



We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

## The History of Summer Camping at the Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges

This year marks a milestone for the Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges: 125 years of community service. Among its many programs and services, summer camping is certainly a signature YMCA program.

Richard K. Gorab, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Metro YMCAs of the Oranges, said “Most people aren’t aware that the YMCA introduced organized camping to the United States more than 100 years ago, and has been an innovator of camping ever since.” He added, “Our Five Branches offer a wide variety of both day and sleepaway camps, and we can fit the needs of every camper. Our extensive programs provide opportunities for children to have fun in a safe, healthy, nurturing environment. All of our summer camps are licensed by the State of New Jersey and are accredited by the American Camp Association, which means that our facilities, equipment, staff, credentials and training are of the highest standards. We take great pride in the high quality of camping programs at our YMCA, which is a very important part of our heritage and our service to members and communities.”



### New Jersey offers ideal and idyllic camping opportunities

In 1885 Sumner Dudley took eight boys to camp at Orange Lake in New Jersey. Since then, YMCA camps began to spring up across the State and Nation. New Jersey offers ideal and idyllic camping opportunities. As the State YMCA described it, “New Jersey with its wealth of historic background, its famous sea coast of one hundred and twenty-five miles, its mountainous Northern section dotted with lakes and streams, its health-giving resorts among the pines, is a veritable paradise for summer activities.”

The first Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges camp began as a two-week experiment in 1915. Fifteen boys lived in two donated tents pitched at Lake Fairview in Stillwater Township, Sussex County. The following year, the YMCA organized Camp Kittatinny at Lake Fairview. The camp became permanent when the Colgate family donated 158 acres on the slope of the Kittatinny Mountains adjacent to the lake. Each year until his death, Colonel Austen Colgate "was a regular summer visitor and entered as heartily into the enjoyment of the place as any of the boys," according to a 1934 report in New Jersey State Work. Over future years, the camp would grow to become the 660-acre Fairview Lake YMCA Camps and Conference Center.

### **East Orange YMCA**

The East Orange YMCA continues the YMCA's proud camping tradition by providing exciting and fun-filled summer camps with a full range of educational and recreational activities for children between ages 3 and 15. Youngsters participate in a traditional camp program featuring sport activities and instruction, swimming, arts and crafts, computers and weekly field trips.

The focus is teaching young people the YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Youngsters are given individual attention while having group experiences. All activities are conducted in a safe, protected environment. In addition to summer camps, the Branch offers activities for after-school children, preschool childcare, swimming, teen enrichment, and cultural enrichment programs for children.

### **Fairview Lake YMCA**

Established in 1915, Fairview Lake YMCA Camps have a long tradition of successful camping programs. Campers return year after year, gain acceptance into our Counselor-In-Training Program and often advance to become counselors and key staff members. Our camp alumni return in the summer to share memories of their summers spent at Fairview Lake and enjoy learning that camp traditions from the years gone by remain strong. Our youngest campers feel safe to enjoy new experiences, learn new skills and make new friends in a supportive and caring environment. As campers mature into their teens and young adulthood they gain an even greater appreciation for the opportunities and exciting activities Fairview Lake YMCA Camp provides for them.

Fairview Lake YMCA provides traditional and specialized camping programs to children entering 2nd –11th grade regardless of race, religion or financial situation. Environmental Education and Conference Groups are also a staple at Fairview Lake during the school year.

Fairview Lake YMCA Camps and Conference Center sits on mile-long Fairview Lake in Northwestern New Jersey. Its 660 acres adjoin the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, providing access to the Appalachian Trail, the Delaware River, unlimited hiking possibilities and breathtaking views. Two waterfronts and a fleet of canoes, rowboats, kayaks, sailboats, and windsurfers offer a wide variety of waterfront activities. There are three athletic fields for soccer, softball and other field sports, two basketball courts, two tennis courts, a hockey court for in-line skaters, a sand volleyball court, archery and rifle ranges, low and high ropes courses and outdoor climbing walls. Campers live in cabins that are clean and well maintained, with screened windows, built-in bunks and storage areas, electricity, and indoor plumbing. Everything is provided to make campers comfortable and happy in a beautiful and scenic setting.

