



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA OF MONTCLAIR OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER CAMP AT THE LAKE



2026 CAMP AT THE LAKE PARENT HANDBOOK

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing the YMCA of Montclair Outdoor Education Center's Camp at the Lake summer day camp program. We hope you and your child are as excited as our team is for the upcoming camp season! Contained in this parent handbook is all the information that you will need to prepare yourself, and your child, for an amazing summer camp experience.

At the YMCA of Montclair, our Camp at the Lake staff are dedicated to providing a safe, enriching environment in which your child will have the opportunity to explore new interests, build authentic friendships, and find a love for the outdoors! Camp at the Lake provides a meaningful summer camp experience to all campers and staff by emphasizing the four core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility in every interaction, activity, and event. As an American Camping Association Accredited camp, we pride ourselves on providing a summer camp program that operates on the highest level of safety standards and dedication to youth development.

The YMCA of Montclair Camp at the Lake team is excited to welcome your child into a new camp season of 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,

Camp at the Lake Leadership Team

MISSION

YMCA OF MONTCLAIR OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER

CAMP AT THE LAKE DAY 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 Camp at the Lake gives campers between the ages of 5 -16 years old the opportunity to grow physically, mentally, and socially in an outdoor camping environment. 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. Villages are structured age appropriately and provide small and large group activities. The YMCA of Montclair Camp at the Lake is a fun and safe day camp experience that has that sleep away camp feel. Your child will have memories that will last a lifetime. Based on the Statement of Purpose, the objectives established by the National Council of YMCA's, we have adapted the following goals for The YMCA of Montclair Outdoor Education Center Camp at the Lake.

1. Each camper & staff member should have an opportunity to develop self-confidence and appreciation of their own worth as an individual.
2. Each camper & staff member should have an opportunity to grow as a responsible member of their family and citizen of their 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 their capacities for leadership and use them responsibly in their own groups and in community life.
6. Each camper & staff member should have an opportunity to develop an interest in, knowledge of, and a respect for, the natural world and its ecology, and work for its conservation.
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.

CAMP AT THE LAKE CONTACT INFORMATION

Location/Address: 131 Germantown Road, West Milford, NJ 07480

Camp at the Lake Office Phone Number: 973-697-2929

YMCA of Montclair (25 Park St) Phone Number: 973-744-3400

Chief Operating Officer (Interim Camp Director): Ann-Margaret Gutierrez, agutierrez@montclairymca.org

Assistant Camp Director: Marlon Pollard, MPollard@montclairymca.org

Camp Program Coordinator: Danmarie Montalvo, DMontalvo@montclairymca.org

Camp Waterfront Director: Madison Lalli, MLalli@montclairymca.org

IMPORTANT COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

If you need to speak with a staff member during the camp day concerning your child, please call the camp office phone to speak with the Office Manager. The camp office phone is accessible during operating hours (8:00am – 4:30pm). You may also send a note with your child’s bus counselor addressed to “Camp at the Lake: Office”. 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 using the contact information above.

You may also send a note with a special request via your child’s bus counselor to be given to the Office Manager upon arrival at camp (i.e. - your child is being picked up early for the day). **Under NO circumstance can we allow bus counselors to accept verbal messages; please put everything in writing!** If unplanned changes occur during the day, make sure to call the camp office and inform the Office Manager.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately upon serious illness or injury to their child. You will also be notified via phone of minor bumps/bruises/scrapes by our camp nurse. 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 to Chilton Memorial Hospital in Pompton Plains by ambulance or official YMCA vehicle.

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 non-refundable OR transferrable deposit for all Camp at the Lake programs (Traditional, Specialty, Junior Lifeguards, CIT Program) and aftercare is due upon registration.**
- **Any outstanding financial obligations to the YMCA of Montclair must be resolved prior to registration. If there are any outstanding balances on your account at the time your child is set to start camp, they will NOT be permitted into the program.**
- 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 or 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
- **To receive a refund for a cancelled session (minus the 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 written cancellation request in a timely manner, you will be responsible for the remaining balance.

