



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# **YMCA OF MONTCLAIR**

## **SUMMER CAMP PARENT HANDBOOK**

Dear Camp Families,

Thank you for choosing the YMCA of Montclair Summer Day Camp program. We hope you and your child are as excited as our team is for the upcoming camp season! This parent handbook includes all the information you will need to prepare yourself — and your child — for an amazing summer camp experience.

At the YMCA of Montclair, our camp staff are dedicated to providing a safe, enriching environment where your child can explore new interests and build authentic friendships. Our camp experience is rooted in the four core values of **caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility**, which are emphasized in every interaction, activity, and event. We take great pride in offering a program that upholds the highest safety standards while remaining deeply committed to youth development.

The YMCA of Montclair Camp Team is excited to welcome your child to a new season filled with fun, exploration, and memories that will last a lifetime. We can't wait to see your child in camp for an amazing summer!

Yours in Camp,  
**YMCA of Montclair Leadership Team**

## **MISSION**

### **YMCA of Montclair Summer Camp**

- **Our mission acts as a blueprint for a successful summer**
- **Every staff member embraces the mission**
- **Our mission guides the campers towards the most positive summer camp experience and ultimately lifelong memories!**

The YMCA of Montclair camps give campers between the ages of 3 -14 years old the opportunity to grow physically, mentally, and socially. Our highly trained and caring staff will provide progressive, challenging, and structured activities. These activities will build self-esteem, develop skills, clarify values, and appreciate diversity. Groups are structured age appropriately and provide small and large group activities. Your child will have memories that will last a lifetime.

1. Each camper & staff member should have an opportunity to develop self-confidence and appreciation of his/her own worth as an individual.
2. Each camper & staff member should have an opportunity to grow as a responsible person of his/her community.
3. Each camper & staff member should have an opportunity to appreciate that health of mind and body is a sacred gift and that physical fitness and mental well-being are conditions to be achieved and maintained.
4. Each camper & staff member should have an opportunity to recognize the worth of all persons and appreciate the diversity of all people.
5. Each camper & staff member should have an opportunity to develop his/her capacities for leadership and use them responsibly in his/her own groups and in community life.
7. Each camper and staff member should have the opportunity to use the Y's character values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility and to educate others on the importance of these values.

## **CONTACT LOCATIONS**

**YMCA of Montclair (25 Park St) Phone Number:** 973.744.3400

**New Discoveries Camp 49 Orange Road, Montclair**

**New Adventures Camp 26 Lakeside Ave, Verona**

**YBA Camp 26 Lakeside Ave, Verona**

**Explorers Camp 54 Orange Road, Montclair**

## **IMPORTANT COMMUNICATION INFORMATION**

If you need to speak with a staff member during the camp day concerning your child, please call the camp office to speak with the Office Manager. The camp office phones are accessible during operating hours (7:45am – 6:00pm). To leave a message with a staff member or one of the Camp Directors during off-hours, please call the YMCA of Montclair Park St. Location at 973-744-3400 OR send an email.

## **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION**

Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately upon serious illness or injury to their child. Every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians through all contact numbers provided. If parents/guardians are unavailable, emergency contacts listed on your child's registration form will be called until parental contact is made. Treatment will be given as necessary by our camp nurse and/or trained staff. Should your child require additional medical treatment, emergency services will be notified, and your child will be transported by ambulance to the local hospital.

## **CAMP REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT POLICIES**

- To ensure your child's enrollment in camp, early registration is strongly recommended as camp sessions fill up quickly.
- Aftercare spaces are limited per session, so early registration is encouraged.
- A \$75 non-refundable deposit per child per session is required at the time of registration.
- A \$35 non-refundable deposit per child per session is required at the time of registration for before/aftercare.
- Any outstanding financial obligations to the YMCA of Montclair must be resolved prior to registration.
- An active YMCA of Montclair membership is required for all children attending a YMCA of Montclair summer camp program.
  - If you have multiple children registering for camp, please make sure that they are on the same account for a smooth registration process! Please call the Y at 973-744-3400 for assistance with merging your children's accounts.

