



South Mountain YMCA Parent Camp Guide 2024

Thank you for choosing the Y for your child's summer camp experience. This guide contains valuable information to address most questions about our camp programs. Please read and share it with your camper to familiarize them with camp policies and safety guidelines. Our aim is to provide a safe and exciting summer filled with fun and friendships. Through deliberate planning, we offer campers an enriching experience to create lasting memories. **The South Mountain YMCA is committed to excellence in camping.**

Year Round Contact Phone Number: (973) 762-4145

Website: www.smountainymca.org

Goals & Outcomes for Our Campers:

The South Mountain YMCA endeavors to achieve these outcomes through our commitment to exceptional day camps that positively impact children's lives:

1. **Social Skills** - making friends and maintaining relationships
2. **Independence** - becoming more self-reliant in problem-solving and daily activities
3. **Teamwork** - improving effectiveness in peer group settings
4. **Confidence** - developing belief in their ability to succeed
5. **Curiosity** - fostering eagerness to learn and explore
6. **Responsibility** - learning accountability for actions and mistakes
7. **Appreciation for Nature** - developing emotional connection to the natural world
8. **Problem-Solving Skills** - building confidence in resolving challenges
9. **Summer Learning Loss Prevention** - keeping minds engaged 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 South Mountain YMCA's mission, to 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: 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. 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 about their culture, language and country of origin.

C. American Camp Association: (ACA)

The ACA is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization committed to enhancing the quality of the camp experience and dedicated to promoting high standards in organized camps. ACA is the only national accrediting body for all types of camps. We proudly display the logo of the

American Camp Association. This logo assures parents that our camps comply with up to 300 health, safety, and program quality standards.

ACA-accreditation shows that our camps are committed, credible, and accountable for their actions. YKNOTS, SOMAPY, Teen, Summer Discovery, Global Arts and Creative Theater Camps are all currently accredited.

D. Session Dates:

Weekly Camps: June 24 - August 23

SOMAPY Week 10: August 26-August 30

Session Camps

Creative Theater:

Session Camps 1: June 24-July 12

Session Camps 2: July 15 - August 2

Session Camps 3: August 5-August 23

Global Arts:

Session Camps 1: June 24-July 12

Session Camps 2: July 15 - August 2

Session Camps 3: August 5-August 16

2. CONTACTS & COMMUNICATIONS

A. Contact Information 973.762.4145

Executive Director: James Goodger

Associate Executive Director: Eric Stoddard

Welcome Center Admin: Gladiz Ricci

TRADITIONAL DAY CAMPS:

YKNOTS

Location: South Mountain YMCA, 13 Jefferson Ave, Maplewood

Director: Nakeeyah Lambert

Camp Phone: 862-438-1717

Email: nlambert@metroymcas.org

Camp Hours: 7:30-3:30

After-Care: 3:30-6:30

SOMAPY 1 & SOMAPY 2

Location: Memorial Park

Rainy Day Location: Jefferson Elem.

Director SOMAPY 1: Zachary Poe and Nyeshia Nelson

Director SOMAPY 2: Jessica Mayers

Camp Phone: 862.400.6021 SOMAPY 1

Camp Phone: 862-400-8983 SOMAPY 2

Email: zpo@metroymcas.org

nnelson@metroymcas.org

jmayers@metroymcas.org

Pool Site: Maplewood Country Club

Camp Hours: 7:30-3:30

After-Care: 3:30-6:30

Teen Adventure

Location: Borden Park Maplewood

Rainy Day Location: Civic House 124

Dunnell Road Director: Tommy Donaldson

Camp Phone: 862.400.8982

Email: tdonaldson@metroymcas.org

Pool Site: Metcalf Park Pool Orange NJ.

