

# CAMP YOMEGA



Raritan Valley YMCA



## ***PARENT HANDBOOK***



# 2020

# CAMP YOMECA



## Summer Day Camp at the Raritan Valley YMCA



Welcome to Camp Yomeca! This handbook has been created to help you and your child better prepare for camp. These policies and procedures may have been abbreviated to convey the necessary information in a concise format.

### Program Philosophy

Our camps are designed to make children feel safe and accepted while developing these skills:

Developing YMCA character values of: **Respect, Honesty, Caring, and Responsibility**

Making New Friends

Gaining Independence

Learning New Skills

Building Self Esteem

Appreciating Successes

Learning from Mistakes

Engaging in Sportsmanlike Conduct

Camp will be a home away from home where they may grow and develop to their fullest potential. Most of all, Camp is a place where a child can be a child, free from the worries of peer pressure, bullying and the search to be accepted. At Camp every child will feel welcome and part of something bigger than themselves. They will be a part of a community where their individuality is welcomed and supported.



Our ACA-Accredited Camps have 50 years of parent trust behind them. Accreditation identifies those programs which offer a solid foundation of health, safety, and program quality; assurance that we comply with up to 300 health, safety, and program quality standards; and solid proof of our accountability, credibility, and commitment. It demonstrates that we have gone to great lengths, have been evaluated, and have passed the test!

### Raritan Valley YMCA Mission

The Raritan Valley YMCA is committed to building strong kids, strong families and strong communities throughout our area. It is a charitable; not for profit organization that welcomes all people regardless of age, race, religion or economic status and strives to enrich each and every life through a unique, dynamic combination of programs that strengthen spirit, mind and body.

### Character Development

The YMCA has four core values that are modeled and taught to our campers on a daily basis. They are caring, honesty, respect and responsibility and are incorporated into our programs, discipline techniques, and camp projects.



### Camp Options and Orientation

Camp runs for a series of one-week sessions with several options to choose from. For a full list of each session including specialty camps please see the camp registration pack.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Parent Orientation Nights are scheduled for **Wednesday June 10<sup>th</sup>** and **Thursday June 11<sup>th</sup>** from 6:30-8:00pm. It is expected that parents of new and returning campers will attend one of these two nights. We cover a lot of material including new and updated information so all should plan on attending. Children are always welcome to attend!



The YMCA Annual Campaign is funded through individual and community donations, foundations and events which ensures that all families eligible have the financial assistance needed to participate in quality programming. Camp scholarships are available through an application process. Please request a packet from our Welcome Center staff and return your packet no later than May 15th. Financial assistance is available through the State and through YMCA scholarship assistance, where eligible. We are happy to help guide you in the right direction and to assist you in the application process. All financial aid requests and all personal information are kept strictly confidential.



## Transportation

Parents are responsible for bringing their child to and from the YMCA daily. Transportation is provided by the YMCA to and from the swim location for swimming and on field trip days to and from the trip venue. YMCA staff members may not transport any child enrolled in our programs, for any reasons, in their own vehicles, in accordance with their signed code of conduct.



## Supervision and Staffing

All staff are carefully screened and selected for their character and love of children. They undergo a criminal background check, fingerprinting and 30 hours of pre-camp comprehensive training. Education, practical experiences, outstanding references, as well as an understanding of children's developmental stages are considered before hiring.

Junior Counselors are 16 years or older and are never left alone in direct supervision of the children. All Senior Counselors are over 18 years and are selected based upon their experience with children, their personal character, responsibility and enthusiasm. Counselors-In-Training (CITs) are not counted in the supervision ratios. Volunteer staff may be counted in the supervision ratio but are never left alone with campers unless previously trained and cleared by our YMCA.

For swimming, additional swim instructors and lifeguards are added to increase supervision. Administrative staff members and volunteers are used to supplement supervision within camper groups on trips. Staff and volunteers are never left alone with campers. For specialty programs such as archery and outdoor living skills a program specialist is added both to direct the activity safely and to supplement the supervision ratio.