CAMP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At the time of registration, a non-refundable or transferrable 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 st , 2026	June 15, 2026
Week 2: July 6– July 10	May 1 st , 2026	June 22, 2026
Week 3: July 13 – July 17	May 1 st , 2026	June 29, 2026
Week 4: July 20 – July 24	June 1 st , 2026	July 6, 2026
Week 5: July 27 – July 31	June 1 st , 2026	July 13, 2026
Week 6: August 3 – August 7	June 1 st , 2026	July 20, 2026
Week 7: August 10 – August 14	July 1 st , 2026	July 27, 2026
Week 8: August 17 – August 21	July 1 st , 2026	August 3, 2026
Week 9: August 24 – August 28	July 1 st , 2026	August 10, 2026
Week 10: August 31 – September 4	July 1 st , 2026	August 17, 2026
<u>Specialty Camp Session</u>	<u>Billing Date</u>	<u>Cancellation/Withdrawal Refund Deadline (Minus Deposit)</u>
Session 1: July 6 – July 17	May 1, 2026	June 22, 2026
Session 2: July 20 – July 31	June 1, 2026	July 6, 2026
Session 3: August 3 – August 14	July 1, 2026	July 20, 2026
<u>Counselors in Training (CIT) Session</u>	<u>Billing Date</u>	<u>Cancellation/Withdrawal Refund Deadline (Minus Deposit)</u>
Session 1: July 6 – July 17	May 1, 2026	June 22, 2026
Session 2: July 20 – July 31	June 1, 2026	July 6, 2026
Session 3: August 3 – August 14	July 1, 2026	July 20, 2026
<u>Junior Lifeguards Session</u>	<u>Billing Date</u>	<u>Cancellation/Withdrawal Refund Deadline (Minus Deposit)</u>
Session 2: July 20 – July 31	June 1, 2026	July 6, 2026
Session 3: August 3 – August 14	July 1, 2026	July 20, 2026

GENERAL CAMP & BUS INFORMATION

- 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.
- A group orientation will be scheduled during first period every Monday morning for each camp group.
- Our campsite is treated for ticks routinely throughout the summer camp season. Please make sure to educate your child on the importance of sun block and tick prevention prior to the camp season starting. Information on tick education can be found via the following link:
 - [Keep Campers Safe from Ticks | American Camp Association \(acacamps.org\)](https://www.acacamps.org/keep-campers-safe-from-ticks)
 - Although staff will perform tick checks for groups that have been exploring in the woods, parents are strongly advised to check their children daily for ticks.
- Please make sure to apply a high SPF sunscreen to your child BEFORE dropping them off at the bus stop.
- Please make sure your child eats a nutritious breakfast BEFORE arriving at the bus stop to ensure they have the energy needed to start their action-packed day. The camp day begins with the bus ride there!
- Please make sure to send your child with a nutritious lunch (**NUT-FREE**) that includes extra snacks along with a refillable water bottle.
 - Camp is always stocked with bread, wow-butter, and jelly in case of EMERGENCIES only.
- Please refer to the “Camp at the Lake Packing List” document found on page 19 when preparing your child for their first day of camp!
- At Camp at the Lake, 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.**
- Bus stop drop-off begins at 8:00am. All buses will leave at 8:15am SHARP, unless your chosen bus location is a connecting stop. Please make sure to get to the bus on time as they do not wait for anyone!
- Aftercare takes place on-site at camp. All campers enrolled in aftercare will stay at the camp until 4:45pm each day. The aftercare bus will arrive in Montclair between 5:30pm-5:45pm depending on traffic. Pick-up is no later than 6:00pm.
 - If you are registering your child for aftercare, you MUST use the Hillside bus stop. This is the ONLY bus for aftercare and must be used to AND from camp each day. There are no exceptions.

