



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# YMCA Summer Day Camp Parent Handbook

## YMCA of Metropolitan Chattanooga

- Downtown Family YMCA
- Hamilton Family YMCA
- YMCA Healthy Living Center at North River
- Cleveland Family YMCA
- North Georgia Community YMCA

Our Mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

[ymcachattanooga.org](http://ymcachattanooga.org)



## Welcome

Welcome to Summer Day Camp at the YMCA! We're glad you have chosen to embark on adventure with us this summer! Each summer camp experience is designed to offer opportunities for kids to try new things, learn, grow and make new friendships that last a lifetime.

We are committed to teaching the Y's core values of respect, caring, honesty, responsibility and faith. Our program will give your child the opportunity to demonstrate these core values and make meaningful relationships. We are looking forward to an exciting summer!

## Our Mission

The YMCA's mission to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. At the Y, all are welcome.

## Our Camp Goals

The goal of the YMCA is to promote youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. As part of the YMCA, our camp programming is also designed to reflect these values – helping campers grow mentally, physically and spiritually.

Our program objectives are based on interactions with others and with the environment. The specific principles of camp are:

- The achievement of personal growth in mind, body and spirit.
- The formation and practice of socially constructive habits and attitudes.
- The acquisition of knowledge about and development of skills and interests outdoors.
- Development of an appreciation of nature and a respect for the environment.
- The strengthening of family relationships through parent participation in the day camp program.

## Camp Sites/Address/Contacts

<b>Downtown Family YMCA</b> 301 W. Sixth Street Chattanooga, TN 37402 <b>Camp Director: Tori Glover</b> 423.266.3766	<b>Hamilton Family YMCA (camp at Fuller Ridge)</b> 9101 Fuller Rd. Chattanooga, TN 37421 <b>Camp Director: Rick Dunn</b> 423.899.1721  <b>Shelter Church</b> 9516 E. Brainerd Rd. Chattanooga, TN 37421 <b>Camp Director: Rick Dunn</b>	<b>YMCA Healthy Living Center at North River</b> 4138 Hixson Pike Chattanooga, TN 37415 <b>Camp Director: Travis Corder</b> 423.877.3517
<b>Cleveland Family YMCA</b> 220 Urbane Rd. NE Cleveland, TN 37312 <b>Camp Director: Rubye McGruder</b> 423.476.5573	<b>North Georgia Community YMCA</b> 1735 Battlefield Parkway Fort Oglethorpe, GA 30742 <b>Camp Director: Amber Hinch</b> 706.935.2226	

## Payments

Payments are due the Friday prior to the start of camp (Monday). If payments have not been received, your child will not be able to attend camp until payment has been made in full. There is a \$20 fee for any return drafts on payments.

## Drop-off

Sign your child in with the camp staff at the designated location each morning. Please provide a photo ID. Your site's camp director will inform you of specific drop off times. YMCA Day Camps are full week camp experiences, so it is encouraged that your child attend each day.

## Early Pickup

If your child will be leaving early, please notify the site coordinator in writing, on the morning of the designated day. The staff will have your child prepared to be picked up at your requested time. Remember that you will still need to sign your child out of camp.

## Pickup Guidelines/Signing In and Out

Sign your child out when you pick them up from camp. Please bring a photo ID with you every day. If someone other than yourself or the persons authorized on the registration form will be picking up your child, a written note must be submitted to the camp staff ahead of time. This person must also bring a photo ID with them at the time of pickup.

Please help to ensure the safest possible environment and remember to notify the center of any absences.

No camper will be allowed to leave by him/herself or sign him/herself in or out of camp, regardless of written permission.

*\*Note: Appropriate legal documentation is required to be on file with the YMCA when the custodial parent requests the center not to release the child to the other parent.*

## Late Pickup Policy

There will be a \$5 charge for the first 15 minutes after 6 p.m. pickup time. For every additional minute, a \$1 charge will be applied.

