



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Thank you for choosing the Capital District YMCA to care for your child this summer. We're grateful for the trust you place in us.

Capital District YMCA Day Camp Parent Guide

Our Mission

The Y is a charitable, non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening our community. Our mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

Statement of Inclusion

The Y welcomes children with individual needs into camp when reasonable accommodations can be made. All children have multiple opportunities to learn, develop, and form positive relationships while in our care. During registration, please identify any health concerns or individual needs your child may have so we can determine together what accommodations your child may need to be successful. To best respond to your child's needs, completion of an individual care plan and a meeting with your child's Camp Director will be needed prior to participating in camp. We work collaboratively with families of children with special needs who receive specialized services and we partner with agencies and school districts to meet the needs of individual children.

An Overview of What we Offer

Our Summer Camps provide children (ages 5-15) with fun supervised activities that teach children character values, conflict resolution, and leadership skills. Campers have fun while making new friends, building self-confidence, appreciating teamwork, and developing self-reliance. Typical camp programs include a variety of activities such as group games, crafts, science, songs, swimming and field trips. And many of our camps offer a variety of outdoor experiences such as hiking, archery, and more. Some camp activities require that a waiver be completed prior to participation. We will be sure to let you know if a signed waiver is needed. All camp activities are age appropriate, and campers are placed in respective age groups and enjoy activities that are geared toward their developmental level.

Our staff prepare for rainy days with back-up plan options that include songs, skits, games and in-door activities. Rain never stops the fun at Y Summer Camp!

Our caring, competent staff offer positive reinforcement and safe surroundings; they actively promote the Y's core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility; they enthusiastically share fun and laughter which, in turn, helps bring these characteristics out in our campers.

Our Hours, Days, and Months of Operation

Summer Camp is offered Monday thru Friday, from the end of the current school year to the beginning of the next school year. Our day camp typically runs from 9AM to 4PM, with before-care offered from 7 to 9AM and after-camp care offered from 4 to 6PM **at no additional charge**. We appreciate that camper parents are busy, and gladly provide before- and after-camp care. To help your child enjoy time with her/his group, from the start of camp each day, we ask that you make every effort to have your child at camp by 9AM each day. **Thank you** for your kind assistance.

Staff Training and Counselor-to-Camper Ratios

Our staff attend training before working at any of our camps. Their training hours are spent on CPR, first aid, character development, age appropriate activities, bullying prevention, camper abuse awareness, and a variety of additional topics that ensure that your child enjoys a safe, fun experience, from the very first day of camp.

Please note that our staff are not permitted to baby-sit or participate in any non-YMCA organized activities or interactions with campers.

Field Trips and Special Events

Each child will receive a t-shirt when camp begins. For the safety of our children, when we are away on a field trip, campers who participate in Field Trips need to **wear their t-shirt**. We are happy to provide additional shirts, which each cost just \$5.

It's common for camp directors to plan different trips and events, to add something special to your camper's experience. Special activities include treasure hunts, talent shows, speakers and field trips. These take place during the camp day and give your camper an added fun experience. Field trips are fun and exciting outings that enhance your child's experience. Please note that **some field trips may have additional costs**.

Swimming and Water-Related Activities

Camper's need appropriate swimwear, a towel, goggles (if they wish) and sunscreen. For the safety of your child, water wings, inner tubes and other inflatable devices are not allowed in our pools. Each camper is swim tested on her/his first day at camp to determine her/his swimming ability.

What to Bring to Camp

To help your child keep track of her/his belongings, please label items with camper's first and last name. Please send your child in comfortable play clothes.

Daily Items for Camp

- Water Bottle. This is one of the most important items for your child.
- Healthy Snacks and Lunch
Please send your child with **nut-free items** that don't need to be refrigerated/heated.
- Bathing Suit and Towel
Please send your child with goggles if she/he is more comfortable with them.
- Cap/Hat/Visor
- Non-Aerosol Sunscreen. This is an essential item for camp. The FDA is currently investigating the risks of accidental inhalation of spray sunscreens. The challenge in using spray sunscreens is that it's difficult to know if you have used enough to cover all sun-exposed areas of the body, which may result in inadequate coverage. In light of this challenge, and the FDA investigation, we are requiring the use of non-aerosol sunscreen.
- Bug Spray. Lotion/Pump sprays are recommended.
- Backpack or similar to help carry items.
- Closed toe or athletic shoes. These are much safer than flip flops or open-toe sandals.
- Sweatshirt as it can get chilly during the day.

