



FIND YOUR REASON TO PLAY. TO LEARN. TO CONNECT.

YMCA OF CENTRAL NEW YORK
CAMP FAMILY HANDBOOK

2025



INDEX

REGISTRATION	3
Program Withdrawal Procedure	
Payment Procedure	
BASIC QUICK GUIDE	4
ABOUT CAMPS	5
YMCA Mission Statement	
YMCA Summer Camp Goal	
Our Commitment	
Licensing	
Staff	
Group Structure	
Character Development	
HEALTH, ILLNESS, INJURY, & MEDICATION POLICIES	6-7
ATTENDANCE POLICY	8
Drop Off & Pick Up	
Late Pick Up Fees	
SWIM TEST & BAND POLICY	9
BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES	10
Campers	
Parent Conduct Policy	
Child Abuse Prevention	
NUTRITION	11
OTHER INFORMATION	12
Inclement Weather	
Lost & Found	
Clothing, Sunscreen, & Bug Spray	
Field Trips	
Inclement Weather	

REGISTRATION

You may register your child for as many weeks of camp as you like. When you register, you will be charged a one time Registration Fee, per program, for all the weeks when you register. So if you register for 9 weeks of one camp, you will pay \$25 at the time of registration. If you register for 2 weeks of one camp and 4 weeks of another camp, you will be charged the \$25 fee twice. ***Camp Evergreen requires a \$25 fee per session registered.* This fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.** Registration fees are not applied to the cost of camp.

Immunization records for each camper must be submitted to the camp office by June 1st.

PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

We understand that your summer plans may change after registration. All withdrawal request must be submitted in writing to the camp office, not over the phone or left in a message.

All camp families will have until **May 1st** to make any cancellations to your registered camps **without additional fees**.

If you request any cancellations **AFTER MAY 1ST**, you will be charged a \$25 cancellation fee per child for each week/session you are cancelling. If you cancel after May 1st, you will receive a refund minus the cancellation and registration fees. This is to help ensure we are planning for camp accurately. We encourage everyone to have their plans before May 1st. Refunds will be permitted until June 15th (see refund policy below).

Families who pay in full at the time of registration and cancel before the May 1st deadline will receive a full refund, minus the registration fee.

REFUNDS

Refunds are not permitted after June 15th, regardless of whether or not you attend the program. We understand emergencies may occur and will be taken on a case-by-case basis.

Reminder: Registration Fees are non-refundable and non-transferable at any time after registration.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Full payment for each week is due 2 weeks prior to the start of each week. Payments may be made on your online account at ymcacny.org or with cash, check, or card at the Member Services Desk.

Using your online account, you may also schedule your weekly fees to be charged to a preferred bank account or credit card. These charges will occur on each due date.

A \$35 late fee per account will be applied for any late or returned payments. If payment is not made one week prior to the start of camp, your spot in camp may be forfeited and you will still be responsible for payment. Payments may be submitted at your YMCA branch. **Failure to make payment is not an acceptable form of cancellation.** Please see the Program Withdrawal Procedures.

BASIC QUICK GUIDE

YOUR FIRST DAY OF CAMP

- Introductions
- Get to Know You games
- Rules of Camp
- Pool & Field Trip rules
- Fun Activities
- New Friends

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO CAMP?

- Morning Snack (if attending AM Extended Hours for your camp)
- Bag lunch with juice or water- nothing that needs to be heated or refrigerated
 - Soda, Take Out/Delivery, and Fast Food lunches are not permitted at YMCA Camps
- A Water Bottle

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR TO CAMP?

- Comfortable clothing that you don't mind getting messy
- Sneakers (no sandals, flip flops, or crocs please)
- Socks
- Rain Gear (on rainy days)

HELPFUL HINTS:

- Label morning and afternoon snacks as "Snack" to help your child portion control their food throughout the day.
- Label EVERYTHING- towels, swimsuits, socks, underwear, other clothes, snacks, sunscreen, water bottle, and anything else you'd like your child to bring home.

WHAT SHOULD I LEAVE AT HOME?

- Toys, including fidget toys
- Dolls/Stuffed Animals
- Cell phones, iWatches, iPods, personal gaming devices, cameras, other electronics
- Money (the YMCA is not responsible for money brought to camp)

Note: We ask that your child not bring the above listed items which may be distracting to campers, lost, or broken during the camp day. All toys from home or electronics will be collected by counselors. Please contact your camp's phone number if you need to communicate with your child.

ABOUT CAMPS

YMCA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the YMCA of Central New York is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

YMCA SUMMER CAMP GOAL

YMCA Summer Camps aim to offer a fun, exciting, and safe environment for all who attend. Your child will be able to express their creativity, learn new skills, practice sportsmanship, and build self-esteem. We provide quality attention to impacting achievement, relationships, and belonging within each of our camps.