Camp Hours: 7:30-3:30

After-Care: 3:30-6:30

Counselor-in-Training:

Location: 240 Franklin Ave Maplewood NJ

Director: Eric Stoddard

Camp Phone: 973-762-4145

Email: estoddard@metroymcas.org

Training Week(s) Camp Hours: 9:30-3:00

On Site Weeks: 8:30-3:30

SPECIALTY DAY CAMPS

Creative Theatre Camp 1, 2 & 3

Location: 1st and Presbyterian Church 111

Irvington, South Orange

Director: Gailmarie Green

Camp Phone: 862.438.1718

Email: ggreen@metroymcas.org

Pool Site: Metcalf Pool Orange NJ

Camp Hours: 7:30-3:30

After-Care: 3:30-6:30

Summer Discovery

Location: 1st and Presbyterian Church 111

Irvington, South Orange

Director: Gailmarie Green

Camp Phone: 862.400.6019

Email: ggreen@metroymcas.org

Pool Site: Metcalf Pool Orange NJ

Camp Hours: 7:30-3:30

After-Care: 3:30-6:30

Global Arts

Location: St. Joseph's Church 240 Franklin Ave Maplewood

Director: Marian Judge

Camp Phone: 862.400.8994

Email: mjudge@metroymcas.org

Camp Hours: 7:30-3:30

After-Care: 3:30-6:30

Basketball Camp

Location: 1st and Presbyterian Church 111

Irvington, South Orange

Director: Mike Laughner

Camp Phone: 862.438.1730

Email: mclaughner@metroymcas.org

Camp Hours: 7:30-3:30

After-Care: 3:30-6:30

Sports Galore

Location: Clinton Elementary School

27 Berkshire Road, Maplewood, NJ

Director: Mike Laughner

Email: mclaughner@metroymcas.org

Camp Hours: 8a.m.-3:30p.m.

After-Care: 3:30-6:30

B. Camp Communication

Effective communication is a powerful tool! Together, let's utilize it to create a safe, nurturing, and positive camping experience for our campers. Regular communication from both camp and home contributes to a positive summer experience. Throughout the summer, your Group Leader may contact you to share updates on your child's achievements, such as hitting a home run or advancing in swimming levels. Additionally, if there are any behavior concerns or incidents, you will receive a call to discuss and collaborate on resolving them together. These communications are aimed at keeping you informed and working together to ensure a successful camp experience for your child.

It is equally important for parents to actively communicate with the camp. We appreciate receiving positive feedback for our accomplishments and also value

hearing from you about any concerns you may have. We can only address issues if we are aware of them.

Throughout the summer, you will receive weekly email updates containing camp news, upcoming trips, reminders, and schedules from your Camp Director. PlayerSpace serves as our primary platform for camp communication via email and text messages. Opting out of this service means you will not receive our weekly updates or emergency camp information. In emergencies, such as outdoor camp plans due to rain, delayed trip arrivals exceeding 30 minutes, or phone line issues, emergency information will be posted on the front page of our website.

3. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Prior to the start of camp, complete all forms and waivers in Player Space. Please call 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. 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, 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 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 South Mountain 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

NO MEDICATION IS 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 each day on the 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 mature and responsible enough to walk to and/or from camp without supervision, please note the following guidelines:

- Written permission is required for this option.
- Submit the permission form to the Camp Director or YMCA office at least 2 days before your child plans to walk unsupervised.
- This option is available only for campers entering 5th grade or higher.
- For safety reasons, the permission form is not available on our website.
- To obtain the form, please visit our Welcome Center or request it to be emailed to you.

This policy ensures the safety of our campers while providing flexibility for older children who can walk to and from camp independently.

C. Alternate Pick-Up Form

We understand that emergencies can arise. Please keep us informed so we can assist with your needs and arrange for alternate pick-up if your emergency contacts are unavailable. If you need to designate someone who is not listed on

your original registration form as an alternate pick-up person, please notify the YMCA as soon as possible. For security purposes, we require identification from individuals who are not familiar to our staff before releasing your child to them.