## Camp T-Shirts

Each camper will receive a YMCA Fieldtrip t-shirt for the entire summer.

## Camp Attire

Please dress your child appropriately for camp. Our camps use discovery and play as a major part of our camp program. Please dress your child in clothing that you do not mind getting dirty or stained with art materials. Other reminders regarding clothing for camp:

- T-shirt with sleeves
- Shorts (no skirts)
- Socks
- No halter tops/tube tops. Not short shorts.
- Tennis shoes (no sandals or flip flops, please)
- Cap/hat – something that provides protection from the sun
- Backpack
- Swimsuit (camp appropriate)
- Label everything with your camper's name.

## What to bring to camp

- Healthy snack inside a lunchbox or bag that is labeled and does not contain peanuts, tree nuts or manufactured in a facility with nuts (see below guidelines).
- If you are sending your camper with a lunch (outside of those provided to campers), please ensure it is ready to eat as is. There is no access to microwaves.
- Refillable water bottle (***Note that your child will have access to unlimited water.***)
- Swimsuit/towel labeled with child's name
- Backpack (labeled)
- Hat, if desired
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Old shoes/tennis shoes
- Jacket, if desired



## Lunches and Snacks

*The YMCA is committed to reasonably limiting potential food allergens; therefore, parents should not send peanut butter, or products that contain peanuts or tree nuts or have been manufactured in a facility with nuts. We make significant efforts to limit food with allergens; however, cannot guarantee a 100% nut-free or allergen-free environment and, therefore, cannot be labeled as an allergen-free or nut-free facility.*

All campers will have the option of bringing a non-perishable lunch and beverage to camp daily, or a request may be made for a lunch and snack provided by our Mobile Fit program. Please pack healthy, low sugar and balanced meal. No soda, please. Please do not have meals delivered to your camper. Do not send food or drinks in glass containers. Lunches will not be refrigerated, so please do not send foods that will spoil if not kept cold. Tip: Freezing lunches and/or beverages the day before and inserting a cold pack will help preserve the food. Please label all lunch boxes/bags with your camper's name. **There is no access to a microwave or refrigerator.**

## Personal Belongings

Please do not allow your child to bring personal belongings to camp. The YMCA cannot be responsible for the loss or damage of toys, games, clothing or other personal belongings.

**Please do not bring the following items to camp:**

- Any electronic games/devices (including Switches, iPods, iPads, CD players, etc.)
- Cell phones
- Trading cards
- Toys
- Guns, knives or weapons of any sort (fake or real)
- Any items of value

## Clothing and Other Belongings

All belonging brought to the YMCA should be properly marked with the child's name. Should children need to bring specific items from home for activities, appropriate notice will be given to parents.

## Lost & Found

There will be a designated lost and found location for YMCA Summer Day Camp. Please ask your camp director for details on that location. Note that while we make every effort to keep all campers' belongings in their backpacks, the YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. At the end of each week, will display the found items (unclaimed items will go to Goodwill). Please make regular checks of your child's backpack to determine if there are any lost items.

## Communication

On the first Monday of each session, you will receive important information regarding schedules, field trips, special events, etc. Please read all information carefully. This is where you will find daily announcements, photos of the day and be able to communicate with coordinators. You can leave messages at the camp check in desk for the camp director, coordinators or counselors.

## Disabilities/Special Needs

In order to provide the best YMCA day camp experience for your child, please consult with the camp director prior to registration about any special needs your child may have. We will make every attempt to serve all children, however your child must be able to function in a group setting. Our staff encourage open communication between parent(s) and the YMCA to help facilitate any accommodations needed for your child.