THE CAMP DAY

- Campers are divided into “Villages” and placed into groups according to age.
 - Junior Village: 5-7 years old
 - Middle Village: 8-10 years old
 - Senior Village: 11-14 years old
- Campers will interact with their village during morning attendance, lunch, swim time, bus dismissal and special events.
- Each session has a specific theme in which activities and special events are based upon. Please refer to the “2026 Weekly Themes” document in this handbook for a preview of this summer’s themes and Wacky Wednesday’s.
- Traditional camp day activities include: swim lessons, free swim, aquapark, boating, paddle boarding, pedal boats, boating (canoes & kayaks), arts & crafts, gaga, ropes course, sports & games, archery, fishing, science & nature, and outdoor living skills (OLS) among others.
 - Archery, Fishing, and Paddle Boarding are only available to Middle and Senior Village campers per our safety standards.
 - **All swimming-related activities take place in our on-site lake. We DO NOT have a pool at this facility.**
- **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 (please refer to the “2026 Weekly Themes” document). 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 Village/camp-wide activities. During some of these special events, campers may be asked to wear costumes or bring items from home. There will be a camp-wide ceremony to announce and honor campers and counselors of the week to end every Friday.

SPECIALTY CAMPS

Specialty camps are designed to provide a singular exposure to one program area and are a great way to add even more variety to your camper's summer experience. It is essential for campers to have a genuine passion and strong enthusiasm for exploring this program area. All specialty campers receive the activities below, in addition to their specialty programming.

- Instructional Swim
- Free Swim
- Aquapark
- Special Event Fridays

Nature Navigators: Outdoor Education Camp

This specialty camp is designed to offer nature lovers the full outdoor experience while teaching them basic outdoor education and survival skills.

Session 1: July 6 - July 17 | Survival & Adventure

Session 2: July 20 - July 31 | Nature Detectives

Session 3: August 3 - August 14 | The Great Outdoors

Sports Stars: Sports Camp

This specialty camp is tailored for sports enthusiasts, combining the unique experience of Camp at the Lake with opportunities to sharpen athletic skills through a variety of sports and friendly competitions.

Session 1: July 6 - July 17 | Slam Dunk

Session 2: July 20 - July 31 | Goal Getters

Session 3: August 3 - August 14 | Sports Mania

COUNSELORS IN TRAINING (CIT)

Camp at the Lake's NEW Counselor-in-Training (CIT) Program is a dynamic leadership development experience designed for teens who are ready to grow, learn, and step into a mentorship role at summer camp. Open to motivated youth ages 15–16, the program blends hands-on training with interactive workshops to help participants build confidence, communication skills, and a strong sense of responsibility.

By the end of the program, CITs will have developed practical counselor skills, strengthened their ability to work as part of a team, and embodied the YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility—preparing them for future leadership opportunities both at camp and beyond.

- Instructional Swim
- Free Swim
- Aquapark
- Special Event Fridays

Must complete application (to be completed by CIT participant)

Session 1: July 6 - July 17

Session 2: July 20 - July 31

Session 3: August 3 - August 14

JUNIOR LIFEGUARDS

The Red Cross Junior Lifeguard program, hosted by the YMCA of Montclair, introduces teens ages 11-14 (must be entering 6th grade in Fall 2026) to the fundamentals of lifeguarding through a blend of water-safety education, skill development, and hands on practice. Designed for participants who are strong swimmers and eager to build confidence around aquatic environments, this program teaches essential rescue skills, CPR and first aid basics, and how to recognize and respond to potential safety hazards in and around the water. This engaging and supportive program is ideal for teens interested in aquatic safety, personal development, and preparing for future employment opportunities at the pool or waterfront.

Session 1: July 20 - July 31

Session 2: August 3 - August 14

To participate in Junior Lifeguarding, the following skills must be demonstrated:

- Maintain position at the surface for one minute by treading water
- Rotate one full turn and orient to the exit
- Level off and swim front crawl for 25 yards, demonstrating rotary breathing
- Retrieve a dive toy in 8ft of water
- Must be comfortable in water without goggles

Pre-course Dates (must attend one):

- Tuesday, May 12 from 4:00pm-4:30pm
- Friday, May 15 from 8:00pm-8:30pm

Please note that participants will NOT receive a certification for the completed course if they miss any days of the 2-week course.