To facilitate timely arrangements, fill out the designated form available on the camp webpage. Submit the form via email no later than noon the day before to ensure it reaches your child's camp site promptly. This policy ensures the safety and security of all campers while accommodating unexpected situations with appropriate measures.

D. Grouping Requests

When organizing camper groups, we take into consideration various factors, including session registrations, group dynamics, individual needs, and other relevant information. These considerations help us ensure that each camper is placed in an appropriate group that enhances their camp experience.

- Campers must be in the same grade and requests must be mutual and listed on your original registration form. Written communication from both families is needed in order to honor a request.
- To promote fairness and balanced group dynamics, we can accommodate up to two camper requests per group.
- We will do our best to honor all requests wherever possible, but we cannot guarantee all group requests.

5. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation safety and efficiency is our top priority. Review our Bus Travel Rules at the end of this guide with your camper.

The South Mountain 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 have different locations at their specific sites for drop-off and pick-up. 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.

C. Mid-Day Departure

If you need to pick up early, call to make sure your camp will be at its regular location before arriving. Many of our camps travel daily for pool, park and nature walks and trips.

NO vehicles are permitted to enter camp at the YMCA facility on Jefferson Avenue between 8:25am and 4:00pm, as our attention is focused on the safety of

campers during this time. Make sure to find an appropriate parking space to walk your child into camp or get on line in your car to have your child escorted into camp at this site for the YKNOTS DAY CAMPS ONLY. We ask that you have patience during drop-off and pick-up time in the car line up as we take the time to become familiar with faces of approved contacts.

7. AFTER CAMP CARE PROGRAMS

*Post-camp supervision is provided for many camps at their camp sites. 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, register early! *Teen Campers are bussed to Memorial Park and join the SOMAPY After-Care Program.

Contact our camp office (973) 762-4145 to make arrangements for PM Care no later than the Wednesday at noon before the week you wish to register for, pending availability in these programs.

Registrations are taken on a first-come basis until programs are full.

A. CAMP START TIME

Note that our "Camp Day" starts at 7:30. Similar to years pre-pandemic, the 7:30-8:30 time frame serves as "Before Camp Care." In 2022, we included this time frame into our fee. Please note the actual camp day/programming will start at 9:00. The drop off time for campers who do not need before camp care is from 8:30-8:50.

Many campers enjoy eating breakfast, playing quiet games and fun activities while waiting for the regular camp day to start. Feel free to send your child to camp with a light, nut free breakfast to eat with us.

B. After Camp Care

PM Care ends at 6:30 pm at your campsite.. After Camp Care may include sports, outdoor play, crafts, games, music,

cheerleading, reading, clubs, etc.

C. Snacks

Healthy snacks will be supplied in After Camp Care which may include: apples, bananas, pretzels, graham crackers, cereal, carrots or other peanut-free snacks. All campers receive one serving size. Additional snacks are welcome and encouraged, especially if you plan to pick your camper up in the later portion of the program time. Our camps are

PEANUT-SAFE which means no peanuts or peanut products please.

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 bloodborne 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 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:

The South Mountain 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. 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 complains 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, 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 morning. 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 pick up their child. 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 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 eligible for discounts or credits.

E. Injuries

If a minor injury occurs during the day, an "ouch" report will be 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. 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 camp registration that is completed at the time of registration, will be brought to the hospital by the staff person.

F. Medications

You may send medications to camp by giving them to your Camp Director, Assistant Director, Coordinator, Supervisor, or Bus Counselor. Please ensure to call your Camp Director to confirm receipt of the medication if sending it with a bus counselor. All medications will be securely stored and managed according to ACA guidelines by the camp staff.

- 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. 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.
- Only the Health Care Supervisor or Camp Director (or designee) is authorized 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.

9. STAFF/CAMPER FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

The YMCA fosters a positive and cooperative relationship between families and staff. However, it is crucial to maintain a strictly professional boundary that does not extend beyond camp activities. Conflicts and uncomfortable situations may arise if parents request staff to babysit after camp hours. While we understand the trust parents place in our counselors, we must strictly enforce this policy. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in respecting this important guideline.