The Camp's Director is on site daily. Any camper needs should be brought to their attention and will be addressed in a timely manner. Counselors are trained in Basic First Aid, child abuse prevention, emergency procedures, water safety, and how to conduct camp activities including songs and games that incorporate values and education.

Our low staff-to-child ratios meets NJ State and American Camp Association requirements. Small groups mean more individual attention for each child. Counselors and Directors will foster a mentoring relationship with each child and work to create open and honest communication; working with parents to develop effective techniques for bringing out the best in every child.

### Staff Ratios:

<b>1:6</b> 4-5 year olds	<b>1:8</b> 6-8 year olds
<b>1:10</b> 9-14 year olds	<b>1:12</b> 15+ year olds

## Camper Groups

Campers are assigned to groups according to their grade in the upcoming school year. We offer flexible grade ranges to accommodate maturity factors that you can choose. Camper friends may be requested but BOTH campers must request each other AND be enrolled in the same camp. We cannot guarantee that campers will be placed with particular counselors. We will make every reasonable effort to honor requests.

## Hours of Operation

The YMCA Day Camp program operates **M-F from 6:00am-7:00pm**. The Traditional Camp Day schedule begins at 9:00 am and runs through 4:00 pm with extended care available at NO EXTRA CHARGE. The YMCA is open for registration M-F from 5:30am to 9:00pm, Saturdays and Sundays from 8:30am to 4:00pm.



## Registration and Enrollment

Camp is enrolled on a first come, first serve basis. When a session is full, a waiting list is developed. There are no fees to be placed on the waiting list. When the wait list opens up, you will be informed and have a limited time to pay any deposits and balances due to register before we move the list again. Every effort will be made to enroll your child in camp as quickly as possible while maintaining proper staff to child ratios.

For your child's welfare, all registration forms are due at time of enrollment. Registration for each week is due no later than Wednesday prior to the week, pending availability, to ensure staff have proper time to prepare for your child's safe arrival. You may add additional weeks after your initial registration, pending availability, by completing a Camp Change Request Form available at the Welcome Center. There will be no exceptions, as we need to process the paperwork for the health and wellness of your child. No child will be admitted to the program without the following forms:

Registration Form  
Parental Agreement  
Universal Child Health and Immunization Record signed by a physician  
(if not enrolled in public school and/or preschool campers)  
Authorization for the Administration of Medicine by Center Personnel (if needed)

## Payment Policy

A current YMCA annual program membership is required for participation in all YMCA programs. Each session requires a deposit due at time of registration. The balance (minus Deposits) of each regular camp session is due in 3 installments for different weeks registered. Failure to do so may result in cancellation and loss of deposits. Cash, personal checks, MasterCard, Visa, American Express, Discover, and ATM cards are accepted. Please make all checks payable to **Raritan Valley YMCA**. You may call the YMCA to process payment over the phone, mail your check, or request to be drafted on the due dates automatically.

## Refund Policy

**Deposits and memberships are non-refundable and non-transferable. Camp balances after the session has started are not refundable or transferable.** Changes in registration can be requested by completing a Camp Change Request Form available at the Welcome Center. Changes are not guaranteed due to enrollment and deposits are not transferable to new sessions.

## AM Care Drop Off (6:00-9:00am) and PM Care Pick-Up (4:00-7:00)



Campers are required to arrive and be signed in no later than 9:00am to ensure timely transition to their camper group and transportation to aquatic site and trips. To ensure all campers' safety, please enter the parking lot off of Alvin Court and pull inside the orange cones where you must sign your child into camp daily. After signing-in/out, please pull your car to the second gym entrance where a staff member will collect your child and belongings from the car and escort them into the building or escort your child to your car at the end of the day. To facilitate arrivals and departures we ask that all parents remain in their cars. Please exit the parking lot by continuing through the lot and onto the access road leading back to Tices Lane. Identification and signature will be required for signing-out your child(ren). Only the names of those listed on the registration form are permitted to remove your child from our care. In an emergency situation, you may fax written authorization for someone who is not on file to pick up your child to 732-257-5762. **No child will be released from camp to an unauthorized person or without a Walk Home Waiver on file.** Walk Home Waivers may be obtained from a Camp Director. Additional persons may be added to your original registration paperwork as someone authorized to pick-up your child(ren).