Junior Lifeguards Contact Information:

Camp Waterfront Director: Madison Lalli, MLalli@montclairymca.org

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 at the Lake, 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 a designated rainy-day schedule so that our campers still get the most out of their camp day! On days when rain is in the forecast, please make sure to send your child in appropriate clothing (ponchos are strongly encouraged on these days!).

IMPORTANT WATERFRONT INFORMATION

Swimming is an integral part of the camp day as well as a life skill promoted by the YMCA. Our Waterfront operations meet all the requirements of the state of New Jersey, ACA (American Camping Association), and the County Board of Health. An independent, state-approved laboratory tests our lake weekly. The Waterfront Director and a team of waterfront certified lifeguards are on duty at all times.

- Camp at the Lake campers are required to take a swim assessment on their first day of camp.
- Swim tests will be done every Monday to determine your child's swim level and ability. This will help the waterfront staff determine what swim lessons they will receive.
- ALL campers are expected to participate in swim lessons.
 - If a camper refuses to participate in their swim lessons, they will not be eligible to participate in free swim and/or aquapark that day.
- In the event of illness or injury, notification from parent/guardian for a temporary excusal from swim lessons is required.
- Please be sure that your child is prepared to swim despite weather reports for inclement weather. Weather conditions consistently change at camp, and we make every possible attempt to operate on a normal camp day schedule.
- ALL waterfront activities apart from swim lessons and free swim (dependent upon your child's swimming abilities) require campers to wear a PFD (professional flotation device) regardless of their swim level or abilities. This is a mandatory safety standard required by our ACA (American Camping Association) accreditation.

MEDICATION REQUIREMENTS

- If your child requires medication to be taken at camp (i.e. - prescription, non-prescription, EpiPens, etc.) you **MUST** fill out a "Prescription Medication Authorization" form and 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 along with their Village and bus stop location.**
- 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 handed to the Bus Counselor each morning at drop-off. Your child will not be permitted onto the bus if the Bus Counselors are not in possession of their medication.
- Medication will be given to your child by the Camp at the Lake Camp Nurse.
- The YMCA retains the right to refuse to administer medication if the Camp Nurse, 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 AT THE LAKE 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 at 973-697-2929.

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 send a note with your child's Bus Counselor describing in detail the item(s) lost. Please make sure to include your child's name and Village as well as your contact information. This information will be passed on to their Village Leaders and Counselors. You may also call the camp office to report a lost item.
- A "Lost & Found" will be held on-site for all lost items found by the camp team. The lost and found will be available for campers and parents to look through on Family Days (2026 Family Day dates & times can be found on the last page of this Parent Handbook).
- **All lost & found items left at the end of the camp season will be returned to our Park St location for pick-up. Items will be held and available for pick-up for 2 weeks on the large pool deck, after which they will be donated to charity.**

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

- If a parent/guardian is not present when the bus arrives, 2 Bus Counselors will wait at the bus stop 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 973-697-2929 and provide your child's first and last name as well as their bus stop location. If you cannot reach the camp office, please call the Y at 973-744-3400.
- If a parent/guardian is consistently late, you will be asked to register for Aftercare.
 - If late pick-ups continue in aftercare, your child will be dismissed from the program.

EMERGENCY DRILLS PROCEDURE

An emergency drill is practiced once per week during the camp day. Emergency drill procedures are reviewed with the campers every Monday morning to ensure they know what to expect when they happen. During these drills, campers' shelter in place while staff perform the action plan. Drills may be scary for some of our younger campers, but they are done to ensure our compliance with ACA standards and best practices. Although our staff explain the reason for drills and their importance to the campers, your reassurance at home is helpful in keeping them calm and understanding when they happen at camp. You will receive email communication on days when a drill has been rehearsed.

