



CAMP PARENT GUIDE

Thank You for choosing the Y for your child's summer camp experience.

This guide contains useful information to answer most questions you may have about our camp programs. Please read and share the information with your camper to help familiarize them with camp policies and safety guidelines. Our goal is to provide a safe and rewarding summer filled with fun and friendship. Through intentional planning, we provide our campers with an enriching experience that creates memories to last a lifetime. **The Metro YMCA of the Oranges "Dedicated to Excellence in Camping."**

Year- Round Welcome Center Contact Phone Number is: 201-487-6600

Our remote Welcome Center is 973-758-9039

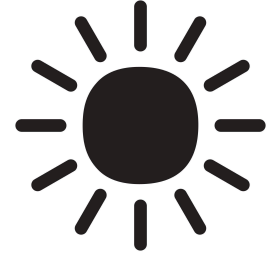
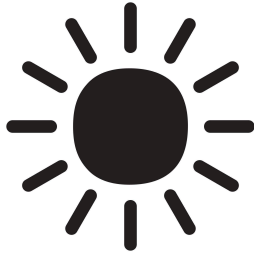
Our website is: newmilfordymca.org

Goals & Outcomes for our Campers: The New Milford YMCA Program Center works to make these a reality as part of our commitment to high quality day camps that make a difference in children's lives.

- 1. Social Skills-** make friends and maintain relationships
- 2. Independence-** rely less on others for solving problems and for day-to-day activities
- 3. Teamwork-** become more effective when working in groups of peers
- 4. Confidence-** believe they can be successful in the things they do
- 5. Curiosity-** be more curious, inquisitive, eager to learn new things
- 6. Responsibility-** learn to be accountable for their own actions and mistakes
- 7. Appreciation for Nature-** develop feelings of emotional connection toward nature
- 8. Problem-Solving Skills-** believe they have abilities to resolve problems
- 9. Summer Learning Loss Prevention-** keeping minds engaged for learning year round

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1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

A. Mission Statement:

Strengthen community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

Our summer day camps are an integral component of the Greater Bergen County YMCA's mission, and provide a safe, fun-filled, day camp experience for each of our campers. Our diverse and highly capable staff is committed to providing our campers with skill development, innovative programming, an appreciation of the outdoors, and greater swim confidence.

Our Y is dedicated to 3 areas of focus including: youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Our Y Camps provide a safe and nurturing environment where the children can make new friends and explore new activities. All of our camps remain focused on the positive healthy development of our campers by helping to build self-esteem, confidence and social skills – while increasing independence, and health and wellness awareness. Central to our mission is encouraging our campers to live by the four core values of honesty, caring, respect and responsibility. Our staff is dedicated to role modeling these positive values and mentoring with our campers in their development of them.

B. Diversity

The YMCA welcomes families of every race, religion and ethnic group. We encourage parents to share information about their culture, language and country of origin. Throughout the facility graphic displays show a variety of children from different racial and ethnic groups, as well as persons with disabilities and individuals performing non- traditional work roles.

C. Session Dates:

***Weekly Camps:** June 23 - August 22

Bonus Week August 25-29th Summer Fun only



2. CONTACTS & COMMUNICATIONS

A. Contact Information 201-487-6600 x1200

Camp Director: Danielle Abreu

Executive Director: Jason Kelly

TRADITIONAL DAY CAMPS:

Summer's Fun

Location: New Milford Center 1092 Carnation Drive, New Milford, NJ 07646

Director: Danielle Abreu

Camp Phone: **201-487-6600 x 1221**

Email: dabreu@metroymcas.org

Camp Hours: 8am-4pm

After-Care: 4pm-5:30pm

Extended 5:30pm-6:15pm

Summer's Fun Jr.