Please be aware of the designated pedestrian walkways and camper crossings. There is a strict maximum speed limit of 10mph in the parking lot. If you need to speak with the Camp Director or conduct additional business at the YMCA please pull into one of the parking spaces in the main lot and enter the building through the main entrance.

### Late Arrivals (after 9:00am)

If you arrive at camp after 9:00 am, please sign your child into camp at the main office. You will be given a pass to turn over to your child's counselor notifying them of your completed check-in with signature. You will need to escort your child(ren) to their camper group on campus (or offsite if busses have already departed). We cannot accommodate requests to place campers in another group temporarily if arriving late due to safety concerns. **Campers are required to arrive and be signed-in no later than 9:00am to ensure timely transition to their camper group and to ensure transportation to aquatic site and trips.**

### Absences

We are responsible for your child upon sign-in each morning. We do not require you to call the Y for absences unless your child is ill so we can inform other parents about potential communicable disease/illness. Tuition credits cannot be given for illness, vacation, and inclement weather or holidays.

### Early Pick Up (before 4:00pm)

If you pick up before 4:30 pm, please sign your child out of camp at the main office. You will be given a receipt to turn over to your child's counselor to release your child. This receipt notifies the counselor that ID has been checked and pick-up authorization verified.

### Failure to Pick Up

In the event that a child is left at Camp past the 7 pm pick up time, Every effort will be made to contact the child's authorized contacts to pick them up. A minimum of two staff members will remain with the child. Every effort will be made to ensure parents are informed that their child has been released to an emergency contact. Late charges will apply to any child left past their pre-registered pick-up time.

#### Late Policy

The YMCA Day Camp program ends promptly at 7pm. Parents should arrange to have their child picked up by this time. A late fee of \$15.00/child for up to each 15 minute interval after pre-registered pick-up times will be charged to any parent arriving after that time. Please call the Camp if you anticipate being late on any given day. Calling does not waive the late fees but does allow the YMCA to make arrangements for supervision of the child until the parent arrives.





## Communication with Parents

Daily communication with the Camp Directors will be available, so parents can discuss their child's progress at camp. Parents should allow a few minutes at the end of the day to discuss their child's experience. Conferences can be scheduled, as the parent or camp deems necessary. The Camp Director is available for phone conferences if preferred. Emails will be sent as updates are made to camp trips as well as posted on our website.

## Visitation Policy

The YMCA has an open door policy for the parents of all campers. Parents wanting to visit their camper during the camp day must first check in at the front desk. While parent visits can be welcomed events, they may distract campers and disrupt programs. We ask that parents please be considerate of the schedule and if possible call ahead to schedule a visit. We will make every accommodation to schedule your camp tour or visits at a mutually convenient time.

## Day Camp Rules and Discipline Policy

Staff members are encouraged to model positive and appropriate behavior and handle discipline in a sensitive and reasonable manner. The camp structure is centered on the YMCA's four core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. We expect that all campers and staff members adopt these values as the cornerstones of exemplary behavior. All staff members are expected to exhibit the characteristics of, enthusiasm, adventure, creativity, reflection, balance, compassion, confidence, humor, common sense, appreciation and resilience; applying these traits to all daily interactions with campers. A priority is placed on the recognition and positive reinforcement of good behavior.

It is important that everyone understands the rules (see Camper Code of Conduct) and the consequences of their behavior. We will encourage your child to make choices and help them understand the consequences for their choices. We ask that parents work with us as part of a home-camp partnership to help children be successful. Please read and discuss the Camp's rules with your child.