***Note: If your child has been receiving assistance in behavior management during the school year, it is imperative that this information is shared with the camp coordinator. This will enable us to work more effectively with your child.***

## Behavioral Guidance

The YMCA believes that all children should experience success. Staff will interact with children in accordance to our YMCA values of caring, respect, honesty and responsibility and will guide campers to behave accordingly including encouraging the following:

- Respect of personal privacy
- Respect differences in cultural, ethnic and family backgrounds.
- Encourage decision making abilities
- Promote getting along with others
- Encourage independence and self-direction.
- Reiteration of expectations.

Behavioral guidance will be constructive in nature and age appropriate, and seek to redirect children to appropriate behavior and resolve conflicts. Parents will be notified if/when persistent behavior problems are identified, and the camper will be placed on the Camper Behavior Accountability Plan (see below) in response.

### Camper Behavior Accountability Plan

To insure a positive and safe camp experience for all children, we have put policies in place to help children learn accountability for their actions. Our code of conduct does not permit language or actions that can hurt or frighten another camper including:

- Angry or vulgar language
- Physical contact with another person in anger or threatening way.
- Any demonstration of sexual activity or sexual contact with another person.
- Harassment or intimidation with words, gestures, body language or other menacing behavior.
- Behavior that intends to destroy property.
- Theft
- Carrying or concealing weapons or devices that may be used as weapons.
- Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

Should any of these behaviors arrive with a camper, our staff will respond by means of verbal or written warning. Staff reserve the right to dismiss a child from camp if issues are unable to be resolved.

***\*Note that if your child is suspended from camp, there will be no refund issued for that week.***

### Guidelines for Persistent Inappropriate Behavior

Persistent inappropriate behavior is any inappropriate behavior which continues after the progressive guidance steps have been used; any behavior which threatens the health or safety of themselves, other children or staff; or a continuous inability to follow the rules and guidelines of our program.

**YMCA will use the following procedures:**

- Observe and record the child's inappropriate behavior.
- Document what we have done and try to change the behavior.

- If inappropriate behavior continues, parents will be asked to participate in an immediate parent-teacher conference. Children old enough to understand this process will be invited to attend. A specific action plan will be developed at this conference to address the behavior.
- The Center Director/Program Administrator may suggest outside resources to parents and we will work with any outside resource for further guidance in responding to the child's behavior.
- If the inappropriate behavior continues, parents will be asked to keep the child home for a specified period of time.
- If the inappropriate behavior persists after the child is kept home, YMCA will dis-enroll the child.

## **Bullying**

The YMCA of Metropolitan Chattanooga is committed every day to prevent bullying by creating a welcoming, positive environment where all are included and accepted. In keeping with our mission to build healthy spirit, mind and body for all, our goal is that campers gain self-confidence, make new friends, and have fun making positive and memorable camp experiences.

Bullying of any type is not tolerated in any of our YMCA youth development programming including Summer Day Camp. Campers are expected to treat each other with respect. Camp staff are prepared to deal with any issues related to bullying proactively and thoughtfully, and may contact parents should an instance arise.

## **Evaluations**

Our YMCA Summer Day Camp program values your feedback to further improve our camp program. We will be distributing evaluations by Listen360 to parents over the course of the summer. We ask that you please complete these, and you are invited to give regular assessments of the camp program to the site director at any time.

## **Field Trips**

YMCA Summer Day Camps will conduct field trips over the course of the summer to the Cleveland Family YMCA (during Freaky Fitness Week) and to YMCA Camp Ocoee during Great Outdoors Week. In case of rain, a field trip may be changed or cancelled.

## **Medical/Emergency Information**

Each camper must have completed:

- Camp registration form
- Health history checklist
- Emergency information and contacts form
- Program waiver
- YMCA Agreement Form
- If needed, a Medical Consent form.

These forms must be given to the YMCA at the time of registration, or your child will be unable to attend camp. Please ensure the information on forms is complete and accurate.

## Address & Phone Numbers

Please inform the YMCA in writing of all changes to address and phone numbers. If numbers change, it is important that we are notified immediately to ensure proper notification of parents in the case of an emergency. Please notify the YMCA if you are going out of town, as this allows us to quickly contact others on your emergency contact list if necessary.