OUR COMMITMENT

The YMCA of Central New York is an organization that is committed to helping people grow in spirit, mind, and body. YMCAs are here to serve people of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, and incomes. We are community-based and believe that our programs and services should be available to everyone.

Our Annual Giving Campaign raises money for financial assistance to ensure that nobody is turned away due to an inability to pay. Sliding scale scholarships are available to fit each family's financial situation and offer every camper a chance for their best summer ever. To apply for financial assistance or to make a donation visit your Y today or go to ymcacny.org

LICENSING

YMCA of Central New York Camps are licensed by the Onondaga County Department of Health and inspected a minimum of twice yearly. Inspection reports concerning the camps are on file at: Onondaga County Health Department, Division of Environmental Health, John H. Mulroy Civic Center 12th Floor, 421 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, NY 13202, Phone number: 315-435-6617.

STAFF

Our YMCA Camp Counselors are enthusiastic individuals who are committed to providing a safe, diverse, and fun program for all campers. We screen, interview, and select all camp staff based on their ability to work effectively with children. Before the start of camp, our team undergoes extensive training that includes the following: camp policies & procedures, emergency & safety regulations, child abuse prevention, behavior modification, creative age-appropriate programming, staff leadership, first aid, CPR, and much more.

GROUP STRUCTURE

Campers are divided into groups according to their grade level. At minimum, we maintain a 1:12 staff-to-camper ratio, though some of our camps may choose to use smaller ratios when possible.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Like all YMCA youth programming, activities at YMCA camps promote the values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility, in addition to Friendship, Sportsmanship, and Achievement. It is the goal of the camp staff to foster and recognize these values throughout the camping experience.

HEALTH, ILLNESS, INJURY, & MEDICATION POLICIES

HEALTH

YMCA Camps shall accept into the program all children who are able to participate within the regular activities and guidelines as part of a group with a ratio of 1 staff to 12 campers. All program participants must be capable of independent toileting on a consistent basis.

The YMCA complies with applicable federal and state disability discrimination laws and will consider reasonable accommodations to its policies to allow disabled children to enjoy equal benefits of this program. Registrations for camp ask general questions of all parents in order to assess the YMCA's ability to meet the needs of a child. All registrations are held for 3-5 business days to allow sufficient time to review the registration before a child begins attending the program. A member of the Administration Team reviews all registrations. If a parent/guardian has indicated that a child may require additional support, the YMCA will set up a meeting with the parent/guardian and child to develop and Individual Health Care Plan prior to the completion of the enrollment process. This meeting will be used to verify that the YMCA expects to be able to meet the needs of the child without fundamental alteration or undue hardship to the program. At this time, it will also be determined if the child qualifies for limited support services through the Y Kids Inc. program. This program is grant funded and space is limited. Please contact the YMCA Inclusion Coordinator at your branch if you feel your child may qualify.

If a child requires services beyond those the YMCA is able to provide, the YMCA will direct the parent/guardian to local agencies that may be able to provide the child with a support person. It will then become the parent/guardian's responsibility to secure the necessary support person who will be responsible for facilitating participation as well as completing all tasks related to toileting for the child. If the parent/guardian-provided support services are unavailable, the parent/guardian will need to make other child care arrangements for the day.

If applicable, the parent/guardian will also provide a copy of the child's current IEP for the YMCA camp staff.

Every child shall be included in all activities and lesson plans shall allow for adaptation of activities based on a child's individual abilities. All staff shall receive training in techniques & expectations for working with children with special needs.

The registration forms include health and medical history, parental authorization (for emergency examinations, hospitalization, and field trips) and immunization records, which are all mandated by the NYS Health Department. Parents must provide proof of immunizations by attaching a copy of the immunization records with the registration form. Immunization records are either due at the time of registration or by June 1st. Your child may not attend camp without them.

HEALTH, ILLNESS, INJURY, & MEDICATION POLICIES

ILLNESS

Please keep your child at home if they have a communicable illness, fever, cold, or virus. This protects your child and the health of other children at camp. Your child should be symptom-free (without the aid of fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to camp.

If your child becomes ill during camp, you will be notified and asked to make arrangements for the pick-up of your child within 30 minutes of notification. If we cannot reach you, we will attempt to reach your emergency contact person.

If your child should contract a communicable illness such as chicken pox, pink eye, or lice, we ask that you contact the Camp Program Director. A doctor's written consent must be provided before your child will be allowed to return to camp.

Please note: If your child comes to camp with a contagious illness, you will be required to come and pick up your child immediately.

INJURY

Counselors will administer basic first aid if your child has a minor injury. The parent or caregiver will be notified upon pick-up of these minor injuries and will be requested to sign an accident report.