A child will not be deprived of food, isolated, or subjected to corporal punishment or abusive physical exercise as a means of punishment either by staff or by another child. A child shall not be disciplined for failing to eat, sleep or for soiling himself/ herself. A child, whose behavioral issues require more than a reasonable amount of the counselor's time and attention, will be brought to the attention of the child's parents and the Camp Director. A plan for helping the child adjust will be established and communicated to the parent and child by the Camp Director.

Anyone (parent, staff, children, etc.) may be asked to leave Camp for any of, but not limited to the following reasons: Consistently disruptive behavior; dangerous or threatening behavior posing a risk to the physical or emotional safety of another individual; bullying; possession of a weapon of any kind; vandalism or destruction of property; sexual misconduct; possession or use of tobacco, alcohol or controlled substances. The YMCA reserves the right to suspend or expel any camper who poses serious or continual discipline problems, whether or not all of the steps in the progressive discipline plan have been completed.



## Birthdays

Birthdays are an important milestone in a young child's life, and we like to celebrate them. Parents are welcome to bring in a special healthy snack for their child and their group, and to participate in this special event. Please speak to your child's counselor ahead of time for any necessary planning and restrictions.



### **Emergencies**

Campers can be reached by parents/guardians by calling our main office at **732-257-4114**. The Camp Director and Program Director will have camp cell phones that may be contacted by the office if your camper is off site swimming or on a field trip. Parents will be contacted first, should an emergency involve their child, followed by additional authorized contacts listed on original registration paperwork..

**Campers cannot have cell phones at camp!!!!**

All personal items should be labeled permanently. Your child will transition to many areas and on busses throughout the day. A Found Box/Area is always available at camp for any belongings your child/children may have misplaced and was found.

The YMCA assumes no responsibility for the loss of personal property.

## **Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting**

Gentle touching, hugging and holding can be important and memorable aspects of all YMCA youth program experiences. However, YMCA staff and volunteers need to be sensitive to each person's individuality. The Raritan Valley YMCA prohibits inappropriate touch and verbal and physical abuse. If it happens, the following prompt action will occur:

At the first report or accusation that child abuse has occurred, the employed staff person to whom an inappropriate action between staff and child has been reported, will notify the Executive Director. Refer all media inquiries to the Executive Director. A report in accordance with the New Jersey State Law will be made by the Executive Director through the child abuse prevention hot line (24 hrs/day 1-800-792-8610) or local district office.

In the event the reported incident or incidents involve a program volunteer or employed staff person, the Executive Director may suspend the volunteer or staff person from the YMCA pending an investigation. Any incident in a Y-sponsored program, regardless of location, will be considered job-related. Reinstatement of the volunteer or staff person will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the Executive Director. Child abuse incidents not involving a staff person or volunteers should be reported by staff to their immediate supervisor and the Executive Director. The Executive Director receiving the report will advise on what additional steps need to be taken depending on the circumstances.

Corporal punishment and neglect of children by staff are serious concerns, which will be treated as child abuse issues and reported. The parents or legal guardians of the child or children involved in the alleged incident will be notified by the Executive Director. All YMCA staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in the handling of this information and therefore should only discuss the incident with their direct supervisor, and the investigating authorities within and outside the YMCA. Please note that all YMCA staff are mandated reporters and are required to report suspicions of child abuse to the appropriate authorities.



## Administration of Medication

In order for medication to be given to a child at the YMCA, a signed **Permission to Medicate Form** must be on file at camp for a specific medication. A separate signed form is required for each new medication. The medication must be delivered in and dispensed from the original pharmacy container clearly labeled with your child's name and doctor's instructions.

Medications will be disbursed by the Camp Director or Medical officer only and will be documented. We ask parents to keep staff informed daily about the continuing medical needs of their child and any changes in medical information. The form applies to all over the counter and prescription medication brought to camp. Campers may not carry medication at any time at camp. Exceptions will be made for epi-pens and inhalers when a doctor's authorization is on file at the YMCA.

## Health Policy

The Raritan Valley YMCA's Day Camp is licensed and equipped to care for children in good health. Parents and staff, working together, promote the child's total well-being. Each child enrolled in the Raritan Valley YMCA's Day Camp must have up to date documented health records. This includes the **Universal Child Health Record**, which includes a physical examination and an immunization record. These forms must be filled out by your child's doctor, signed, stamped and returned prior to camp.