Location: New Milford Center 1092 Carnation Drive, New Milford, NJ 07646

Director: Danielle Abreu

Camp Phone: **201-487-6600 x 1221**

Email: dabreu@metroymcas.org

Camp Hours: 8am-4pm

After-Care: 4pm-5:30pm

Extended 5:30pm-6:15pm

Life Explorers

Location: New Milford Center 1092 Carnation Drive, New Milford, NJ 07646

Director: Danielle Abreu

Camp Phone: **201-487-6600 x 1221**

Email: dabreu@metroymcas.org

Camp Hours: 8pm-3:30pm

After-Care: 3:30pm-5:30pm

Extended 5:30pm-6:15pm

B. Camp Communication

Communication is a wonderful tool! Let's use it jointly to provide our campers with a safe, nurturing and positive camping experience.

Proactive communication from both camp and home helps to ensure a successful summer experience. You may receive calls throughout the summer from your Group Leader to communicate your child's progress. Calls may be made to inform you that your child hit a home run or passed a swimming level. A call will also be made to inform you of a behavior concern or incident that has happened. These calls are our attempt to inform, brainstorm, and work cooperatively with our parents to ensure a successful camp experience for your child.

It is of equal importance that parents are proactive in communicating with camp. We love receiving positive calls for the great things we do, but we also need to hear from you with concerns you may have. We cannot address a situation we do not know about.

You will receive weekly email updates with camp news, upcoming trips, weekly reminders and schedules from your Camp Director throughout the summer. We use Player Space as our main source of camp communication for email and text messaging service. If you choose to withdraw from this service, we will not be able to send you weekly news or emergency camp information. Emergency information is posted on the front page of our website. Examples of emergencies may include: Rainy day plans for outdoor camps, trips arriving more than ½ hour later than expected, phone lines down, etc.

3. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Prior to the start of camp you must complete all forms and waivers in Player Space. Please reach out to our call center if you have not received an email notification/invitation from Playerspace.

A. Media/Photography Policy:

A permission statement was included in Playerspace allowing the Y to use photographs and media for promotional purposes. The names of campers are never included in our printed materials or online and further approval will be requested if your child is the primary focus of a media piece we would like to use. Any camper without permission for media use has been brought to the attention of the camp directors. If you have further concern, please put it in writing and give it to the Welcome Center or the Camp Director.

B. Emergency and Alternate Pick-Up

Contacts: In cases of emergency, if after both primary guardians cannot be reached, we will contact the additional people you listed as Alternate Pick-Ups who would be authorized to pick-up your camper. Photo ID will be required if our staff do not recognize the individuals.

C. Child Safety at Camp Please read the note from our President/CEO at the end of this guide.

D. Staff Code of Conduct

The Y has established conditions for staff to adhere to while remaining an employee. Please contact the Y if you see staff not adhering to these policies. Any violation of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. The Code of Conduct is attached at the end of this guide for your review.

E. Statement of Discipline and Expulsion

Discipline at the Greater Bergen County New Milford Center YMCA is handled with much care and thought. We use two methods of discipline with our campers. First, we try to redirect the child by focusing their attention to an appropriate activity. Second, we use positive reinforcement with all children. If a serious situation occurs, steps may be taken to suspend or expel a camper. The Y reserves the right to dismiss a child from camp whose special needs we are not able to meet or whose conduct is not in the best interest of the total camp. This is available for review at the end of this guide.

4. IMPORTANT FORMS

A. Permission to Administer Medication Form

NO MEDICATION IS TO BE SENT TO CAMP WITHOUT PROPER NOTIFICATION. This form MUST be completed and accompany any medication your child may need to take while at camp. Medications are to be given to the Camp Director, Supervisor or Bus Counselor in the original container and labeled with the child's full name, medication name and dosage. All medications will remain at camp in a lock box except for emergency medication such as: inhalers, epi-pens or eye drops which are carried in the Sr. Counselor's backpacks and returned to the lock box at the end of every day. This form is posted on the camp webpages for your convenience.