BUS TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

- Prompt arrival at the bus stop is essential to getting your camper off to a good day!
- Campers should be dropped off at their designated bus stop location no later than 8:10am. The buses leave for camp at 8:15am sharp.
- The YMCA of Montclair Outdoor Education Center's Camp at the Lake program will assume responsibility for campers after a parent/guardian signs the camper in with a Bus Counselor.
- If you will not be picking your child up at the end of the camp day, please make sure that the person picking up is listed under the "Authorized Pick-up" section of your child's camp registration form.
 - If you have not previously listed them on your child's form, please provide the Bus Counselor with the individual's first and last name along with the best number to reach them.
 - If you would like this person added to your child's list of authorized pick-ups moving forward, please make sure to call the camp office phone and/or email the Interim Camp Director – Ann-Margaret Gutierrez, agutierrez@montclairymca.org.
- The YMCA of Montclair is dedicated to Child Safety and Protection. All parents/guardians and/or Authorized Pick-ups will be asked for identification during dismissal. If a staff member does not recognize you, they will ask to see your I.D. that they will match to the name listed on your child's registration form.
 - We appreciate your cooperation and understanding of our staff in ensuring that your child goes home safely!
- Campers **MUST** be checked-in EVERY morning and checked-out EVERY day.
- **If your child requires medication to be sent to camp, this medication MUST be checked in with the Bus Counselor. Your child WILL NOT be permitted onto the bus in the morning if their medication has not been given to the Bus Counselor.**
 - **Upon arrival to camp, your child's medication will be signed-in with the Camp Nurse who will distribute it to your child's Counselor.**
- Parents/guardians **MUST NEVER** leave their child unattended at the bus stop.
- After your child's bus leaves the bus stop, it WILL NOT stop on route to pick up a late camper. If you miss the bus, you will need to drive your child directly to camp.
 - Directions to camp are available in this parent handbook.
- All campers must use the same bus location to and from camp – NO EXCEPTIONS.
- If your child is registered for Aftercare, they **MUST** use the Hillside bus stop to and from camp.
- Campers over the age of 10 may walk home from the bus stop **ONLY** if you have provided written permission to the Camp Director.
- If you are picking your child up directly from camp, you must check in with the Office Manager and sign your child out.
- Upon arrival at the bus stop, campers whose parents are waiting will be dismissed first.
- After those campers have been dismissed, all remaining campers will exit the bus and wait with camp staff for their parents/guardians.
- Two Bus Counselors will stay with the campers until an authorized adult picks up. There must be a parent/guardian and/or authorized pick-up at the bus stop by no later than 4:15pm.

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.
- Bus counselors are trained to do a spot safety check of the bus and deliver a “Bus Safety and Procedures” orientation to all campers on the first morning of each session, and to any new campers if they were not present on that day.
- Bus orientation includes seating procedures, safety guidelines, and a bus emergency evacuation drill upon arrival to camp.
- 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.
- Buses shall not stop enroute to pick up staff or campers.
- Children shall never be left unattended on a bus. Before campers enter the bus, a staff member must board first.
- Bus counselors will check all seats 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.
- In case of illness, the bus will pull over to the side of the road and stop as soon as it safely can. A counselor will help the child off the bus and when they get back on the bus, the child will sit up front by an open window next to a counselor.
- All buses will be equipped with a first aid kit and fire extinguisher.
- No counselor shall be left alone with a camper. Two counselors will remain at each bus stop until the last child is picked up.

BUS EVACUATION PROCEDURES

This procedure is practiced on the first day of each session and documented with the camp office.

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. 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. Parent/guardian will be notified of this incident.
2. The child will be removed from the activity to meet with their Village Leader 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 complete a “Behavior Agreement” with the Village Leader and Camp Director. Parent/guardian will be notified of the child’s behavior and a copy of the agreement will be sent home with the Bus Counselor.
4. If the behavior persists beyond these 3 steps, the Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director, and Village Leader will make an evaluation regarding whether the environment at the YMCA of Montclair Outdoor Education Center – Camp at the Lake 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 of camp. No refund will be given the day missed.
 - b. If it is determined that Camp at the Lake is not the right fit for the child, then the Camp Director assumes the right to remove the child from the program.