The YMCA reserves the right to deny any child's admittance to the program on any given day for reasons of obvious illness. The YMCA may request early departure should symptoms become obvious during the course of the day. Tuition will not be adjusted due to absence.

If a child contracts/exhibits any contagious illness, please report it to us immediately. The child may return with a physician's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others or 24 hours after the symptoms cease. When a child does develop symptoms while at camp, he will be moved to an isolation area in the YMCA. A staff member will always be in close visual proximity. The parents will be called to the center immediately to pick up the child.

When the child's parents cannot be reached, one of the emergency contacts will be called to come and retrieve the child. Please notify the center when the emergency or pediatrician's phone number changes. It is of the utmost importance in case of emergency.

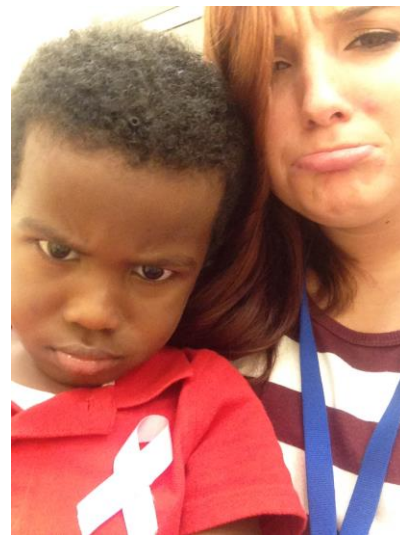
## Accidents/Injuries

Parents will be notified by camp personnel if their child becomes ill or gets injured while at camp. All injuries or illnesses will be communicated to the parent once proper first aid has taken place and the child is made comfortable.

In both cases children will be brought inside and allowed time to rest before returning to activities or being picked up by a parent if necessary. In severe injuries needing higher medical attention, the parent or guardian will be contacted immediately and arrangements made for further medical attention.

If we cannot contact the parent or physician we will call 911 for an ambulance to transport the child (and child's file) to a hospital where a staff member will wait with the child until the parent or emergency contact arrives. An incident report will be completed and on file at the YMCA.

If your child has a pre-existing injury or condition, please notify the camp directors to that we can make arrangements to accommodate any special needs or restrictions. Please do not send your child to camp if they are suffering from an illness that may be contagious. Once the symptoms dissipate the child may return to camp.



## Insurance

The YMCA does not carry or provide accident or medical insurance for the children participating in Summer Day Camp programs. Your health insurance is the primary coverage for your child.



## Applying Sunscreen

Please put sunscreen of SPF15 or higher on your child before coming to camp each day and send enough sunscreen for each day. Staff will remind children throughout the day to reapply sunscreen after one hour in water and/or two hours in direct sunlight. Staff will assist preschool and/or other campers in applying sunscreen. To ensure that your child gets the proper coverage, please send spray or mist sunscreen not lotion. For those with fair skin, tend to burn easily, and/or have a family history of skin cancer, we recommend an extra t-shirt and hat to be worn in the water. Please communicate this need on your registration form, if staff need to remind your child of such need.



Please inform us of all dietary restrictions or food allergies on registration forms and verbally with all staff. Nut-free tables are provided for children with allergies in school-age camps. The Early Childhood Center is a nut-free / product-free environment due to the severity of allergies and volume of undiagnosed children.

## Meals and Snacks

Campers will need to bring a lunch and dinner (If staying after 4 pm) to camp each day. A lunch box with an ice pack clearly labeled with your child's name is recommended. **Please do not send food that needs to be refrigerated or reheated for school-age campers.**

We suggest healthy balanced meals that provide children with the nutrition they need to run and play. Please also provide your child with a few healthy snacks for breaks throughout the day.

**Utensils and water bottles should be sent daily.** Several water stations are available to refill as needed. NO glass bottles please!