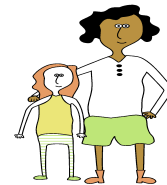
B. Sign-In/Out Waiver

Parents are required to sign their campers in and out of camp each day on the camp roster. **The Y will not call home to confirm camper absences.** Campers will not be released from camp without an authorized adult signature, or this completed form on file.

If your child is responsible enough to **walk to and/or from camp or unsupervised**, written permission is required and this form must be turned into the Camp Director or YMCA office 2 days prior to the first time this request is expected to occur. This option is only available for those campers entering 5th grade or higher. This document is not posted on our website to help keep our campers safe. You may pick one up at the Welcome Center or ask to have it faxed or emailed to you.

C. Alternate Pick-Up Form

We understand that emergencies occur. We ask that you stay in contact to alert us of your needs and arrange for an alternate pick-up if your emergency contacts are unavailable. Please allow the Y as much notice as possible if you need to arrange for an alternate pick-up person that is not listed as an emergency contact or alternate pick-up on your original registration form. We'll ask for identification before we release your child to an individual that our staff does not recognize. This form is posted on the camp webpages and needs to be emailed no later than noon the previous day to get to your child's camp site in a timely manner.



D. Grouping Requests:

Many factors are considered when determining camper groupings including sessions that campers are registered for, group dynamics, special concerns, the number of campers in each group and information we know and you may not.

- We will do our best to honor all requests wherever possible, but **we cannot guarantee all group requests.**



5. TRANSPORTATION

Our top priority is that field trip transportation is safe and efficient. Please review our Bus Travel Rules at the end of this guide with your camper.

The Greater Bergen County YMCA contracts bus use with a reputable bussing company that complies with all ACA standards and State Codes. Camp vehicles are checked daily to ensure they are in good working order. Bus drivers are CDL certified and have been fingerprinted by the State. Camp vehicles are equipped with safety and communication equipment, as well as a Bus Counselor to supervise our campers.

6. SIGN-IN / SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES

In accordance with our policy on the release of children, if the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent for picking up campers appears to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the staff/supervisor in charge, the child would be placed at risk of harm, the camp will ensure that the child is not released to that individual.

A. Location

All camps will have different locations at their specific sites for drop-off and pick-up. Please review the **Welcome/First Day of Camp Letter** emailed the week before camp starts.

B. Approved Pick-Up Contacts

All campers MUST be signed in and out daily by a parent/guardian or other pre-registered pick-up person. Please review the Alternate Pick Up Form and/or Sign-In/Out Waiver policies if you need alternate arrangements. Those not listed on your forms will not be allowed to pick-up your child from camp. Names listed as approved pick-up contacts may be asked to present identification upon arriving at the Y. Please remind them to bring identification.

7. AFTER CAMP CARE PROGRAMS

*Post-camp supervision is provided for many camps. There is a fee for this service and pre-registration is required. Spots are limited as we have less space in these programs than camp, so register early!

A. CAMP START TIME

Note that our "Camp Day" starts at 8am. We will start our camp day activities by 8:30am at the latest.

B. After Camp Care

PM Care ends at 6:15 pm if you register for extended care. After Camp Care may include sports, outdoor play, crafts, games, music, reading, clubs, etc.

8. CAMP HEALTH CARE INFORMATION

A. General Information

- A Health Care Supervisor, sometimes also the Camp Assistant Director, is at camp each day. Our Health Care Policies are reviewed annually by a licensed physician and all camps have several certified CPR/First Aid trained staff. All camp staff are trained in basic health procedures and blood born pathogen procedures. **It is important to inform us of all allergies to ensure the safety of your camper.**
- All camper health history and permission to treat sections of the registration forms (in Playerspace) must be complete and signed. The NJ State Health Dept. requires that all campers have their "required" immunizations up to date. Contact the YMCA office for religious exemption forms.
- Each camp has a Health Care Center which can handle minor illnesses & injuries. Camp has an affiliation with a local hospital and consulting physician. If a parent cannot be reached, emergency medical care will be provided pursuant to the parental consent set forth in the registration. The Health Care Supervisor or Camp Director will be available to discuss concerns you might have about your child's medical condition. Please do not contact counselors directly regarding medical matters.