If your child becomes seriously injured during camp, you will be notified immediately. If no one can be reached, we may call emergency services and have your child taken to the emergency care location indicated on the Parent Authorization Form. The Camp Director or another YMCA staff will accompany the child in the absence of an authorized adult.

MEDICATION

All medications being administered at camp, including over-the-counter, require the NYS mandated Written Medication Administration Consent form completed by the parent/guardian AND the child's physician. Please contact the Camp Administration Office to receive a copy of the form. All medication must be in the original bottle and labeled with the child's first and last name and dosing instructions. Please **hand all medication directly to a staff member** at the time of drop off. For the safety of all participants, do not send medication in your camper's bag. The Camp Program Director or a designated counselor will assist your child with their medication at the proper time.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance will be taken daily during the first 15 minutes of the regular camp day. If your child will be late or absent from camp, please notify the staff.

Please call the Camp Program Director as soon as possible if your child will be late or absent from camp.

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

If you are approved through DSS, your child is required to attend camp at least 3 times for the week. If your child does not attend for 3 days or more, you will be responsible for paying the balance of the full weekly rates.

DROP-OFF & PICK UP

Families must park in a legal parking space and walk to the camp site for drop off and pick up. For the safety of everyone, parking in the road or in a fire lane is **NOT** permitted. Please make sure a counselor has acknowledged that you have dropped off your child at the start of the camp day.

Only the people on your child's authorized pick-up list will be allowed to sign your child out from camp. The list of all people, other than parents, who are authorized to pick up your child must be completed on your child's registration form. Everyone who picks up a child is required to provide picture ID. As we become familiar with our campers' families, we may not ask to see the ID every day; however, we ask that you always come prepared in case our regular "sign-out" staff are not present when you come. Please inform all authorized emergency contacts of this policy. All authorized pick up people must be at least 16 years old. Siblings of appropriate age must be included on your authorized pick-up list.

Campers may not be dropped off before the camp opening time each morning. All campers must be escorted by an authorized person (16 years and older) to and from the program. The sign-in/sign-out sheet must be signed daily & include the time of arrival/departure.

LATE PICK UP FEES

There will be a \$15 fee for each 15-minute block that you are late in picking up your children (per family). The fee will be added to your account and must be paid before your camper attends the next week. Chronic late tardiness of 3 or more late pick-ups may result in dismissal from camp.

Please call the Camp Program Director if an emergency will prevent you from picking up your child(ren) before the closing of camp. Also inform the staff who will be picking up on your behalf. If you do not pick up your child by closing, the counselor(s) will attempt to call you or the emergency numbers listed on your registration form. If no one is reached within 30 minutes, the Camp Program Director will be notified and will designate someone to stay with your child at the camp site. If no one has picked up your child within one hour, the Police will be notified.

SWIM TEST & BAND POLICY

Our swim test and swim bracelets help keep our campers safe, whether they are swimming or boating.

LESSONS

Any swim lessons offered during camp are taught by YMCA Certified Instructors. Lesson groups are split based on swim abilities.

If attending a camp that swims, campers must take the swim assessment to assess swim ability on their first day of participation in the aquatics program for the week. If it is advised by the swim instructor, campers may have an additional opportunity to test at a designated time. Instructors who are certified as Red Cross Water Safety Instructors (WSI) or YMCA Swim Lesson Instructors (YSI) will conduct Y swimming proficiency test in accordance with YMCA of Central New York standards.

Life jackets are provided by the YMCA; however, your child may bring their own life jacket or puddle jumper that is Coast Guard approved.

All swimmers, regardless of level, participate in structured swim. Structured swim is conducted and supervised by certified instructors (WSI or YSI) to ensure that all swimmers leave camp with new knowledge and skills.

- **RED bands** (novice swimmers) are not able to complete the swim test or campers who choose not to participate. Campers will be closely supervised at a ratio of 1:3 for non-certified staff and a ratio of 1:6 for certified instructors. Campers must wear a life jacket and stay within arms reach of an assigned counselor at all times.
- **YELLOW bands** (intermediate swimmers or those over 5 feet tall) can complete most of the swim test, but have areas that need significant improvement. We also keep a 1:3 ratio; however life jackets are not required during free swim.
- **GREEN bands** (independent swimmers) demonstrate the minimum level of swimming ability for safe deep-water swimming. We keep a ratio of 1:10 with these campers. Smaller ratios are kept for green band swimmers under the age of 8.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

CAMPERS

All children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment at camp. Our first step in behavior guidance is prevention. Our staff are trained to be proactive to prevent behaviors.