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, which if violated, may lead to immediate removal from the 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 at the Lake an enjoyable, safe experience for all our campers and staff!

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. As an ACA accredited camp, we follow smaller camper to staff ratios and best practices in safety standards. Due to the outdoor nature of Camp at the Lake, it is important to understand the following details of our camps daily structure before registering your child for this program.

- We are a fully outdoor camp that does not have access to indoor facilities.
- 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.
- Weekly camp-wide activities take place every Friday in which all of camp gathers together for a ceremony that celebrates campers and staff who excelled during the week. This ceremony is filled with excitement and cheering in a large group setting.

Camp at the Lake 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. 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 providing 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 additional information that you would like to share with the camp, please make sure to reach out to the Camp Director prior to registering your child for the program. Information provided by parents/guardians concerning health matters will only be shared with camp staff on a need-to-know basis if they are working directly with your child.

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP

YMCA of Montclair Outdoor Education Center – Camp at the Lake

131 Germantown Road, West Milford, NJ 07480

Take Route 46 West to Route 23 North. Proceed 10-12 miles to the town of Butler. Continue for an additional 2 miles on Route 23 North to Germantown Road. Make a right onto Germantown Road. Proceed up the hill approximately .5 miles – the camp entrance is on your left. Drive down the one-way road through camp until you reach the bend facing the camp office. A staff member will direct you where to park.

DIRECTIONS TO CHILTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Chilton Memorial Hospital

97 West Parkway, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444

From Route 287 North/South

Take Route 287 to Exit 52-A for Route 23 South. Go through the first light and take the first exit for West Parkway and the Boulevard. Follow signs to the right for West Parkway. The hospital is approximately 1.5 miles south on the right.

From Route 80/Route 46

Take Route 80 West or Route 46 to Route 23 North. Continue about 1.5 miles to Newark-Pompton Turnpike exit. Continue on Newark-Pompton Turnpike for about 3 miles to the first light. Take a left onto Jacksonville Road. At the second light, turn right onto West Parkway. The hospital is about .5 miles ahead on the left.

From Route 23 South

Take Route 23 South to the exit for West Parkway and the Boulevard. Follow signs to the right for West Parkway. The hospital is approximately 1.5 miles south on the right.

CAMP AT THE LAKE

2026 WEEKLY THEMES

Session	Theme	Wacky Wednesday
Week 1 June 29 – July 3	Party in the USA	Patriotic Pride
Week 2 July 6 – July 10	Animal Planet	Dress like your favorite Character
Week 3 July 13 – July 17	Carnival	Crazy Hair Day
Week 4 July 20 – July 24	Battle of the Spirit Stick	Wacky Tacky Day
Week 5 July 27 – July 31	Outlaw Showdown	Dress Like Your Favorite Camp Staff Day
Week 6 August 3 – August 7	Camp's Got Talent	Band/Artist T-Shirt Day
Week 7 August 10 – August 14	2026 Olympics	Celebrate Your Culture Day
Week 8 August 17 – August 21	H2-Oh-No!	Favorite Decade Day
Week 9 August 24 – August 28	Active Adventures	Sports Team Day
Week 10 August 31 – September 4	The Last Splash	Hat-tastic Day

As of 2/10/26

CAMP AT THE LAKE PACKING LIST

What your child should WEAR to camp:

- All campers should wear a swimsuit daily. If a swimsuit is worn under clothes, please send underwear and a change of clothes in your child's backpack. It is easiest for children to wear swimsuits under their clothes and throughout the day as they are in and out of the lake and water activities.
- **SNEAKERS! Open-toed sandals and flip flops are not permitted at camp. All camp activities require sneakers for the safety of the campers.**
 - Closed-toed keen shoes with a reinforced back are acceptable.
 - CROCS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE for activities but can be worn on the beach.
- SUNSCREEN & BUGSPRAY! Campers will have the opportunity to re-apply sunscreen/bug spray throughout the day as needed.
- A light-colored hat is encouraged as it will keep your child cool when playing in the sun.
- Please send your child in rainy-day gear on days when it is raining.
 - Suggested clothing items include sweatshirts, long pants, and raincoats. Ponchos are strongly encouraged as they tend to work the best!
- KIDS GET DIRTY AT CAMP! This means they had a great day! Please make sure to send your child in appropriate clothing that is comfortable and can get dirty.