The Health Care Supervisor will contact parents in case of a head injury or any other injury requiring medical follow-up.

B. Overall Wellness of our Campers:

Greater Bergen County YMCA takes Child Abuse Prevention very seriously. Staff and/or volunteers will conduct a visual health check of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening manner. Any questionable marks or responses will be documented. If emotional, mental, sexual, or physical abuse is suspected, it is the staff member's legal duty to report these concerns to the Camp Director immediately. If child abuse is suspected after an internal investigation, it is our legal responsibility to file an official report in accord with state child abuse reporting laws and in compliance with the YMCA's policies.

All information found during this procedure is strictly confidential. At NO TIME will information be discussed with campers, staff, or other persons, except to complete a proper assessment or to arrange intervention.

C. Camper Health and Well-Being

We ask for your cooperation in order to provide a camp environment that promotes good health. Please check and be alert if your camper shows signs of red or irritated eyes, skin rashes, especially a rash that looks like an archery target circle, or complaints of itchy scalp or discomfort around the ears (lice).

The following guidelines outline the average terms and conditions under which an illness may be communicable. If you have additional concerns, please consult with your physician.

- If you are unsure if your child is well enough to attend camp, the best decision is for your child to stay home.

- **DO NOT** send your child to camp if they do not feel well in the AM. Colds and other illnesses are often contagious and can spread easily. If we feel a camper should not stay at camp, parents will be called. At the discretion of our Health Care Supervisor or camp director, an ill camper will not be allowed to go home on regular transportation. A parent must come to camp and pick up their child. Please keep emergency names and numbers up to date and notify the Camp if you will be out of town.

D. Illness Policy

In the event that your child has been diagnosed with an illness, please notify your camp director as soon as possible. If your child develops any of the following symptoms during the camp day, we will contact you, request that you pick your child up immediately and follow the guidelines related to your child's condition.

May return after 24 hours symptom free

- *Fever of 100.5 or higher
- *Two occurrences of diarrhea
- *Vomiting

May return with doctor's note

- *Sore throat
- *3 days of persistent cough
- *Meningitis
- *Shingles
- *Tuberculosis
- *Whooping cough
- *Influenza
- *Hepatitis A
- *Salmonella
- *Giardia Lamblia
- *Lice or scabies

May return after 24 hours of treatment/rest and doctor's note

- *Red/inflamed eyes with discharge
- *Conjunctivitis (drops)
- *Fifth disease
- *Impetigo (cream)
- *Ringworm (cream)
- *Too ill to take part in activities inside or outside
- *Green, yellow or brown mucus from nose or mouth for more than 3 days

May return when there are no open sores present and doctor's note

- *Undiagnosed skin rashes
- May return after 2 days with medication and doctor's note
- *Strep throat

May return after 3 days and doctor's note

*RSV *Coxsackie

May return after 4 days and doctor's note

*Rubella *Measles *German measles

May return after 6 days and doctor's note

*Chicken pox

May return after 9 days and doctor's note

*Mumps

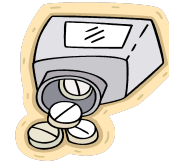
- A child who is taking antibiotics under the care of a physician is able to return to camp with doctor's permission after 24 hours of being on the medication.

Please notify us if your child contracts a communicable disease so we can inform other parents. Sick days are not discounted or credited from the camp tuition.

E. Injuries

If a minor injury occurs during the day, an "ouch" report will be filled out and given to the parent. If a more serious injury occurs, the parent will be notified by telephone. If the injury requires medical attention, the parent will be asked to come to Camp immediately to pick up the child. Staff members cannot take a child to the hospital or doctor in their own vehicles.