## **CANCELLATIONS**

- Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable.
- To cancel a camp session(s), cancellations MUST be made in writing and submitted to the corresponding camp director and the billing coordinator.
  - Camp billing coordinator – Shirley Farquharson, [SFarquharson@montclairymca.org](mailto:SFarquharson@montclairymca.org)

- To receive a refund for a cancelled session (minus the \$75 deposit), submission of cancellation must be made in writing a minimum of **2 WEEKS PRIOR** to the session you are cancelling.
  - **In medical-related circumstances where an exception may be made, medical documentation is required.**
- If you fail to submit a cancellation request in a timely manner, you will continue to be billed for the balance.

## CAMP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

**At the time of registration, a \$75 non-refundable deposit is due per session per child.**

<u>Camp Session</u>	<u>Billing Date</u>	<u>Cancellation/Withdrawal Refund Deadline (minus deposit)</u>
Week 1: June 29– July 3	May 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	June 16, 2026
Week 2: July 6– July 10	May 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	June 23, 2026
Week 3: July 13 – July 17	May 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	June 30, 2026
Week 4: July 20 – July 24	June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	July 7., 2026
Week 5: July 27 – July 31	June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	July 14, 2026
Week 6: August 3 – August 7	June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	July 21, 2026
Week 7: August 10 – August 14	July 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	July 28, 2026
Week 8: August 17 – August 21	July 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	August 4, 2026

## GENERAL CAMP

- The YMCA of Montclair’s employment policy prohibits YMCA staff from babysitting and/or transporting children to and from our camp programs or bus stops. Please do not put our staff in a difficult situation.
- Please **LABEL ALL ITEMS** sent to camp with your child’s first and last name.
- Please make sure to apply a high SPF sunscreen to your child BEFORE dropping them as well as sending a labeled bottle so that our staff can reapply if needed.
- Please make sure your child eats a nutritious breakfast BEFORE arriving at camp to ensure they have the energy needed to start their action-packed day.
- Please make sure to send your child with a nutritious lunch (**NUT-FREE**) along with a refillable water bottle.

- Please refer to your child’s camp’s “Packing List” document found on our website when preparing your child for their first day of camp!
- At camp, we unplug and connect. Electronics are prohibited by campers and staff during the camp day.
- DO NOT send your child with toys, electronics, Pokémon cards, or any other valuables. **The YMCA of Montclair is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**
- All campers are required to be potty trained as our staff is not permitted to diaper/change. Pull ups are not acceptable.

## THE CAMP DAY

- Campers are divided by age and placed into groups according to age.
- Each session has a specific theme in which activities and special events are based upon.
- Traditional camp day activities include instructional swim, STEM, Arts, Sports and Games, Healthy U and nature among others.
  - **All swimming-related activities take place at either our Park Street YMCA or Geyer YMCA.**
- **Wacky Wednesdays**: Every Wednesday is Wacky Wednesday! Campers and staff are encouraged to dress up based on the Wacky Wednesday theme that corresponds with each session. All are encouraged to get as wacky as possible!
- **Special Event Days**: Every Friday is a Special Event Day to end another awesome week of camp! During these days, campers and staff participate in camp-wide activities. There will be a camp-wide ceremony every Friday.

## RAINY/INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS

Regardless of weather, every day in camp is jam packed with fun activities; a little rain never hurt anybody! At Camp, we make every attempt to operate on our normal activity schedule. Campers will continue to participate in their scheduled activities in the event of light rain/mist and on those cooler summer days. Please make sure to always send your camper prepared for a typical day of camp (with their swimsuit, towel, and change of clothes) even if the forecast shows rain as there is always the possibility that it will clear up. On days that rain is heavy and continues throughout the day, we are prepared to move to an indoor schedule so that our campers still get the most out of their camp day!

## IMPORTANT SWIMMING INFORMATION

**Swimming is an integral part of the camp day as well as a life skill promoted by the YMCA.**

- Our YMCA aquatics department will lead instructional swim for all campers.

- Swim tests will be done for all new campers to determine their swim level and ability.
- ALL campers are expected to participate in swim lessons.
- Please be sure that your child is prepared to swim daily. **SWIM CAPS** are required for campers!
- Our YMCA pools are properly grounded; however, the Y-USA has updated their safety policies to include indoor grounded pools to be closed in the event of an electrical storm. All pools will be cleared for 30 mins if lightning is seen, or thunder is heard.