10. PROGRAMMING

A. General Camp Activities

Camp activities are scheduled in blocks of 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the specific activity and camp. Campers transition as a group between activities, with the selection varying by the camp chosen. Weekly offerings typically encompass sports, cooking, nature exploration, arts & crafts, music, dance, drama, karate, chess, basketball, tennis, and outdoor play. For detailed information on activities, please refer to your specific camp for details.

B. Aquatics Programs and Swim

Instruction Swim instruction is offered YKNOTS, SOMAPY, Summer Discovery, and Creative Theater Camps and is based on the YMCA Aquatics Policy. Campers are tested & placed into swim groups based on ability within their first two days of camp. Campers are expected to swim every day unless you send notification otherwise. All camp staff are hired to teach campers water confidence and swim skills and are trained in aquatic safety procedures.

Short free swim periods may be provided for some camps at the end of swim lesson periods. We ask for your help in encouraging your camper to participate in swim lessons. Campers who do not participate in swim lessons (except teen

campers) will not be allowed to join free swim periods. Occasionally the swim facilities may close due to lightning, camper illness or accidents. If a pool closing does happen, other activities will be provided.

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. Also, always send your camper in with their normal backpack and swimsuit. Many rainy days turn into beautiful days!

We believe that on most days, campers enjoy the outdoors when properly dressed. Plan accordingly for the extreme summer heat. We do not plan to stay indoors all day (or move to an indoor site) if the weather is extremely hot. We keep campers hydrated and physical activity to a less strenuous level on these days. Many activities involve getting campers wet, to keep cool and have fun.

D. Overnights

Teen Adventure Campers are offered three overnight experiences per summer. Overnights may be at the South Mountain YMCA in our gymnasium, at the Fairview Lake YMCA or the Greater Bergen YMCA sleeping outdoors in a tent. Campers will have meals included on these overnights. Additional information will be sent to you prior.

E. Off-Site Trips

Parents will be notified when campers will be traveling off camp grounds. You will be informed if your camper will be coming home on regular bussing or coming home later in the evening if your camper attends one of our teen camps. Trips that return later will require campers to be picked up

at the South Mountain YMCA. For the safety of all, **campers and staff MUST WEAR their official Camp T-Shirt when traveling offsite.**

11. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Special Needs of Campers

Our Y is very flexible with our campers' needs. If your camper has special needs that we might be able to accommodate, contact us prior to camp. Campers are most successful when we work together with our families in honest, open and collaborative partnerships and make mutual decisions. Although we cannot accommodate every request, we will do our best to work together on a case-by-case need. Special accommodations may include: summer school needs, disabilities and behavioral needs. Contact your Camp Director to arrange for a meeting prior to camp. 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 visits are welcome,, please be conscious of how your presence may disrupt your child's camp day, as well as the others in their group.

We offer a special afternoon visitation for some camps. Meet and Greets are generally scheduled for orientation

Parents can also be involved in: field trips, volunteering for special events and becoming involved with the Y on a community level. Our programs are

greatly strengthened by active family involvement.

Our Y also offers an all-camp carnival hosted by our Teen and Pre-Teen Campers typically during the fifth week of camp. Mark your calendars for this event! Feel free to join us during your camp's timeframe which will be scheduled in weekly communications. You and your camper are welcome to join us even if your child is not registered for that week of camp, however, these campers must remain with their parents.

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 day.
- Bring a backpack without wheels.
- The backpack should include: swimsuit (or underwear, if your child wears their swimsuit to camp), 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! Some camps (including YKNOTS) require campers to come to camp in a bathing suit with sunscreen applied. Check with your camp for requirements. This makes for quicker transition and more pool time.
- Attire should be comfortable and able to withstand abuse: shorts, a t-shirt, socks, and sneakers. SNEAKERS are the preferred. 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. 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 \$10.00 each at your campsite. **Campers must wear Camp T-shirts on all trip days.**

- Place snacks separately from lunches in backpacks. We recommend: fruit, pretzels, apple chips, granola bars, natural fruit roll-ups, etc.