What your child should BRING to camp:

- Campers should bring a backpack LABELED with their first and last name to hold their belongings.
- Refillable water bottle, towel, change of clothes, sunscreen, bug spray, nut-free lunch, snack, goggles, water shoes.
- Please make sure to pack a plastic bag (such as a Ziploc) for your child to bring their wet clothes home in. This bag MUST BE LABELED!
- A book for the bus ride home is acceptable.

What NOT to bring to camp:

- Electronics of any kind including cell phones, hand-held gaming devices, tablets, etc. The YMCA is not responsible for lost and/or stolen items.
- Toys, trading cards, Pokémon cards, money, jewelry, or any other unnecessary items.
- Alcohol, drugs, vehicles, weapons, animals, or personal sports equipment.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LABEL EVERYTHING THAT YOUR CHILD COMES TO CAMP WITH!!

Camp at the Lake 2026 Bus Stops

Bus stop drop off begins at 8:00am. Buses leave at 8:15am.

Buses return by 4:00pm dependent upon connecting stops.

A late fee of \$10 will be charged for every 10 minutes after 4:00pm

The same bus stop must be used for both AM drop-off and PM pick-up.

Bus stop location is chosen at the time of registration

BLOOMFIELD
Berkeley Elementary School – Parking lot in front of school off Bloomfield Ave.
Watchung Presbyterian Church Parking Lot – 375 Watchung Avenue
MONTCLAIR
Charles H. Bullock School – 55 Washington Street
Edgemont School – 20 Edgemont Road
Nishuane Park Parking Lot – near corner of Harrison Avenue & Cedar Street
UPPER MONTCLAIR
Buzz Aldrin Middle School Parking Lot – on Lorraine Avenue
VERONA
H.B. Whitehorne Middle School – 600 Bloomfield Avenue
WEST ORANGE
Seton Hall Prep. Athletic Complex – 700 Prospect Avenue
AFTERCARE ONLY
Hillside School – 54 Orange Road; grassy area in front of school.
Hillside bus stop can <u>ONLY</u> be used for aftercare participants who have paid an additional fee for the aftercare program
Bus will return around 5:45pm depending on traffic. Pick-up is by 6:00pm.
Aftercare drop-off and pick-up will be located at our Geyer branch (159 Glenridge Ave) for sessions 9 & 10.

As of 2/10/26

If you are registered for aftercare, YOU MUST use the Hillside School bus stop for drop-off and pick-up.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Camp communication is sent via email from a YMCA of Montclair email address. Please monitor your inbox for important camp announcements!
- **Weekly re-cap emails will be sent to camp families that are registered for the current and following session. These emails will be sent from our YMCA of Montclair Constant Contact account that you must be subscribed to in order to receive them. If you are unsure of your subscription status, please contact the Camp Director to confirm.**
- If you would like to see the facility prior to your child starting camp, please reach out to the Interim Camp Director – Ann-Margaret Gutierrez, agutierrez@montclairymca.org to arrange a tour.
- **Please note that the Aftercare bus stop drop-off and pick-up location changes for Session 9 & 10 of camp!**
 - **Drop-off and pick-up will be located at our Geyer Family branch at 159 Glenridge Ave for Sessions 9 & 10. Aftercare campers will return to Montclair between 5:30pm-5:45pm depending on traffic.**
- Session 10 will operate on an alternate activity schedule to accommodate staffing.
- Camp at the Lake will host 2 separate Family Day events at Camp at the Lake during the summer camp season.
 - Saturday, July 18, 2026 – 10:30am – 2:00pm
 - Saturday, August 8, 2026 – 10:30am – 2:00pm
- If you would like additional information about Camp at the Lake that was not covered in this handbook, please contact the Camp Director.