## MEDICATION REQUIREMENTS

- If your child requires medication to be taken at camp (I.e. - prescription, inhalers, EpiPens, etc.) you **MUST** fill out a "Prescription Medication Authorization" form or an allergy action plan from your physician send it to camp with your child's medication. This form can be found on our website under the main camp landing page.
- Any medication should be enclosed in a clear Ziploc bag with your child's first and last name on it.
- All medications must be followed according to their label.
- All prescription medications must be current, in the original pharmaceutical packaging and have the child's name, physician's name, and instructions clearly visible.
- If your child requires an EpiPen, a copy of the allergy action plan must also be inside of the clear Ziploc bag alongside the "Permission to Administer Medication" form.
- You can receive a copy of the allergy action plan from your child's physician.
- Medication **MUST** be provided to the camp staff or your child will not be permitted into the camp.
- The YMCA retains the right to refuse to administer medication if the Camp Nurse or the Camp Director, and/or Assistant Camp Director feel that there is a conflict. In this instance, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately.

## OFFICIAL CAMP CELL PHONE POLICY

### \*AT CAMP WE UNPLUG AND CONNECT! \*

- Cell phone use by campers and staff is prohibited.
- If you are sending your child to camp with their cellphone, please understand that they are NOT allowed to use it during the camp day. **Please note that the YMCA of Montclair is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**
- We appreciate your help with enforcing this policy as it is designed to help all campers remain engaged and have a better, more meaningful experience while at camp.
- If you urgently need to get in touch with your child during the camp day, please call the camp office.

## LOST & FOUND

- Please remember to **CLEARLY LABEL** all your child's possessions!
  - These items include towels, bathing suits, clothes, containers, backpacks, goggles, sunscreen, etc.
- Campers will lose items at camp - labels help our staff return lost possessions to their owners. We do our best to track down and return all lost items that are found at camp!
- When your camper loses an item at camp, please ask the camp staff to try and locate it. You may also call the camp to report a lost item.
- A "Lost & Found" will be set up at camp for campers to look throughout the week if they have lost an item.
- After the last day of the summer camp season, all lost and found items will be donated or thrown away.

## RELEASE OF CHILDREN POLICY

Campers may be released only to the child's custodial parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the custodial parent(s) to take the child from the site and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the custodial parent(s) cannot be reached. A child shall not be visited or released to a non-custodial parent unless the custodial parent specifically authorizes the Camp Director to allow such visits or release in writing. This written authorization, including name and telephone number shall be maintained in the file. If a non-custodial parent has been denied access to a child by a court order, the YMCA shall secure documentation to that effect and maintain a copy in the file.

## LATE PICK-UP POLICY

- If a parent/guardian is not present at camp dismissal or if your child is in aftercare (6:00pm), 2 counselors will wait with the camper until an adult is able to pick-up.
- The late fee is \$10 for every 10 minutes late and will be charged to the payment on file.
- If you are running late to pick-up your child, please make sure to notify the camp office at provide your child's first and last name. If you are not able to reach the camp office, please call the Y at 973-744-3400.
- If a parent/guardian is consistently late for camp pick up, you will be asked to register for Aftercare.
  - If late pick-ups continue in aftercare (after 6pm), your child may be dismissed from the program.

## BUS TRANSPORTATION SAFETY RULES

- Bus drivers conduct a daily check of the vehicle which includes all safety equipment to ensure that the vehicle is in sound, working condition.
- Staff and children must sit, wear a seatbelt, and stay seated while the bus is in motion. Counselors sit spread out in the front, middle, and rear of the bus during the trip. A bus counselor is permitted to walk the aisles periodically to ensure the safety of all children.
- No eating or drinking is allowed on the bus.
- Singing is one of the activities that make the bus trip fun; however, screaming and rowdy behavior can cause distraction for the driver and shall not be permitted.
- Objects must not be thrown, dropped, or hung out of the windows. This includes and is not limited to hands, arms, toys, and hats.
- The interior and exterior of each bus shall be maintained in clean and safe condition with clear passage to operable doors. Main aisle cannot be blocked.
- Children shall never be left unattended on a bus. Before campers enter the bus, a staff member must board first.
- Counselors will check all seats, from front to back, when the bus ride is finished to be sure no children and/or belongings remain on the bus.
- Children will enter and exit the bus from the curbside of the vehicle.
- All buses will be equipped with a first aid kit and fire extinguisher.