In a medical emergency, the proper authorities will be called to transfer the child to the local hospital. The parents will be called immediately. If staff is unable to reach a parent, the next person on the family's emergency contact list will be called. A staff person will accompany emergency personnel and will stay with the child until a parent arrives. The permission to treat section of the camp registration form that all parents complete at the time of registration will be brought to the hospital by the staff person.



F. Medications

You can send medications to camp by giving the meds to your Camp Director, Assistant Director, Coordinator, Supervisor or Bus Counselor. Please call your Camp Director and confirm that we have received the medication if you send it in with a bus counselor. Camp will secure and store all medications in accordance with ACA guidelines.

- All medications must be in properly labeled, **original containers**, with a note specifying dosage, time, frequency, anticipated duration of treatment, and dispensing directions.

- Permission to Administer Medicine Forms must also accompany any medicines brought to camp.

Pharmacy labels are required on all prescription medications. FYI: You can request two labeled bottles from the pharmacist. Please supply sufficient amounts of medication to remain at camp. We will not send medications back and forth each day. At the end of the summer we discard all meds or if requested, you may pick it up on your child's last day of camp.

- Only the Health Care Supervisor or Camp Director (or his/her designee) is authorized ONLY

to administer medication in accordance with your signed Permission to Medicate Form.

- Non-prescription medications such as Tylenol & Advil will be administered ONLY with written authorization on a signed Permission to Medicate Form.
- If you give medication to your child before coming to camp, please inform us. This ensures that there will be no overmedication if a standing order exists.
- If your camper needs to use insect repellent at camp on a daily basis or for outdoor trips, we ask that you send it to camp with a Permission to Medicate Form with a labeled bottle for the staff to apply. We recommend applying this at home before camp, especially if the purpose is for an outdoor trip with no swimming and need to reapply.

9. STAFF/CAMPER FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

The YMCA encourages a positive, cooperative relationship between families and Staff. However, this relationship is always professional, and **MUST NOT** extend beyond camp. Instances of conflicts and uncomfortable situations could result from parents asking staff to baby-sit after camp hours. It is natural that parents want to employ the counselors that they most trust for their children. However, we must ask you and staff to strictly respect this important policy.

10. PROGRAMMING

A. General Camp Activities

Camp activities vary between 30 and 60 minute blocks depending on the activity and camp. Campers move as a group to each activity, depending on the camp you chose for your camper. Check your specific camp for activity details.

B. Aquatics Programs and Swim Instruction

We have water Wednesdays at the New Milford Center full day camps. There are no lessons. We set up sprinklers and water activities for the children to participate in.

C. Extreme Weather Days

Our philosophy is that a rainy day is a sunny day indoors. Our staff has prepared AWESOME rainy day activities. There will be special indoor group activities. Trips are generally followed through with if it is lightly raining in the morning.

We believe that on most summer days, campers can enjoy the outdoors if they are properly dressed. Please plan accordingly for the extreme summer heat. We do not plan to stay indoors all day if the weather is extremely hot. We will keep campers hydrated and physical activity to a less strenuous level on these days. Many high heat day activities involve getting campers wet, to keep cool and have fun.

11. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Special Needs of Campers

You will find our Y to be very flexible with our campers' needs. If your camper has special needs that we might be able to accommodate, please contact us in advance of the start of camp. We find that campers are most successful when we work together with our families in honest, open and collaborative partnerships and make mutual decisions to accommodate the special needs of our campers.

Although we cannot accommodate every request, we will do our best to work with our members on a case-by-case need. Special accommodations may include: summer school needs, disabilities and behavioral needs. Please contact your Camp Director to arrange for a meeting to discuss these needs before you register for any of our camps to ensure we can accommodate your requests.

The Y reserves the right to dismiss a child from camp whose special needs we are not able to meet or whose conduct is not in the best interest of the total camp.



B. Parent Visitations and Family Involvement:

The YMCA maintains an "Open Door Policy" for parent visits, meaning that any parent or guardian can visit Camp at any time. **Please be aware that your child will act differently when you are at Camp and may not get the same experience when you are there.** So although we encourage your visits, please be conscious of how your presence may disrupt your child's camp day, as well as the others in their group.

