



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**FIND
YOUR FUN.**

**FIND
YOUR Y.**

PARENT HANDBOOK

YMCA of NWNC Summer Exploration Academy

YMCA OF NORTHWEST NORTH CAROLINA

Our mission: "Helping all people reach their God-given potential in spirit, mind and body."

Dear Families:

We are so excited to have your child at the YMCA Summer Exploration Academy day camp this summer! We are planning to have lots of fun and know your child will be entertained as they hang out with old friends and make new ones. They'll be learning new skills and honing current ones.

Our camp leaders are dedicated to the development and well-being of your children. We will provide your children with compassion, patience, learning opportunities and love. In turn, we ask that parents help us in as many ways as you can by letting us know of any concerns or ideas that arise at any time. In this way, staff and parents can function as a team oriented toward helping children. The YMCA is a place for families and it is our intent to do everything possible to help strengthen and support your family.

It is our belief that each child is an unique individual with his or her own rate of development. Our goal at the YMCA is to introduce the campers to as many positive experiences as possible. Furthermore, it is our goal to ensure that each child feels confident and secure with himself or herself in this environment. As a team, we seek to improve the quality of life for our campers.

Get ready for a great summer!

Sincerely,
Chris Chunn
Executive Director - Education and Swim
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YMCA Mission

"Helping all people reach their God-given potential in spirit, mind, and body."

Our Focus

Our focus at day camp is to encourage campers to meet their potential by demonstrating five key character traits: caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith.

Our Purpose

To provide a quality, Christian-oriented experience that is safe, convenient and creative. These programs present age-appropriate opportunities and activities that enhance the child's spiritual, physical, social, intellectual and emotional growth.

Contact Information:

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Program Location

Our Day Camp is an outdoor-based program that utilizes the entire YMCA campus. We take extra care to ensure your child is safe and comfortable while participating in our program. We know firsthand how hot summer can get. When weather reports indicate an unhealthy heat index or poor air quality, we adjust our camp day to safeguard campers from dehydration and overexposure to sun and heat. We provide cool, indoor or shaded places for camp activities, provide frequent water breaks and monitor sun exposure.

Rides In/Rides Out Procedures

Staff will be outside at designated locations during Rides In and Out times to assist parents with getting campers in and out of vehicles. Rides in: 7:00-9:00 am. Rides Out: 4:30-6:00 pm.

Early Pick-up and Late Arrivals

Due to the nature of day camp programming, we strongly discourage late arrivals and early departures. We do understand that there will be exceptions and when these occur please notify camp or membership staff to ensure your child will be ready to go when you arrive or a staff member is available to meet you at a designated location if you are dropping off your child late. Please be aware that day camp takes place both inside and outside the branch and there may be some delays depending on which activity your child is involved in.

Late Pick-up

In fairness to our staff and due to subsequent program demands, it is very important that your child be picked up on time. A late fee will be charged for each child not picked up by 6:00 pm. For any child picked up between 6:00 – 6:05 pm, the late fee will be \$5. There is an additional \$1 fee for every minute after 6:05 pm.

Code Words

Anyone picking up a camper from a YMCA Day Camp must be on the camper's authorized pick-up list. To ensure the safety of all our campers, a code word is required when picking up your child. The code word is a word or phrase that you and your child come up with which we will ask for prior to releasing your child to anyone. Please ensure that if you are not the adult picking up the child, that the individual who is will be aware of the code word and has a photo ID. Otherwise the YMCA will not release your child to him or her.

Staffing

A YMCA director supervises all of our camps. We recruit our counselors from local churches, colleges, universities and leadership organizations. All staff members are required to attend over 40 hours of training prior to the beginning of the camp season, which includes First Aid and CPR training.

Huddles

A huddle is a group of campers and counselors your child is assigned to for the week. A huddle participates in activities together throughout the day. The staff to camper ratio is 1:15.

Huddle assignments are made on a weekly basis and based on the rising grade level of campers. Because the make up of the entire camp can be different each week due to the different ages of the campers enrolled for the particular session, the huddles may change from week to week. However, camp staff will make every attempt to keep the huddles as consistent as possible. At the request of the parent, children with special needs will be grouped in the huddle that best fits their needs.

Pre-Camp Weekly Emails

All new families registered by Wednesday of the week prior to the scheduled camp will receive an email welcoming them to camp, answering any questions, and going over the theme and activities for the week.