## **BUS EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

1. If there is an emergency, staff will help the children to remain calm.
2. The counselor closest to the emergency door being used will open that door. Campers shall remain seated and quiet until the counselor gives the all clear to exit. One counselor will exit first and assist the children exiting and one counselor will remain on the bus.
3. When the last counselor is off the bus, a safe area away from the bus will be selected for the children to await further instructions.
4. A head count will be taken to verify attendance.

## **YMCA OF MONTCLAIR CAMP DISCIPLINE POLICY**

**In the event that camp staff are experiencing disciplinary and/or behavioral difficulties with your child, the following discipline policy will be put into effect. Camp staff will begin with Step 1 and move forward with the process accordingly depending on the success of each step.**

1. The camp counselor will remove the child from the activity and take them to the side. A discussion with the child will take place regarding the necessary adjustment needed to improve behavior. The YMCA core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility will be reinforced.
2. The child will be removed from the activity to meet with the Group Director and Counselor to set a behavioral goal. Parent/guardian will be notified of behavior.
3. The child will be removed from the activity and taken to the Camp Office to speak to the Camp Director to go over behavior expectations.
4. If the behavior persists beyond this, the Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director, and Group Director will make an evaluation regarding whether the environment at the YMCA of Montclair Camp program is the right program to address the specific behavioral concerns that the child has exhibited. A discussion with the child's parent/guardian will follow. One of two decisions will be made:
  - a. The child will miss one day/days of camp. No refund will be given for the day/s missed.
  - b. If it is determined that camp is not the right fit for the child, then the Camp Director assumes the right to remove the child from the program.

## **Suspension/Expulsion POLICY**

### **IMMEDIATE CAUSE FOR EXPULSION**

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions towards anyone at our program sites.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to anyone in front of enrolled children.

### **PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S SUSPENSION/EXPULSION**

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization record or provide rescue medications such as Epi pens or inhalers.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Racial or derogatory language used toward any individual.
- Verbal or physical bullying or targeting of other children.

### **CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR SUSPENSION/EXPULSION**

- Failure of child to adjust to the program structure after a reasonable amount of time.
- If they are a repeated flight risk.

- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Threatening language (such as "I am going to kill you" or "I am going to shoot you").
- Physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children. Including but not limited to hitting, excessive biting, spitting, pinching, inappropriate touch, or threatening language.
- Racial or derogatory language used toward any individual.

**Please note that there may be specific, extraordinary circumstances that warrant an immediate expulsion from the program without following the steps above. The YMCA of Montclair has a zero-tolerance policy for violence (verbal or physical), which if violated, may lead to immediate removal from the camp program. If a child has exhibited behavior that impedes the safety of other campers and/or camp staff, this may also lead to immediate removal of the program.**

**We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in helping us make camp an enjoyable, safe experience for all our campers and staff.**

**When a camper is suspended, there will not be a refund.**

## INCLUSION AT THE Y

At the YMCA of Montclair, we are dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment for your child to thrive in. We follow small camper to staff ratios and best practices in safety standards. Due to the nature of camp, it is important to understand the following details of our daily structure before registering your child for this program.

- A majority of the camp day is spent outdoors.
- We offer a variety of fast-paced and challenging activities to keep our campers active all day long.
- Transition times are quick and require a fair amount of walking through the camp site to get from activity to activity. They walk/bus to swim!
- Weekly camp-wide activities take place every Monday and Friday, in which all our campers and staff gather for a ceremony that celebrates campers and staff. This ceremony is filled with excitement and cheering and can be very stimulating.
- All campers are required to be potty trained. Pull ups are not acceptable.

Camp staff will make every effort possible to accommodate campers who may need additional assistance during transition times and activity blocks. However, if your child requires 1:1 assistance during the camp day, please make sure to disclose this information to the Camp Director prior to registration of the program. We are happy to allow a 1:1 aid

to accompany your child in camp if they are provided by the parent/guardian/school district. Prior to the aid being cleared to attend camp with your child, the YMCA of Montclair requires a criminal background check to be run through our HR department. Please contact the Camp Director for more information.

**Please note the importance of communicating any special needs and/or diverse abilities (physical, emotional, behavioral, etc) information concerning your child on their camp registration form. This information will assist our staff in providing your child with the best care possible. If there is any information that you would like to share with the Camp Director, but would like to keep as private as possible, please make sure to reach out to the Director prior to registering your child for the program.**