Some camps offer special events or shows for parents to attend. Parents, friends and other campers are invited to these special performances. Additional information will be sent to you prior to these events via weekly communication.



C. What to Bring/Wear to Camp Every Day

- Bring a labeled, refillable water bottle every day. Our staff will stop at hydration spots to refill these bottles throughout the camp day.
- Bring a backpack without wheels.
- The backpack should include: swimsuit for water wednesdays, a plastic bag for wet clothing and a small towel. Often, a rainy morning is followed by sunny weather. *Don't forget to put underwear in the camp bag!* Check with your camp for requirements.
- Attire should be comfortable and able to withstand abuse: shorts, a t-shirt, socks, and sneakers. **SNEAKERS are the preferred footwear.** Your camper will be running and playing at camp all day. **Footwear must cover the toes and have a back strap to prevent injuries and tripping, please no sandals.** DO NOT send your child's favorite clothes to camp. Getting dirty is part of the camp day.

- Our staff wears Camp T-shirts every day except on special theme days. Every camper receives a complimentary Camp T-shirt. Additional T-shirts are available for \$8.00 each at your campsite. **Campers must wear Camp T-shirts on all trip days.**

- Snacks are encouraged to be placed separately from lunches and placed in backpacks. We recommend: fruit, pretzels, apple chips, granola bars, natural fruit roll-ups, etc.

- Bring lunch every day for full-day camp.

- We are extremely conscientious about allergy-related issues. You **MUST** NOTIFY the camp office if your camper has any food concerns. **All Greater Bergen County YMCA Camps are now PEANUT-SAFE which means no peanuts or nut products please.** To the best of our ability, every effort to be peanut-safe will be attempted.

- No refrigeration is provided for lunches and we do not provide microwaves for reheating. We recommend freezing an additional labeled water bottle/ juice box each night to place in your camper's lunch bag to help keep it cool. Every effort will be made to keep lunches in a cool place.

- Lunch suggestions include: Lunchmeat sandwiches, fruit kabobs, yogurt, cheese and pretzels, veggies and dip, granola bars, soy butter and jelly, wraps, etc.

D. Lost and Found

- **Please label items** including shoes, hats, sunscreen, towels, water bottles and especially **lunch**. On a daily basis, labeled lost items are sorted and returned. Check that items brought home have your camper's name on them. If an item does not belong to your camper, please return it to camp.

- Your camper should bring home their camp bag each day. Wet items are not left at camp.

- Camp is not responsible for lost or damaged personal items. WE RECOMMEND THAT ALL VALUABLES BE KEPT HOME (i.e. electronic devices, trading cards etc).

- At the end of the camp season, all unclaimed and unmarked clothes are cleaned and sent to a charitable organization.

- Hats are strongly recommended. Please label.

E. What not to bring to camp

- Children are **not permitted** to bring firearms, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, animals, or personal sports equipment to camp.

F. Extensions, Credits and Dismissals

- The Y reserves the right to dismiss a camper whose needs we are not able to meet or whose conduct is not in the best interest of the total camp with no refund.

- **All refunds or credits must be requested 2 week or more before the start of the requested weeks refund. No refunds will be given if the requested is made with less than 2 weeks notice before the requested week.**

Note:our Camp Counselors cannot make changes to your child's camp registration – or honor requests. All

requests must be communicated in writing to our Camp directors.

G. Camper Guest Policy

Campers may not bring friends or siblings to camp that are not registered. Insurance regulations require us to adhere strictly to this rule.

H. Feedback/Evaluations

Your feedback is important to us as we continue to strive for excellence in camping. As parents, it is vital to our continued growth and success. Information you learn from your campers can only help us if it is shared. At the end of our Camp Season you will receive a survey from us, we thank you in advance for completing!