- Bring lunch everyday 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 South Mountain YMCA Camps are PEANUT-SAFE. 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: sandwiches, fruit kabobs, yogurt, cheese and pretzels, veggies and dip, granola bars, soy butter and jelly, wraps, etc.

- Label items including shoes, hats, sunscreen, towels, water bottles and especially lunch. 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.

- Campers bring camp bags home 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).

- Hats are strongly recommended. Please label.

D. Lost and Found

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

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.

A reminder of the waivers signed:

TRANSFERS

I understand that I may transfer a week/session of my child's enrollment to a different week/session within the current camp year before February 1 at no additional charge. I understand that a \$35 transaction fee will apply to all requests made on or after February 1.

*Exceptions may be made for medical reasons. Note from a doctor and/or other documentation may be required.

WITHDRAWALS & REFUNDS

I understand that should I choose to cancel my child's enrollment, partially or in full, I must notify the YMCA in writing at least 14 days in advance of the start of the week/session(s) I wish to withdraw my camper from and the following refund schedule will apply:

- Withdraw prior to May 15, a full refund will be issued to my original method of payment. (East Orange YMCA Registration Fee is non-refundable and will be forfeited upon withdrawal.)
- Withdraw after May 15, all monies paid will be forfeited, no refund will be issued.

*Exceptions may be made for medical reasons. Note from a doctor and/or other documentation may be required.

Note:our Camp Counselors cannot make changes to your child's camp registration – or honor requests. All must be communicated in writing to our Administrative Office and to Eric Stoddard the Associate Executive Director via email estoddard@metroymcas.org .

G. Camper Guest Policy

Campers may not bring friends or siblings to camp. 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. 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 season you will receive a survey from us, we thank you in advance for completing!

12. STAFF

The South Mountain 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 South Mountain 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! 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'

Expressing gratitude is a personal choice, and we recommend following the Golden Rule: treat others as you would like to be treated.

It's always appreciated to acknowledge a job well done. At South Mountain YMCA, we expect our staff to strive for excellence, aiming for an AWESOME experience for your child this summer. If a bus counselor, group counselor, swim instructor, or any staff member has made a significant impact, a simple "thank you" is a great way to show your appreciation.

While tipping our staff is neither mandatory nor encouraged, our policy prohibits staff from accepting gifts above a nominal value, and any gifts over \$100 must be reported to the President/CEO.

Your feedback to the Camp Director is valuable. It helps us recognize exceptional staff and address any concerns promptly, ensuring a positive experience for all campers.





Child Safety at Camp

Dear Parent:

We thank you for placing your trust in the Metro YMCAs of the Oranges and South Mountain YMCA Day 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 Eric Stoddard, Associate Executive Director at the South Mountain YMCA at 973-762-4145 or estoddard@metroymcas.org 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
139 E. McClellan Avenue
P 973 758 9622 F 973 535 1478 [www. metroymcas.org](http://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 set up 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 inappropriate 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.



South Mountain YMCA STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE and EXPULSION

Discipline at the South Mountain YMCA is handled with much care and thought. The goal of our discipline is to correct a situation in a positive manner and separate the action from the child. Our philosophy is that no child is ever a “bad child”, but perhaps he/she did not, at a given moment, make very good choices for his or her actions or behavior.

We use two methods of discipline with our children. First, we try to redirect the child by focusing their attention to an appropriate activity. Second, we use positive reinforcement with all children. If we need to become more firm, we may take the child aside and speak quietly but firmly with them, trying to explain that their actions are not appropriate and suggest another way in which they could make a better choice in this particular situation. If there is an ongoing problem with a child, the lead staff member may discuss the problem with the parent(s). Usually, this helps the child’s behavior because he/she will be receiving positive reinforcement with the problem at home as well as at the program. If a serious situation occurs, such as your child seriously injuring another child purposefully and depending on the circumstances and seriousness of the situation, the child may be suspended for a specific period of time. A conference with the Director may be necessary to create an action plan for improved behavior in our programs.