Swimming

Campers have the opportunity for daily recreational swim while at camp. Each camper is swim tested prior to being allowed to swim in the deep end. For campers who cannot swim in deep water, a life jacket will be provided and they will only be allowed to swim in shallow water. During swim time, the pool is staffed with YMCA certified lifeguards as well as camp counselors who swim with the campers. Swim lessons are offered during the camp day. Please inquire about enrolling your child in summer swim lessons at the membership desk.

Illness Policy

Please do not send your child to camp if they are ill and/or running a fever. Campers must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours prior to returning. If a child becomes ill during camp, a parent or emergency contact will be notified to pick up the camper.

Medication Policy

If your child requires any medication (sunscreen, bug spray, prescription medicine, over the counter medicine) during the day, please fill out an Orders for Medication form that is attached to the registration packet. Please bring the medication directly to the camp staff on the Monday morning of each session. Written instructions as to quantity, time to be administered, and your name and phone number must be provided. For prescription medication, the bottle or prescription directions from the pharmacy must be turned in along with an Orders for Medication form. Camp staff will ensure the proper administration of the medication, per the Orders for Medication form.

Rainy Days

In the event of a rainy day, camp remains in operation. Regular camp activities will continue during light rain conditions. During more severe weather including thunder and lightning, we alter a typical day's schedule and plan more indoor activities.

Payment & Registration

Please read all registration materials thoroughly and ensure all forms are filled out correctly. Most camps require a \$45 registration fee.

A nonrefundable \$5 weekly deposit is required to secure your weekly spot in all summer camps. All balances must be paid by the Wednesday prior to your camp session. A \$10 late fee will be assessed on all payments after Wednesday. Your camper will not be able to attend if your balance is not paid in full by Monday morning, before he/she is signed into camp. Please refer to the summer camp brochure or registration form for specific camp fees.

Financial assistance is available for families who qualify. If interested, please pick up a financial assistance application from the Member Services desk, or online at www.ymcanwnc.org/scholarships. Please allow 7-10 business days for financial assistance approval.

Refunds & Credits

Please take note that we are unable to prorate weekly camp fees. We require cancellation no later than Thursday at 5:00 pm prior to each session in order for you to receive a refund (less deposit). After Thursday, there will be no cancellations with a refund.

What to Bring

A backpack is recommended in order to keep track of all items which should be labeled with camper's first and last name. Campers should bring the following:

- Comfortable play clothes appropriate for the weather and old sneakers are recommended
- Swimsuit and towel
- Sunscreen and bug spray (An Order for Medication form is required for either of these)
- A plastic bag for wet/dirty clothes
- Closed toed shoes are required at camp
- Pack a water bottle and two snacks that do not require heat or refrigeration
- Alexander County only: pack a lunch that does not require heat or refrigeration
- Please do not allow your child to bring any electronics as we will not allow them to be used

Sunscreen & Bug Spray

In order to comply with our child abuse prevention guidelines, our staff will not be able to assist with sunscreen or bug spray application. Please bring spray sunscreen and bug spray.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, we will make every attempt to notify parents or emergency contacts. If necessary, emergency care and transportation will be handled by 911 and local emergency services.

Prohibited Items

The following items will be confiscated by YMCA staff and held in the office for parents to retrieve at the end of the camp day:

- Trading/Playing cards
- Sports equipment
- Electronic games or devices (including cell phones)
- Valuables (YMCA not responsible for lost/stolen items)
- Weapons (play or real)
- Candy, gum, cough drops (Due to food allergies, campers should not bring candy or snacks to share. Peanuts or peanut products are prohibited at YMCA Day Camp.)

Behavioral Consequences*

Campers not adhering to camp behavior standards will be handled on an individual basis. Frequent or severe violation may result in suspension or expulsion from the program at the discretion of the Camp Director. No refunds will be given due to expulsion or suspension on account of behavior. Staff in YMCA childcare programs use a positive, teaching form of guidance. Staff continually remind campers of program guidelines. Children are redirected to other activities when behavior contradicts camp guidelines. Parents are always kept informed of their children's progress. In order to ensure each camper has a safe and memorable experience, the following behavior guidelines are set forth:

If a camper is unable to comply with the behavior expectations, they will be given an initial warning and his or her parents/guardians will be notified. If the camper's behavior continues to be disruptive, he or she will receive a written reprimand and parents/guardians will be notified and consulted concerning the campers behavior.

- 3 written discipline reports = 3 day suspension
- 6 written discipline reports = 5 day suspension
- 9 written discipline reports = expulsion from program

*The YMCA reserves the right to immediately suspend or expel a child based on the severity of the offense.