12. STAFF

The Greater Bergen County YMCA hires mature personalities who are experienced and younger staff who are moldable to work at our summer day camps. We expect our staff to be positive role models. Our summer staff is composed of high school, college and graduate students, as well as teachers and coaches from our local school systems.

The Camp Directors at the Greater Bergen County YMCA are year-round employees who start working on camp planning the day after camp ends the previous year. Staff participates in year-round professional development and are always discovering new ways to make camp experience safe and fun.

All camp staff go through extensive training for weeks prior to camp, totaling over 30 hours. Our training motto is simple: KEEP OUR CAMPERS SAFE WHILE HAVING FUN (AND IN THAT ORDER)! Staff is trained in many areas of safety by risk management professionals and online courses including: Aquatic Safety, Playground Safety, Trip and Transportation Safety, Camper Safety and Supervision, Emergency Procedures, Dealing with Possible Intruders, Prevention of Lost Campers and Lost Camper Drills, Health Orientation, First Aid/CPR and Child Abuse Prevention.

Staff is also trained in the following topics: Positive Discipline, Summer Fun Camp Activities, Inclusion, Interactive Workshops, Outdoor Living Skills, Youth Development, Swim Lessons, and Games Training.

13. STAFF APPRECIATION POLICY 'TIPS ABOUT TIPS'

How you say thank you is a very personal and subjective decision. Our policy is to recommend that you follow the **Golden Rule** and "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you".

It's always nice to say thank you for a job well done. The question to be asked is, "How well was the job done?" Some people do an acceptable job, some do a great job. We hope that the South Mountain YMCA Staff does an AWESOME job! If a bus counselor, group counselor, swim instructor, or other staff member has significantly impacted your child's summer experience

- a "thank you" is always a nice expression of appreciation.

Tipping our staff is not required, nor expected, nor encouraged. Our staff is informed upon hiring of our policy not to accept gifts from members or vendors other than those with minimal value. Any employee

receiving gifts from members or vendors with a value in excess of \$100 must advise the President/CEO.

Letting your Camp Director know about your experience is helpful during (and after) your summer with us. This allows us the opportunity to reward staff or correct behavior during camp which benefits everyone, especially our campers.



Child Safety at Camp

Dear Parent:

We thank you for placing your trust in the Metro YMCAs of the Oranges and Greater Bergen County YMCA Camps. Our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility are part of everything we do. Because of this, we place great value on creating the most child-safe environment possible. The purpose of this letter is to educate and engage you in our approach to child safety.

To keep children safe in our programs, we utilize the following steps in our pre-employment screening and employment practices for all staff:

- Detailed employment application and voluntary disclosure forms
- Comprehensive reference checking and interview process
- Criminal and sexual background records checks
- Comprehensive training including child abuse prevention, camp, playground, transportation and aquatic safety.
- Confidential reporting system for grievances, safety concerns, etc.

Safety is our primary concern at the Metro YMCAs of the Oranges. We have policies in place so that all interactions between staff and children are monitored and supervised by others. It is important for you to know that our staff sign and are accountable to our Code of Conduct.

Our Code of Conduct requires that Staff and Volunteers:

- Are never to be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others.
- Should never leave a child unsupervised.
- Are not allowed to transport children in their own vehicles.
- May not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside the YMCA (this includes babysitting, sleepovers, inviting children to homes, etc.).
- Should not give excessive gifts (ex. Video games, TV, jewelry) to youth nor be exclusive.
- Shall not abuse or neglect a child in any way, physically, verbally, sexually or mentally.

With this being said, I am asking you to assist us in maintaining the safe environment we have long enjoyed at our YMCA. First, educate your children about appropriate and inappropriate physical, verbal and emotional contact whether it is peer-to-peer or adult-to-child. Make sure that your child knows that if they experience any inappropriate actions at our YMCA (or elsewhere) including e-mail, blogging, texting or phone calls, that they should alert you immediately. Please let your child know it is important to tell you about these kinds of activities and that they will be believed and will not be considered to be at fault.

