the water over their head and resurface.
- Tread water for 30 seconds consistently without touching the side of the pool.
- Swim 25 yards non-stop.

Those who do not pass the swim test will be issued a **red wristband**, considered a non-swimmer and will be expected to:

- Wear a U.S Coast Guard approved personal flotation device either provided by parent of the YMCA
- Wear band while swimming
- **Those who decline to take the test will be considered nonswimmers.**

MEDICINE PROCEDURES

Please do not pack medication with your child's belongings. Parents (not the child) must leave necessary medication with a staff member during drop off. Medication must be in its original container with written instructions for dispensing. A Medication Form must be provided for staff to dispense all medications including over the counter medications such as topical ointments. Forms will be available via emails and on the website closer to the start of summer.

Generally, children are prohibited from having medication with them, unless the medication is dispensed on their person (such as an insulin pump) or a doctor has specifically indicated in writing that the child may self-administer and safety precautions are met for the safe handling of the medication. If a doctor has given this written permission, a copy must be provided to the YMCA. A parent or guardian must give the medication to the program staff. For safety reasons, all medications are stored and locked in the program office.

Notice: For those children who may require injections, medications that require insertion into a body cavity, and/or have other special medical needs, the YMCA will consider all requests for reasonable modifications to its program, including meeting with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of such children to discuss such modifications, and strive to develop a mutually acceptable plan designed to address the medical circumstances of each child, provided that the requested accommodation does not amount to a fundamental alteration to its program.

SUNSCREEN

Sunscreen can be brought with the child to the program. Children must be able to apply sunscreen independently. Our staff are not permitted to apply sunscreen on the children. Please apply sunscreen at home before coming to the Y.

WHEN TO STAY HOME

Please do not send your child to YMCA programs with any of the following symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Excessive coughing
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Fever
- Head lice
- Undiagnosed rash, sore, or other skin condition
- Any other contagious disease or symptom

A child must be diarrhea, vomiting and fever-free for a **full 24 hours before** returning to the program. A physician's note may be required before re-admitting a child to the program.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of severe rain, lightning or other unsafe conditions, activities will be modified as necessary to ensure the safety of all participants.

On CODE ORANGE days, outdoor activities are modified with frequent water breaks and play in shady areas. On CODE RED days, activities are modified with virtual field trips or indoor play depending on the program site.

Severe weather may affect the pickup process. In cases of driving rain and/or lightning, staff will keep children sheltered until conditions improve. This may slow down the pickup process, requiring drivers to wait. The safety of YMCA children and staff is our first priority.

DROP OFF & PICKUP

Specific drop off and pickup procedures will vary from location and will be communicated in our weekly newsletters. Please check with your Summer Day Camp On-Site Director for details. Parents will receive the detailed information prior to summer. Parents will be asked to present a photo ID at the time of pickup.

PICKUP PROCEDURES

At pickup time, children will only be released to parents, legal guardians and those designated as authorized pickups on your child's account.

If you need to add a permanent authorized pick up, you can update your authorized pick up list [HERE](#). Please notify your director that you made an update to the list.

If you plan to have anyone else pick up your child for a specific date and do not want them added to the list permanently, you must notify the staff in writing via a handwritten note or email the Summer Day Camp On-Site Director.

Parents who drop off or pick up children outside of scheduled times should go to the Front Desk for assistance in picking up their child.

Severe weather may affect the pickup process. In cases of driving rain and/or lightning, staff will keep children sheltered until conditions improve. This may slow down the pickup process, requiring drivers to wait. The safety of YMCA children and staff is our first priority. The YMCA/our staff or volunteers do not buckle children of any age into their car seats or fasten seatbelts, even when requested by the parents. We make every effort to be efficient in the pick up line. We provide parking spaces or space for a parent to pull up so they can secure their own child.

PICKUP LATE FEE

Children not picked up by the close of the program will be supervised by YMCA staff. The Y will assess a fee of \$1 per minute after the program officially ends (for which payment will be expected upon pick up). Every attempt will be made to contact the parent. If the parent has still not arrived one hour after program end time and parents are not reachable, DHR and local authorities will be contacted.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

At the YMCA of Greater Birmingham, our behavior expectations and discipline procedures are based on our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We believe in creating a safe, secure, and fun environment where all youth have the opportunity to learn the importance of demonstrating good character. We believe that in order to do this, all youth need to know and understand the rules and expectations for appropriate behavior. We also believe that when youth do not follow the rules or when they demonstrate inappropriate behavior, we have an opportunity to help youth learn from their mistakes.

The YMCA promotes behavior guidance and discipline through creating a positive environment, developing structure and clear limits, promoting social and emotional learning, reinforcing our core values and addressing challenging behaviors.

The YMCA of Greater Birmingham youth programs use six simple rules to communicate behavior expectations to the youth in our care. The purpose of these rules is to ensure the safety of our campers and staff and to create a positive environment for all.

The rules are:

- Listen and follow directions.
- Do what's right.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Try everything and do your best.
- Be an Upstander. If you see something, say something.
- Be safe and have fun!

All youth are expected to follow the rules established by the YMCA for the safety of all youth in the program. Your cooperation and support ensure that all youth have a safe and fun experience.