**Meal option is available for \$25 per week extra. Lunch menu will be emailed as we get closer to the Camp**

## Emergency Drills

To insure a safe program Camp holds a number of safety drills throughout each session and throughout the summer. These drills include:

- Bus Evacuation (Every Monday)
- Fire Drills (Once a Month)
- Missing Swimmer Drill (Bi Weekly)
- Lost Camper Drill (Bi Weekly)
- Swim Buddy Checks (Every 10 Minutes)

Emergency drills allow staff and campers to become familiar with emergency procedures in the event of a real crisis. Drill procedures are reviewed regularly with the camp staff to keep them up to date.

As a partner with the Horizon Foundation and the NJ Partnership for Healthy Kids, healthy eating and physical activity are a main focus of YMCA youth work. We are always happy to help parents and make suggestions as to healthier lunch and snack options.

New Jersey  
Partnership  
for Healthy Kids



## Activities

Campers participate in a daily schedule of age-appropriate activities geared toward individual growth, physical/social development and fun. Below is a general listing of the activities that the children will participate in, based on age in a progressive experience. Schedules will be available and posted every Monday. Activities may vary from day to day including, but not limited to:

**Basketball, Soccer, Hockey, GaGa, Kickball, Wiffle Ball, Volleyball, Newcomb, Ultimate Frisbee, Archery, Fitness, Dance, Drama, Cooking, Outdoor Living Skills, Arts and Crafts, Nature, Field Games, Songs, Swimming, Tumbling, Flag Football, Tennis, Team Handball, Dodge Ball, Playground, Four Square, Character Development, Reading, Drawing, and Science.**

There is no such thing as a typical day in day camp. We start off every day at 9:00am with an opening activity and end every day at 4:30 pm, the rest of the day is spent in various large and small group activities. Most of the day your child will be doing these activities with his/her assigned group.

By signing the camp waiver form you give permission for your child to participate in all camp activities. Please notify us on your registration form if your child is restricted from an activity and needs to opt out.

**Camp Yomeca is an affiliate of the CATCH Kids Club Program. The CATCH Kids Club is a summer and after school enrichment program designed to:**

1. Provide children with 40-60 minutes of physical activity daily, and be involved in moderate to vigorous activity 40% of the time.
2. Increase nutrition knowledge and help children make healthier food choices.
3. Provide all children with the opportunities to participate and practice skills
4. Encourage children to participate in physical activities at home with family and friends
5. Have fun.



## Swimming

Swim skills and water safety are an important part of the YMCA's service and commitment to health and wellness, and Camp Yomeca is no exception. Younger campers (generally up to age 7) will participate in swim lessons onsite in our outdoor teaching pool. Older campers will have daily trips to the Crystal Springs and/or Milltown aquatic facilities locally. Our swim instructors are YMCA professionals who specialize in aquatics.

Campers will be swimming regularly so a bathing suit, towel, sunscreen and change of clothes are required. If suits are worn to camp please do not forget to pack under garments to allow for a dry, comfortable rest of the day. Goggles will be allowed during swim time.

**YMCA CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS AND LIFEGUARDS ARE ON DUTY FOR ALL SWIM SESSIONS.**



## REDUCE SUMMER LEARNING LOSS...

Camp Yomeca is part of the Explore 30 summer reading program partnership with the American Camp Association. The goal of this program is to have children read for 30 minutes each day. While the camp schedule may not allow for campers to read everyday at camp (i.e. Trip Days) we do encourage campers to read daily during Morning Mix Up and Club 60 as well as have counselors read to younger campers. Campers are encouraged to bring reading material from home that may excite their specific interests.

## Specialty Camps

Specialty camp programs are half day programs with specialty concentration in the mornings before returning to traditional camp groups for lunch and the second half of the camp day. Specialty campers will begin the day with traditional camp and then be collected by the specialty camp leader and brought to their specialty camp program. **These campers will swim ONLY at the Y's teaching pool as transportation to offsite facilities occurs in the mornings.** The rate for specialty camps varies based on program, pending supplies and staffing needs. Check our website for a list of Specialty Camps and sessions.