Recognizing that one size does not fit all, a variety of camp programs are available to meet the needs and interests of our campers. The Traditional Camp Program has three units: Minisink for children entering grades 2-4, Laurel Ridge for girls entering grades 5-10 and Kittatinny for boys entering grades 5-10. Specialty camp programs include Horseback Riding at Ranch Camp, Rookies Week for novice campers, Arts & Hearts, Trails & Tails, Tennis Camp, Sailing/Windsurfing Camp, Fine Arts Camp and more. A Counselor-in-Training Program (CIT) program for 16-year-old Traditional, ETC and Ranch Campers entering the 11th grade is an intensive three-week program that offers selected applicants the opportunity to develop leadership, program, and outdoor living skills. The focus is on

small group dynamics, communication skills, teamwork and values clarification. Applicants participate in a variety of exercises and challenges and have the opportunity to take the American Red Cross Lifeguard course.

### **South Mountain YMCA**

South Mountain YMCA offers a variety of camps for youngsters of all ages. The camps provide activities that are educational, exciting and fun, but more importantly, an experience that builds self-esteem, lasting friendships and treasured memories.

Y-Knots 1 for preschool children age 3½ and up, and Y-Knots 2 for children entering kindergarten and first grade, are intended for a child's first camp experience. Mini Y-Knots Camp for ages 2½ to 4 introduces children to a social structured setting on a half-day basis. Activities include swim lessons, playground time, art/crafts, story time and sports.

So-Map-Y offers a variety of age-appropriate activities for children entering grades one through five. Each week a different theme introduces new activities to expand the campers' areas of interest. Some past themes were Loony Cartoony, Art-rageous, Wet Wild & Wacky, and Weird Science week.

Drama Camps 1, 2 and 3 for children entering Grades 1 - 6 will introduce your child to the magical world of theatre with the perfect blend of acting, singing and fun. Children progress from simpler choreography and shows to more advanced work throughout their journey in the years from Drama 1 to Drama 3. Campers are also introduced to the backstage world by creating their own costumes, props and scenery.

Pre-Teen Adventure Camp for grades 5 and 6, and Teen Adventure Camp for grades 7 and 8 provide challenging, fun and character-building experiences. Campers have an extensive travel schedule, taking a trip each week to places such as Great Adventure, Mountain Creek, the New York Aquarium, fishing and overnights at Fairview Lake YMCA Camp and Conference Center.

The South Mountain YMCA also offers a Counselor-in-Training (CIT) program for teens in grades 9 and 10 who enjoy the outdoors and like to work with children, The program includes service projects, weekly meetings and overnights. CIT's work with the Y-Knots or SO-Map-Y camps.

### **Sussex County YMCA**

The Sussex County YMCA is committed to providing a safe, positive and fun summer experience for children and teens, and offers many options to suit each family's needs. These include half-day programs at the Sussex County YMCA and the award winning Blue Mountain Day Camp. All aspects of camp programming highlight the Four Core Values of the YMCA: Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility. Sussex County YMCA camps seek to promote these values in every experience and relationship.

The Sussex County YMCA's Blue Mountain Day Camp for children from pre-school to eighth grade is located in the beautiful setting of Fairview Lake Camp and Conference Center in Stillwater. Blue Mountain Day Camp offers a wide range of traditional camp activities from archery to canoeing to nature studies, fishing trips, overnights and more. Participation in the wide variety of activities helps build friendships and create memories that last a lifetime. Camp Staff is a specially selected group of young adults who demonstrate a love and ability to work with children. The YMCA has a special commitment to a recruitment process that includes comprehensive training and background checks.

Summer Y Kids Club is a half-day program for children entering kindergarten through fifth grade. Weekly themes help promote self confidence and enable the children to explore new experiences in a safe, supportive, and fun environment. Activities include swim lessons, arts and craft, indoor and outdoor sports and games and special trips and events.

Junior Y Kids Club, for ages 3-5 years, introduces preschoolers to camp in a safe, structured, supervised environment. Campers enjoy the same weekly themes as Summer Y Kids Club. Activities include swimming, arts and crafts, singing and circle time.

Teen Camp at the Sussex County YMCA is for youngsters entering grades 6-9. Teens are kept active and engaged using weekly themes, and are encouraged to incorporate leadership, team building and YMCA character values through traditional camp activities.