## Illness Policy

Children must be healthy enough to participate in the program's daily routine. For the safety and comfort of your child, please keep them home if they are sick (until they no longer present danger of passing on their illness). Parents may be asked to present a doctor's note before their child is readmitted to camp.

In the event your child becomes ill at camp, you will be contacted as soon as possible. If the parent or guardian is unable to be reached, the child's emergency contact will be notified. It is the responsibility of the parents to arrange for the child to be picked up from camp as soon as possible.

## Injuries & Medical Emergencies

In the event of a minor injury, First Aid will be administered at the camp location by the camp staff. The following procedures will be followed:

- First Aid will be provided, and the incident recorded in the camp log.
- The child will be periodically observed after First Aid is applied.

In the event of a medical emergency, immediate action will be taken by the staff as per your orders on the camp registration form and policies and waivers. If parents or other responsible adults are unable to be reached, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital for any necessary treatment. Should this occur, the following steps will be taken:

- Immediate First Aid will be administered by camp staff until professional services arrive.
- You will be contacted. If you cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be notified.
- 911 will be called.
- A staff person will accompany your child to the hospital and remain until you or your emergency contact person arrives.
- The incident will be documented on the YMCA incident report.

***Note: The YMCA will not incur any cost of medical treatment. It is imperative that you indicate on your child's health history/registration form what type of insurance you carry.***

## Emergency Plans

Protecting the children in our care is our top priority. Please know that the YMCA has an emergency plan in place and staff have been trained to be well-versed in emergency protocols (including procedures related to inclement weather).



## **Weather**

Outdoor play is an important part of our camp schedule. Parents are asked to dress children appropriately for weather conditions. A light sweater or jacket may be needed in the mornings.

During periods of extreme heat, the camp staff will scale down physical activities. Campers will not be outdoors for more than 15-20 minutes at a time. The staff will increase their water intake on these days. There are some ways you can help keep your camper cool:

- Provide at least 2 drinks per day in his/her lunch.
- Provide them with a hat to wear and dress them in light colored clothing.

## **Sunscreen/Bug Spray**

Should your camper be required to use sunscreen and/or bug spray while participating in camp, the following procedures must be followed:

- Please do not send your child with sunscreen lotion, as staff are unable to apply it. Spray sunscreen is required.
- Keep the sunscreen and/or insect repellant in the original container, labeled with your child's name and give to the camp counselor.
- Camp staff will apply sunscreen to campers under the age of 9. All campers older than 9 years old will be permitted to apply their own sunscreen. Note: Camp staff will not be permitted to apply bug spray to campers.

## **Medications**

Our medication policy is primarily established to accommodate the administration of medication(s) commonly prescribed by physicians for the treatment of short-term illnesses. Prescription and over the counter medications will not be dispensed without written consent from the child's parent.

- Complete the medication authorization form included in your camp registration packet.
- Keep all medication in the original container with the prescription label/directions attached. Medications must be labeled with the child's name, name of medication, dosage amount and the time(s) to be given.
- Give all medications (including inhalers) to the camp counselor. Campers are not allowed to keep medications on their person, in backpacks or lunch bags.
- All medications will be locked up and given to your child at the prescribed time.

## **Allergies**

It is your responsibility to notify the YMCA of any allergies your child may have including treatment/medications for those allergies.

## **Child Abuse**

The YMCA screens all members, guests and program participants for registered sex offenders. Staff adhere to state guidelines and are mandated reporters of any suspected child abuse.

If the YMCA is made aware that a parent/guardian of a child is listed on a registered sex offender database, the camp director will be notified and will inform the staff. Parents who are registered sex offenders are able to enter the YMCA childcare programs for the purpose of enrollment, conferences and to drop off/pick up their children. For the protection of the parent and the children, the parent/guardian must be under the direct supervision of a YMCA staff person at all times when they are in the facility. The YMCA reserves the right to limit or refuse admittance to any facility to any registered sex offenders if needed.