## **WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP EACH DAY**

Backpack	Flip Flops	Insect Repellent (optional)
Towel	Socks	Bagged Lunch w/ ice pack
Water Bottle	Plastic Bag	Extra Change of Clothes
Swimsuit	Sunscreen	Nose and Ear Plugs (optional)
Swim Goggles	Hat/Bandana	Camp Shirt (Trip Days Only)

In order to make your child's day at camp a smooth and happy one; we ask that parents send the following items to camp with their child. **Please clearly and permanently label everything you send with your child's name to ensure safe return.**

Campers should wear comfortable, cool clothing. Closed toed shoes must be worn. Campers may not have bare feet, sandals, open-toed shoes, or flip-flops on YMCA grounds. Flip-flops may be worn at the pool. This is the only exception.

Appropriate clothing is a must. Parents please monitor your child's clothing to ensure it is appropriate for a YMCA summer camp. (This includes swimming suits, strapless shirts, spaghetti strap shirts, halter tops, or midriff shirts.) Excessively short skirts or shorts are not acceptable attire. Wearing or displaying items of clothing, jewelry or accessories representative of/or encouraging the use of alcoholic beverages, drugs or tobacco is prohibited. Camp shirts will be available for sale if inappropriate dress is worn.

It is recommended that your child wear a bathing suit under their clothes. Their clothes **will get dirty...** its camp. You may want to send along an extra change of clothes, just in case. To minimize the chance of misplaced clothing, **PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING PROPERLY. WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR MISSING ITEMS.**

### **DO NOT SEND**

**Cell Phones**, iPads and electronic devices, toys (lego figures, bey blades, pokemon cards etc.), hand held games (DS, PSP etc.), weapons, alcohol, tobacco and other personal items. These items are not allowed at camp and may cause bullying concerns as children choose who may play with them, making other campers feel left out.

These instruments are NOT to be used during the camp day by either campers or staff. If necessary, cell phones and other devices will be confiscated by staff and returned to the parent/guardian at the end of the camp day.

**The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.**

## Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership

Working with volunteers from the Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership we are providing environmental education programs on a weekly basis to campers throughout the summer. In addition campers are exposed to nature based programming within the traditional camp day including nature hikes and hands on activities at our Nature Shed. Having a connection to the outdoors is a vital part of youth development.



### GARDENING PROJECT

Through generous grants and donations we have been able to develop a camp community garden. Campers will have the opportunity to plant, tend, and harvest flowers, herbs and vegetables. Working in the garden helps children connect to the earth; better understand where their food comes from and the energy required to produce food; and reinforces healthy eating and positive nutrition.



### BABYSITTING OUTSIDE OF YMCA PROGRAMS

As part of the YMCA Staff Code of Conduct, YMCA employees are not permitted to be alone with any youth program participants outside of YMCA programs. This includes babysitting, taking children on trips alone, or having them in participants' or their own homes when others are not present.

Although we understand why parents would trust our staff outside of YMCA programs, we appreciate your support of this policy to ensure our staff are complying with all hiring documents and policies.

## Field Trips

Field trips are chosen with great care on a variety of factors and are subject to change based on new information received. These trips are posted on our website and also communicated in each weekly email.

**Campers are required to arrive and be signed in no later than 9:00am** to ensure timely transition to their camper group and transportation to aquatic site and trips. Asking staff to waive this requirement affects the experience of the entire camp while waiting on busses and shortening activity time. Campers not attending the trip should be kept home for the day and no alternative care will be provided by the camp.

Field trips are included in day camp fees. Campers **must** wear their camp shirt on **all** field trips. Camp shirts are available for purchase for **\$13 per shirt or \$22 for two shirts**. Campers not wearing a shirt will be provided a new shirt and the cost will be charged to the parent's account, payable before arriving at camp the next day.