The YMCA does not allow the following behaviors including but not limited to:

- Any action that could threaten the physical or emotional safety of the youth, other youth or staff. Prohibited conduct may include, but is not limited to: abusive jokes, insults, slurs, threats, name-calling or intimidation
- Destructive behavior
- Behavior that is a violation of personal boundaries or is of a habitual nature and negatively impacts the program, and/or safety and enjoyment of others
- Behavior that is of a sexual nature
- Not following procedures related to help reduce the spread of COVID0-19. This may include disregarding social distancing and purposefully coughing/sneezing on each other.

The YMCA uses positive discipline which means staff members promote desired behaviors through teaching and reinforcement. Staff will redirect or problem-solve with youth when they are not displaying desired behaviors, rather than restrict behaviors by taking away opportunities or controlling youth with fear of punishment. We believe this approach focuses on the needs of the youth and contributes positively to the youth's overall development.

Staff shall use positive discipline, which shall include the following:

- Communicate to youth using positive statements
- Encourage youth, with adult support, to use their own words and solutions in order to resolve interpersonal conflicts
- Communicate with youth by getting on their level and talking to them in a calm, quiet manner about the behavior that is expected.

YMCA DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

If a youth is unable to meet established behavior expectations, YMCA staff will follow these disciplinary procedures below. The YMCA staff desire to partner with families of the youth in our care. If at any time you have concerns about your child's behavior or success in our program, please do not hesitate to reach out to your Youth Director to set up a conference.

1. Conversation between staff and youth to discuss behavior and reset expectations.
2. Staff will first use positive reinforcement and redirection to redirect a youth's behavior. If this is ineffective, staff may use a timeout as an opportunity for the youth to take a break from the behavior before rejoining the group.
3. Staff will communicate with parents/guardians if/when youth is not following established YMCA rules. This communication may be at check out, over the phone or via a parent conference.
4. If positive discipline and redirection are ineffective in changing the youth's behavior, the Youth Director may suspend the youth. The length of suspension will be determined based on each individual situation. Factors such as type/severity of behavior, behavior history, age of youth, etc. will be considered when determining the length of the suspension.
5. If the youth continues to have challenges after a suspension, the Youth Director may set up a conference with the parent/guardian to develop a behavior plan for the youth.
6. If neither suspensions nor a behavior plan are effective in changing the child's behavior, the child may be dismissed from the program. Dismissal from the program for disciplinary reasons could result in permanent removal from all YMCA programs.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The goal of the YMCA of Greater Birmingham is to meaningfully include all youth and provide accommodations in our programs when needed. To help us achieve this goal, we respectfully ask parents or guardians to inform the YMCA, prior to the start of the program, of any special circumstances which may affect your child's ability to participate. By providing information regarding the strengths and needs of your child, the staff can prepare helpful accommodations that will better serve all children in our programs.

Upon being informed of such circumstances, the Summer Day Camp On-Site Director or other staff member may request a meeting to gather more information and discuss the accommodations that can be created to successfully include your child.

BULLYING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Bullying is any unwanted behavior that involves a power imbalance. Here at the Y, our goal is to stop bullying, and we encourage our participants, parents, and staff to be Upstanders. An Upstander is one who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. If there is disclosure, discovery, or suspicion of bullying, we will handle each instance case by case and with care. At the Y we are building a caring, respectful, honest, and responsible community for all; the safety of our program participants is our main concern.

Conversely, we define conflict as a disagreement or argument in which both sides express their views and there is an equal power balance. We believe conflict with resolution is a natural and important part of Youth Development. Conflict can be constructive if managed in the right way. We will identify and resolve conflicts in a healthy and proactive fashion. The conflict resolution skills we learn and practice will make a positive impact on our Y programs and in every child's future.

CARING STAFF

The YMCA prides itself on hiring quality staff that embody our Mission and have a passion for being a positive role model for children. Many of our counselors are college students. Staff members are selected through a comprehensive application and interview process, and often have previous experience in other YMCA programs.

Each staff member completes training that emphasizes the importance of safety, child development and fun. All staff are trained in CPR, 1st Aid, AED and must pass a background check and CA/N cleared. The YMCA strives to maintain a 1:12 ratio for youth programs.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The YMCA believes in serving the needs of everyone in our community regardless of their ability to pay full fees. Financial assistance, based on need, is available for Summer Day Camp. We will accept financial assistance applications beginning January 2. Awards are given on a first come basis. For more information click [HERE](#).

Applications should be emailed to childcare@ymcabham.org.

DEPOSITS AND WEEKLY FEES

Deposits will be required at the time of registration for each week. This deposit will hold your child's spot for that particular week. Deposits are \$15 per child per week. **Please note a change for 2023: Deposits are non-refundable and cannot be transferred to another week.**

All fees must be made via automatic payment from either your checking account or debit/credit card. Fees will be scheduled for payment on the due date of Wednesday prior to the week of care. You will be charged for each week that you reserve regardless of attendance unless you cancel the week according to our cancellation policy.

While we traditionally don't allow for drop ins, should this be approved for your location, our team will update your child's registration for the week of care and payment will be made with the payment method on file.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If the YMCA cancels a week, a full refund will be issued for fees paid. If a parent wishes to cancel a week a **2 week advance written notice is required**. Registration Fees and Weekly Deposits are non-refundable and cannot be transferred to another week. No refunds or credits will be issued for requests not meeting the 2-week notice and weekly balance will be considered due. Cancellation notices should be sent to childcare@ymcabham.org.