Next, if you know of or if your child relates to you any behavior you consider being in-appropriate, please call your camp director and we will treat the matter confidentially and urgently.

We pride ourselves on open and honest communication. To that end, we want to give all responsible adults an opportunity to reinforce with our children what is and what is not appropriate behavior.

Thank you for entrusting us with the care of your child. We hope to provide you both with a wonderful and safe experience this summer.

Sincerely,

Rick Gorab - President/CEO

The Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges
www.metroymcas.org



Code of Conduct for All Staff and Volunteers

Employee Conduct with Children and Youth

A foundational commitment of the Y is to provide a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of children. Families entrust their children to the Y's care, and our promise to these families is that we will provide a safe environment in which all participants are treated in a caring, honest, respectful and responsible manner. This includes all dealings with the community, inside and outside of the workplace (both on and off duty).

- At no time during a Y program may an employee be alone with a single child where he or she cannot be observed by others. Employees should position themselves in such a way that other employees can see them.
- Employees shall never leave a child unsupervised.
- Restroom supervision: Children who are participating in Y programs are not to be sent to bathrooms without a Y employee present. (The buddy system or three children together is not acceptable). Staff will make sure the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff will stand in the doorway of the restroom while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection of staff (not being alone with a child). If staff are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip or at other offsite locations.
- Employees should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs; e.g. diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc. When this is not feasible, staff should be positioned so that they are visible to others.
- Employees shall not abuse or mistreat children in any way, including
 - physical abuse: striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, etc.;
 - verbal abuse: humiliating, degrading, threatening, etc.;
 - sexual abuse: touching or speaking inappropriately;
 - mental abuse: shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel, etc. and
 - neglect: withholding food, water, or basic care.
- No type of child abuse will be tolerated. Any abuse by an employee will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

- Employees must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism. Employees will have age-appropriate expectations and setup guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in situations (when necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), administered only in a prescribed manner, and must be documented in writing.
- Employees will conduct a visual health check of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening manner. Any questionable marks or responses are to be documented.
- Employees will respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally, regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, disability, or economic level of the family.
- Employees will respect children's rights to not be touched or looked at in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say "no". Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas that would be covered by a bathing suit.
- Employees will refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of children, parents, and other employees.
- Employees will not transport children in their own vehicles or allow youth participants old enough to drive to transport younger children in the program.
- Employees are role models to children and therefore must appear clean, neat and appropriately attired.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, as well as smoking or the use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents, during working hours is prohibited.
- Using Y computers/devices to access pornographic sites, send emails with sexual overtones or otherwise in appropriate messages, or development of online relationships is not allowed.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, displays of intimate affection, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children, parents, volunteers, or other employees is prohibited.
- Outside the Y, Employees may not be alone with children whom they meet in Y programs. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, driving or riding in cars, and inviting children to their homes. Employees will not initiate contact with or respond to contact initiated by a program participant outside of approved Y activities. Employees will not accept supervisory responsibility for participating children outside of Y approved activities. Any exceptions require written explanation before the fact submitted to the Executive Director and are subject to prior approval from the Human Resources Department.

- Employees must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect the children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.
- Employees are expected to be positive role models for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy and tact. Employees will act in a caring, honest, respectful and responsible manner consistent with the mission of the Y.
- Employees may not single out children for favored attention and may not give gifts to youth or their parents. Gifts around celebrations and holidays are to be shared with all participants.
- Employees may not date program participants who are under the age of 18.
- Under no circumstances should employees release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (authorization on file with the Y).
- Employees, who have access to confidential information during the course of work, have an obligation not to disclose that information to other employees, members or persons, within or outside the Y.
- Employees are to report to their supervisor or next level of supervision anyone who violates any of these rules.
- Staff members are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and to attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by management.
- Staff members are required to fully cooperate with any investigation by the Y, any law enforcement agency or any other authorized outside agency. Failure to do so is considered misconduct and will result in termination.