To provide the best ever camp experience for your child, and help her/him focus on each fun camp activity, please leave these items home:

- Cell Phones and Electronic Devices, such as iPods, MP3 Player, Nintendo DS, and similar
(In the event you meet with our staff and provide a compelling reason, a phone may be carried by your child. If used during camp, staff will place the phone in a safe place.)
- Toys or Stuffed Animals
- Money
- Trading Cards
- Make Up
- Excessive Jewelry

Lost items are placed in our Lost & Found area. Please let us know right away when an item is lost. During the summer, items not claimed are donated to local charities. The YMCA is not responsible for lost, misplaced or stolen items.

What to Wear to Camp

For the safety of your child, campers need to wear athletic shoes (not open-toed or open-heeled shoes), pants, shorts, shirts. Clothing should be appropriate for camp activities and the weather.

Bus Transportation

Adventure Camp, our Premier Regional Day Camp, offers transportation to camp via bus from the Albany YMCA and Schenectady High School. In addition, camps that offer field trips also use bus transportation.

Safety is our primary goal when transporting campers. If your child is being transported to and/or from camp by bus, please review these safety guidelines with your child. To take advantage of our bus transportation option, these safety guidelines need to be followed:

Bus Transportation Safety Guidelines

- The bus driver and YMCA staff have the authority to assign seats, at their discretion.
- Your child's hands, head, arms and feet need to remain inside the bus.
- Nothing should ever be thrown out of a bus window.
- Feet and bags need to be kept clear of the aisle at all times.
- Use of proper, respectful language is expected at all times.
- Seatbelts need to be used when provided.
- Proper, respectful behavior needs to be used at all times.
- Campers are expected to help keep the bus clean, sanitary and orderly.
- Campers should not tamper with the emergency door or any controls on the bus.
- The bus driver is the only individual who should open or close the bus door.
- YMCA staff are not permitted to transport campers in personal vehicles.

Meals and Snacks

Please check with your Camp Director regarding meals and snacks. Some camps ask campers to bring their own meals, snacks, and water. For the safety of all the campers and counselors in our care, we ask that all foods be nut-free. And for those camp programs that offer meals and snacks to campers, items are healthy and meet licensing requirements. Water is the primary beverage. We do not serve sugary drinks at camp.

Enrollment Procedures and Camp Change Notifications

The cost for registration is due at the time you register your child in camp. Your registration is complete once your payment has been received, and your signed and completed paperwork is at the location where your child will attend camp.

To enroll your child in camp, please provide these items:

- Your child's immunization record
- Emergency contact information for someone other than you (not the parent or guardian)
- Each camper's name, address and phone number
- Parent and/or guardian contact information
- Payment information
- Registration deposit (which can be transferred to another week if your plans change)
- Doctor's name and phone number
- Documentation regarding any medical needs your child has

Helpful Information Regarding Paying for Camp

The cost for camp is due on Monday one week before your child is due to attend camp. You can be issued a refund or a credit when you let us know of any change(s) before the payment due date each week of camp.

Cancellations and program withdrawals need to be in writing and received at least one week in advance. Membership fees are non-refundable.

Our \$10 sibling discount covers siblings who attend camp at the same time.

We Offer Scholarships

The Capital District YMCA offers financial assistance through our scholarship program. Applications are available at any of our branches.

Camper Arrival, Departure, and Pick-up Process

Please always have your ID with you at camp. For the safety of your child, she/he will be released only to those individuals listed on the emergency and/or authorized pick up section of the enrollment form. Individuals will be asked to show proper identification. In a case concerning the custody of a child, court documents are needed.

The Importance of Arriving On-Time to Pick Up Your Child

For the emotional health and well-being of your child, please let us know if you're going to be late to pick up your child. To ensure that your child may remain in our care for summer camp, we need parents to be timely when picking up your child from camp.

Helping Your Child Develop Self-Management Skills

Self-management skills and positive social interactions among campers and adults maximize everyone's enjoyment of camp. Our camp staff are trained to use positive guidance methods including reminders, distraction, logical consequences, and re-direction to help campers in their interactions with other campers and with staff. Self-management skills are taught according to the following guidelines:

- Consistent rules are clearly stated with the expectation that campers will follow them.
- An atmosphere of trust is established, to assure campers they will not be hurt nor allowed to hurt others.
- Our staff strive to help campers become acquainted with their feelings, which helps them learn to responsibly cope with those feelings.