#### **Four sports camps are offered**

Sussex County YMCA offers four different sports camps. The Y Sports Club is for youngsters from kindergarten through fifth grade. Campers enjoy a YMCA sports program experience with an emphasis on team building, staying active, learning sports skills, and most of all...having fun!

Sports Galore campers enjoy a YMCA sports camp experience with an emphasis on team building, staying active, and having fun. Campers receive instruction in a variety of traditional sports: baseball/softball, soccer, basketball, volleyball, badminton, flag football, tennis, lacrosse, and golf. Each sport is played in a game setting based on sportsmanship, participation and fun.

World Cup Soccer Camp offers campers technical instruction in soccer as well as being learning about other countries and customs. World Cup Soccer Games are held at the culmination of the week with team banners, cheering and fun! This includes the excitement of the World Cup Soccer Games being held this summer in South Africa.

Extreme Sports Camp offers variety of non-traditional sports, such as Ultimate Frisbee, Dodge Ball, Four Squares, Capture the Flag, Kickball, Skates, Scooters, Skateboards, and Water Balloon Toss.

Sussex County YMCA also holds Kids Summer Workshops. This summer the YMCA is offering weekly classes for children ages 4-14. Sessions will focus on age and developmentally appropriate activities that are fun and engaging. With morning and evening classes, there is something to fit into everyone's schedule. These classes offer a great opportunity to either try something new or enhance one's skills.

#### **West Essex YMCA**

The West Essex YMCA offers two day camps. Pioneer Trails Day Camp is a traditional camping experience for pre-school through eighth grade children. Emphasis is placed on self-discovery and personal development. Campers build self-confidence by successfully exploring new opportunities and overcoming challenges in a safe, supportive environment. Campers learn teamwork, independence, and values.

The Pioneer Trails program places special emphasis on assisting children of working parents. Children are provided a safe, healthy, fun-filled environment so that parents can have peace of mind. The experienced and dedicated staff of counselors and specialists make certain that the children enjoy the best of all possible summers. Pioneer Trails Day Camp utilizes the beautiful facilities of Caldwell College, making it among the finest day camps in the tri-state area. Campers enrolled in the Pioneer Trails program will enjoy a traditional camping experience consisting of sports, arts and crafts, educational games, exciting field trips, swim lessons and recreational swim. Free bus transportation is available to campers at select locations. The YMCA has added extended hours of care for those that need this service. Children can now be dropped off as early as 8:00 am and dismissed as late as 6:00pm no additional charge.

Super Summer Day Camp is where children from kindergarten through eighth grade can have a wonderful summer experience. Activities are exciting and fun, but most importantly it is an experience that builds self esteem, lasting friendships and treasured memories. Located at Livingston High School, Super Summer Day Camp offers a full time, five-day-a-week program for children whose

parents desire affordable, quality care. The Camp is organized with a school-like schedule half of the day with specialty classes such as art, archery, science, drama, sports, cooking, computers, dance, and free choice. In the afternoon the camp will then travel to the pool sites for swimming and there campers are dismissed. The Super Summer Day Camp offers extended hours from 7:15am-6:00pm.

“Throughout our 125-year history, the programs of the Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges have evolved with the times while remaining true to our core values,” said Mr. Gorab. “We are very proud to be providing these very important services to our members and our communities.”

The year long Anniversary celebration at the Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges will culminate with a special Anniversary Gala on October 21<sup>st</sup> at the Pleasantdale Chateau, West Orange, NJ.

The YMCA is the local charity of choice. Financial assistance is available because at the Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges no one is turned away due to their inability to pay.

For more information about the YMCA or their 125 Years of Community Service, please call 973-758-9622 or visit [www.metroymcas.org](http://www.metroymcas.org).

The Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges is the largest YMCA in the state of New Jersey, serving over 163,000 members and program participants annually. Its mission is to enrich the lives of the children, families and communities it serves, through programs that build spirit, mind and body, welcoming all people, in an environment nurturing positive values. Its five branch facilities, located in East Orange, Livingston, Maplewood, Hardyston and Stillwater, provide a wide variety of services and activities:

- Quality all-day and after-school childcare, pre-school classes, recreational and enrichment programs e.g. swimming and other sports, arts, computer activities and day and sleep-away camps.
  - Programs for adolescents and teens that include sports, parties and club activities.
  - Programs for adults and seniors.
- 
-