Striking/Hitting, Leaving the Facility Without Permission, Sexual Content, Stealing, Threatening, Excessive Swearing, Non-Payment, Continuous Late Pick-ups, Bullying (including verbal and physical abuse), Parental Harassment of staff or someone else’s child, Continuous Disruption of the Program, and Repeated Serious Episodes of Inappropriate Behavior are actions contrary to proper YMCA behavior goals and will be looked upon as cause for termination with no refunds of program fees. This will be communicated to you, in writing, with sufficient time for you to make alternative child care arrangements.

As per the Metro YMCA of the Oranges Staff Code of Conduct, staff shall not abuse or neglect the children in our care. A child will never be deprived of food, struck, name called, threatened, or ridiculed. No child will be isolated or left unsupervised at any time.

The staff at the South Mountain YMCA gives each child love and acceptance that is unconditional as well as guidance to learn and grow in a happy and positive way. 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.



South Mountain YMCA Bus Travel Rules

All transportation of campers will be done by a licensed, contracted bus company. Campers are not to be driven in personal staff vehicles, unless an unforeseen and unavoidable emergency arises upon the director's request.

A minimum of 2 counselors, unless special permission is granted, are to ride with the campers acting to maintain safety and order at all times during pick-up/drop-off routes. Longer trips will require that accredited and/or license age-appropriate ratios of staff to children is ensured. Every effort must be made to ensure the safety of all passengers.

Counselors are to spread themselves out in the bus, not all sitting in one area. A counselor should always be seated at the rear emergency door and is responsible for making sure all children get off the bus at the end of the trip. The counselor sitting nearest the bus driver will be responsible for checking that there is a first aid kit and a fire extinguisher on board.

Passengers are to remain seated at all times with their seat belts on when the vehicle is in motion, walking about only when getting on or off at a designated stop. A counselor should exit first before the campers are allowed to leave the bus. EVERY EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF ALL PASSENGERS.

The Senior Counselors take attendance as the children board the bus. A designated Bus Leader will count all heads on the bus, including staff to ensure the return of all guests. The bus will not move until all campers are accounted for and seated with their seat belts buckled. Senior Counselors are responsible for bringing the health and permission-to-treat forms with the group on all trips.

A COUNSELOR IS NEVER TO BE LEFT ALONE WITH A CAMPER ON THE BUS OR ANY OTHER TIME as part of YMCA policy. All staff are trained in safety responsibilities and group management.

General Bus Rules

1. Buses may not be filled over capacity and everyone must have their own seat and seatbelt.
2. No camper enters the bus until their name is called from his/her class attendance sheet by the Senior Counselor who will also recount upon entering the bus and bring all health forms.
3. The Bus Leader must count heads of all campers and counselors on the bus.
4. The campers and staff must wear seat belts.
5. No standing is allowed on the bus while in motion.
6. No throwing objects from the bus.
7. No arms, head, or any body parts are to be hanging out of the windows.

8. No garbage or food is to be eaten or left on the bus.
9. All buses and staff vehicles, if necessary, must follow the convoy travel procedure when traveling together on trips
10. Bus safety and emergency procedures must be reviewed on the first trip of each session.
11. A list of individuals on each trip will be readily available on each bus and at the Y office.

Accident Procedures

If an accident were to happen, the following steps should be taken:

1. One staff member who is certified in CPR/First Aid shall care for the injured.
2. A second staff member should supervise the uninjured.
3. The Bus Leader, who has access to all emergency information regarding staff and campers, should notify the Camp Director of the accident as soon as possible to inform the parents.
4. One of these staff members who witnessed the accident will be responsible for filling out the Accident Report with all witness information as soon as possible.