## **Phone Calls**

Please do not call to speak to your child or your child's counselor unless it is an emergency. If your child is experiencing problems, we will call you immediately. If you need to speak with your child's counselor, please leave a message with the YMCA and he/she will return your call as soon as possible.

## **Rules & Safety**

Safety is paramount to YMCA Day Camp. All children **MUST** be brought to and picked up from camp by a parent or authorized person. All parents will be asked to show an I.D. when retrieving their child.

Camp rules will be established and taught to the children at the beginning of each session and regularly reviewed to ensure the safety of all campers. Please review the following rules with your child:

1. Exit vehicles only at drop off points and only from the passenger side of the car
2. Stay with your group at all times.
3. No climbing on gates, fences or trees.
4. No horseplay, screaming, or yelling while on buses.
5. No inappropriate or abusive language will be permitted.
6. No hitting, kicking or other physical abuse will be permitted.
7. Listen and be respectful of the rules and boundaries for any games or activities in camp.
8. Participate and cooperate during activities.
9. All campers will be expected to show good teamwork! How we play is more important than winning or losing.

## **Staff**

The YMCA strives to hire highly qualified, well-trained staff to conduct all YMCA childcare programs. Day Camp staff members are innovative and creative individuals who love working with children. All staff meet requirements set forth by the State, County and YMCA as applicable. All YMCA staff members participate in planned training and education process to further their skills in child development and recreation.

## **Swimming**

Please send your child to camp with a swimsuit and towel **EVERYDAY**. Although you will be provided with a schedule that indicates your camper's swim schedule, sending your camper with his/her swim gear each day will allow them to participate in any activities in the event of schedule changes.

Children will be swim tested at the beginning of each session and grouped accordingly. Day Camp staff, as well as lifeguards, will supervise the pool at all times.

## **Swim Test Requirements**

All children ages 13 and under are required to take a swim test or wear a lifejacket or another approved flotation device and remain with a staff member at all times.

To successfully complete the swim test, the child must:

- Swim the length of the pool unassisted, without rest, and without their legs or body position dropping below a 45-degree angle.
- Exit the water without support of a ladder.
- Jump into water over their head, resurface, and tread water for one minute.

If successful, the child will be provided with a "green band" and have access to the entire swim area including the deep end. Any swimmer who cannot complete these requirements will receive a "red band" and only have access to the shallow ends of the pool, and wear an approved life jacket or flotation device at all times.

## **Special Notes/Tips for Parents**

As a provider children's programming, the YMCA strives to effectively screen and train all staff and volunteers. YMCA child development and camping programs are licensed by the state and/or jurisdiction in which they take place. Our quality programs enrich the lives of thousands of children each year and the safety of every child is our top priority.

To ensure your child remains safe outside of YMCA supervision, we encourage parents' cooperation in the following areas:

- It is a violation of YMCA policy for a YMCA employee to babysit, host sleepovers, or spend time one-on-one with your child outside of YMCA programs.
- Please do not leave your child at the YMCA facility, school site, or playing field unless a YMCA staff member or volunteer is there to receive and supervise your child.
- Talk to your child about the importance of telling you if someone does or says something that makes them feel uncomfortable. Emphasize that adults should never ask them to keep secrets from you.
- Explain to your child that he/she has a basic right to privacy and that no one should touch them inappropriately or compel them to touch someone else inappropriately.
- Instruct your child to always remain part of the group. Stress safety in numbers.
- Be concerned if your child suddenly becomes withdrawn or balks at attending certain activities or being around a particular person. Gently seek to find out why.
- In the event that you suspect any inappropriate action has occurred while at camp, contact the Camp Director. If these actions involve suspected child abuse, contact the Child Protective Services Department of your jurisdiction immediately, or contact your local police department.