Respectful Camper Conduct

We know you want your child to have a wonderful experience in camp, as do we. To ensure all campers enjoy a positive camper experience while in our care, we follow guidelines regarding respectful camper behavior. Following these guidelines ensures that your camper is able to stay in our care for summer camp.

- Campers should remain at camp and with their counselors at all times.
- Campers should avoid entering unauthorized areas.
- Campers should always use respectful language, and be courteous to staff and other campers.
- Campers should always take proper care with camp property, school property, field trip facilities, and any property visited.
- Campers should be respectful of others, making sure never to fight, injure, or bully.
- Campers should always take proper care with their items and the items of other campers, never stealing or defacing property.
- Campers need to always be willing to remain with the group, at camp and during outings.
- Campers should always follow check-in and check-out procedures.

Because you want your child to have a wonderful experience at camp, in the event there's an incident during which your child does not behave in a respectful manner, we will notify you that day, to ensure you're aware of the situation. We will work to contact you in person or (if we're unable to speak with you in person) by phone. At that time, we'll provide clear information about the situation, and clear direction regarding the next steps for your child. If the disrespectful behavior continues, we will advise you immediately if your child needs to be suspended or removed from our care.

General Health Practices

Campers need to have been examined within the past year by a licensed physician, and we need to have their current immunization record information on file.

Please let us know immediately if your child has a communicable illness or infection. This will allow us to notify the parents of children attending camp with your child. Campers with communicable conditions will be welcome back in camp with a note from their physician indicating that they are able to return. For guidance regarding any particular illness, please speak with your child's Camp Director.

Campers with head lice will be welcomed to camp just as soon as they are free of head lice.

If your child needs the assistance of medication, we need the appropriate medical paperwork and direction in order to administer that medication. For additional guidance, please see your child's Camp Director, prior to the start of camp.

In the Event of an Accident or Medical Emergency

Your camper's safety is our top priority. In the event your child needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately.

To ensure we always have your current/correct contact information, please notify us immediately of any change of address or telephone numbers. If we cannot reach you, the director has the authority to seek medical attention. If the situation is a major medical emergency, the Camp Director will call 911 immediately. Please note that parents and/or guardians are responsible for medical service charges.

Our Emergency Preparedness Plan

Our staff are trained in basic emergency procedures. Issues regarding weather, fire, natural disasters and evacuation scenarios are all covered in our training, and fire drills are conducted each week.

Our Staff are Mandated Reporters

In addition, our staff are trained to recognize and immediately report suspected child abuse and neglect. In fact, our staff are mandated by New York State Law to report incidents of possible neglect or abuse — including physical, sexual, and psychological abuse — to the child abuse hotline, and to cooperate in any investigation for such possible neglect or abuse.

Our staff do not have discretion in this matter, but must make referrals whenever we have reasonable cause to believe a child might have been harmed by someone, including a family member, non-family member or staff, and we may be subject to criminal penalties if we fail to report the possibility of such harm. In grievous cases, we may refer the matter directly to the police. The child abuse hotline is 1.800.342.3720.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

We welcome open communication between parents and staff, knowing how important this is for the success of your child's camp experience with us. We welcome your suggestions regarding program expectations, ideas, and comments on how we may improve our service to you and your family.

At the end of each camp session, you'll receive a survey asking for your feedback about your child's camp experience. In addition, you're welcome to share your suggestions, concerns, compliments and complaints to your child's Camp Director at any time.

You're also welcome to call our Administrative Office, if you're more comfortable contacting us there. 518.869.3500.

Volunteering and Parent Participation

Parents, you're welcome to participate with your children in a variety of activities. For the safety of your child, all volunteers need to complete a NYS background check based on regulator licensing requirements, and YMCA requirements, before you may volunteer with the Y. For the safety and well-being of all the children in our care, volunteers are never left alone with children.

To Help Us Tell Our Story, We Use Photos and Videos

To help us illustrate all the fun that's offered at Y summer camp, our staff use photographs and videos that feature children from our camps for our promotional materials. If you have any questions, please contact the Camp Director where your child is attending camp.

CAPITAL DISTRICT YMCA

www.CDYMCA.org

518.869.3500