Chronically disruptive behavior may include but is not limited to, verbal or physical activity that requires constant attention from staff, inflicts physical or emotional harm to others, is inappropriate and/or ignores or disobeys group behavior and safety rules.

Reasonable efforts will be made to assist children in adjusting to the camp setting by using positive reinforcement. In cases of continued negative or inappropriate behavior, the following consequences may occur: staff reminders, warnings, time away from activities, parent notification, discipline reports, and meetings with the Camp Director. If a camper receives 3 related discipline reports, the camper may be suspended from the program for a period of time decided on by the Camp Director. **CAMP PAYMENTS WILL NOT BE REFUNDED DUE TO SUSPENSION FROM THE PROGRAM.** The above steps may vary based on what is developmentally appropriate for the age of the child. In addition, the above steps can be bypassed based on severity of the actions and behavior.

The following may result in the child's immediate dismissal from the program:

- Repeated refusal to stay within the program space
- Repeated prejudice/racist speech, writing, actions, etc.
- Possession of a weapon, drugs, or alcohol
- Repeated physical aggression directed toward another child or a staff member

A child that has been dismissed from the program must wait at least 12 months before they may register for another YMCA program; including school age child care (SACC), Universal Pre-K (UPK), teen programs, or summer camp run by the YMCA of Central New York, which is comprised of the Northwest Family YMCA, the Downtown YMCA, the Hal Welsh East Area Family YMCA, the North Area Family YMCA, the Southwest Family YMCA, and the Manlius YMCA. Upon re-admittance, the first 90 days of participation will be considered probationary and any recurring behavior challenges may result in immediate & final dismissal from the program. After a child successfully participates in the program for 90 days without incident, they will return to the standard behavior policy.

PARENT CONDUCT POLICY

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.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

All YMCA child care and camp staff are mandated by law to personally report any suspicion of child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment to the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register. Information regarding any reported incident is confidential and may not be discussed. There are 4 types of abuse that staff are trained to identify: Physical, Sexual, Emotional Maltreatment, and Neglect and all types will be considered in observations of children.

NUTRITION

Our YMCA Camp programs participate in the Y-USA Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) program. Through this program, we encourage eating balanced meals and snacks with whole grains and fresh fruits and vegetables. Campers are encouraged to drink water with each meal.

A healthy bag lunch and afternoon snack should be sent with your camper daily. Please pack foods that do not require refrigeration or heating. Take-out delivery, fast food, and soda are not permitted. Your child should also bring a reusable water bottle so that they may refill it throughout the camp day.

Each camp has an allergen-free table for children and friends who have allergen-free lunches. In addition, College for Kids is entirely NUT FREE for the inclusion and safety of participants with severe airborne allergies.

Please make sure your child eats a healthy meal before camp. If your child is attending extended hours, please pack an additional snack. The YMCA does not provide snacks or meals. Please label all lunch boxes and water bottles with your child's first and last name.

OTHER INFORMATION

FIELD TRIPS

Some YMCA camps will go on planned field trips throughout the summer. Each camp contracts a bus company to transport the campers to and from all destinations. The bus companies are registered with and inspected by the NYS Department of Transportation. For the safety & organization of the camp, campers may not be dropped off at or picked up from the field trip location.

If you do not want your child to go on the designated field trip, please do not send them to camp that day. All camp staff and campers in attendance will take part in the field trip.

If there is inclement weather the day of a field trip, we may cancel depending on whether the field trip is outside. We may or may not be able to reschedule field trips depending on availability.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

YMCA Camps are prepared with engaging rainy-day activity schedules. We may still participate in scheduled field trips on rainy days so participants should dress appropriately with sweatshirt, sneakers, and extra clothes just in case their clothes get wet. Please be prepared.

CLOTHING / SUNSCREEN / BUG SPRAY

All program participants should wear sneakers and comfortable, casual play clothes. Water shoes are acceptable for water play activities. Sandals, flip flops, Crocs, and cleats are not appropriate footwear for playing outdoors or in the gym. We strongly recommend that every camper bring the following with them daily: hat, sunglasses, jacket, sweatshirt, or raincoat. Please label all belongings & clothing with your child's first and last name.

Please have your child apply sunscreen before arriving at camp. Your child should also bring sunscreen and bug spray for reapplication throughout the day. Sunscreen and bug spray must be labeled with the child's first and last name. Bug spray must have an EPA number listed on the bottle.

LOST & FOUND

Please label all camper's items clearly with their first and last name to help ensure belongings are returned if lost. Every effort will be made to help your child bring home items brought to camp. Campers often do not recognize their own belongings, so please check the lost and found bin at camp daily. We will hold on to all lost & found items until 1 week after each camp week or session. At this point, all unclaimed items will be donated.

This handbook is intended to be a general guide for all YMCA of Central New York summer camps.