Campers are oriented about the trip, behavior expectations, and bus rules at opening ceremony, further requiring campers to arrive on time by 9:00am. Once at the trip location, campers will receive another briefing detailing the boundaries, bathroom locations, safety issues, and rules.

We transport children in YMCA and charter buses equipped with seat belts and driven by experienced, state licensed bus drivers. We will notify parents in advance of the location, date and times of the trip, any additional fees, and whether we will require parent volunteers.

If time permits, children may have the opportunity to play games or buy snacks on trips, pending ratio and time availability. Please consider sending your child a few dollars in a ziploc bag with his/her name, group, and amount on it and give it to your child's counselor.

Trips always plan to return to camp by 4:00pm unless otherwise specified. Parents should plan on picking up their child after 5pm on these days to allow for potential traffic delays and for transition off busses. We will communicate any delays to the Welcome Center, if any should arise.

We prefer one adult to every three children on field trips as we will be outside the YMCA and in public places. If you would like to volunteer as a chaperone for any/all field trips, please call the Day Camp Director and let them know if you are interested. **ALL** volunteers must agree to fill out a background check and volunteer application **at least 2 weeks prior** to attending a trip.

A pre-trip itinerary and bus rosters will be at the Welcome Center, including all contact numbers. Attendance will be taken by bus prior to leaving the YMCA and each bus will have at least one staff member trained in First Aid and CPR. At the Field Trip location attendance procedures will remain the same as at camp, with attendance being taken regularly before and after moving locations and periodically during transitions and activities.



## **Bullying at Camp**

At the Raritan Valley YMCA, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against all types of bullying. To ensure that we maintain a relationally safe environment and each camper is free to experience camp life to its fullest, our leadership will address all incidents of bullying seriously and will train the staff to recognize and deal effectively with such behavior. We work together as a team to ensure that campers gain self confidence, make new friends, and go home with great memories.

Unfortunately, persons who are bullied may not have the same potential to get the most out of their camp experience. Our leadership team addresses all incidents of bullying seriously, and trains staff to promote open communication with parents and campers, teach an acceptance of diversity, and create an atmosphere of inclusion so that all staff and campers will be comfortable alerting us to any problems during their camp experience and between camp seasons.

All too often the child being bullied feels uncomfortable and opts not to return to camp, while the bully remains unaffected. At camp we have a **Zero Tolerance Policy** when it comes to bullying. We stress to parents to speak openly with their children about the effects of bullying and communicate concerns immediately to camp directors so that we can address any bullying at camp allowing victims of bullying to return to camp happy and free of fear and the bullies to face immediate consequences for their actions. Only with joint parent and staff involvement can we stomp out bullying altogether.

Any behavior deemed by the Camp Director to be inappropriate and/or unmanageable may result in any or all of the following:

- Meeting directly with their Counselor.
- The Camp Director will meet with parent/guardian to discuss behavior and consequences.
- Being dismissed from the camp program.

**Bullying Prevention and Cyber Bullying resources to assist parents are available through the Camp Director.**

## **CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT**

Parents are requested to review this camper code of conduct with their child(ren) prior to starting camp to ensure a positive experience for all. Campers must:

- Show respect to other campers, and treat them as well as I would like to be treated and try to be a friend to all.
- Show respect to camp staff, and cooperate fully with their instructions.
- Respect the rights and beliefs of others, and treat others with courtesy and consideration.
- Communicate in an appropriate manner, which means I must not use foul language or gestures, harsh words or tone of voice.
- Conduct myself responsibly. I understand that horseplay, unwelcome teasing or other unkind behaviors are not allowed.
- Refrain from deliberately causing bodily harm to other campers or staff. I understand that pushing, kicking, hitting or fighting are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Use program equipment, supplies, and facilities properly.
- Respect the property of others; which includes no stealing, property damage, graffiti, or vandalism.
- Be fully responsible for my actions and understand that irresponsible behavior will result in disciplinary action or dismissal from camp.
- Know and follow the rules of the camp.
- Not leave camp property unless on a supervised outing.
- Be on time for all camp activities.
- Have lots of FUN and a GREAT time!