



YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
**COMMUNITY  
WELL-BEING  
& BELONGING**

# PARENT GUIDE

DAY CAMP | 2024-2025

**YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY**



SMILES, SUN, AND  
**SUMMER FUN!**

# WELCOME TO YMCA CAMP

**Mission Statement:** We nurture a healthy spirit, mind, and body so all can thrive while honoring our faith-based heritage.

YMCA Day Camps give your camper an experience that will last a lifetime. Day campers are able to explore creativity, teamwork and leadership in a wide range of adventurous programs that lead to lifelong healthy living. Day camp builds self-confidence, self-esteem and develops character values, all while being FAB, making friends, achieving something new and having a place to belong.

Parents, caregivers and guardians are every Y's partner in making day camp an outstanding developmental experience for their kids. In order for our campers to get the most out of day camp, we need your help. Knowing that no two campers are exactly alike, we ask that you help us get to know your camper. We encourage you to share with us your ideas, thoughts and any concerns that may help us create an environment that is best suited for your camper.

Today, Y Day Camp is more vital than ever. With an increased emphasis on camper safety, personal values and social skills, we want the very best for your child. At the Y, we are committed to the development and well-being of your campers.

**Inclusivity Statement:** The YMCA of San Diego County is an organization open to all people. We welcome and value individuals of all age, race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, gender expression, ability, sexual orientation or financial circumstance. We are committed to having programs and services that embrace diversity, reflecting the people and needs of our community.

## Accredited By The American Camp Association

All of our Y Day Camps have been accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA). We meet or exceed the highest standards in camping services including health, safety, personnel, transportation and facilities. For more information regarding ACA standards, please visit [acacamps.org](http://acacamps.org).

## Goals and Outcomes

It is our belief that each camper is a unique individual with his or her own rate of development. Our goal is to introduce the campers to as many positive experiences as possible. It is our hope that the experiences we provide will foster creativity and individuality in each camper, and encourage an awareness of themselves and others.

**The YMCA of San Diego County has established the following goals for all campers:**

- To grow personally and gain a greater sense of his or her own worth.
- To be inspired to live by the four YMCA character values: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.
- To experience improved personal relationships.
- To learn and appreciate diversity.
- To become better leaders.
- To have fun!

## Camp Hours of Operation

Camp hours of operation vary by location. Please visit your branch's camp webpage for details.

## Drop-Off/Pick-Up Times

Drop-off and pick-up times vary by location.

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# COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

## Pre-Camp:

Emails will be sent each week on Tuesdays.

Contents will include:

- Reminder on daily requirements - lunch, snack, personal equipment.
- Camp hours and check-in/out times.
- Safe check-in procedures.
- Procedures information (Parent Guide).
- Camper Code of Conduct.
- General YMCA waiver.
- Branch specific information - site map, contact information, transportation information and more.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to speak with camp leadership at any time to discuss camp operations.

## During Camp:

Parents/Guardians will be notified at pick-up of any minor injury at pick-up via an Ouch Report, or other general updates from the day.

## Post-Camp:

An online evaluation link will be sent after camp. We want to hear about your child's experience.

# ABOUT OUR STAFF

We model the YMCA character development values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. We program friendship, achievement and belonging into every activity in camp. Most importantly, we are made up of people who love working with kids. We are creative people with good hearts who are silly enough to sing “The Y Song” at the top of our lungs!

We are First Aid/CPR certified and are required to attend 20 hours of training prior to the first day of Summer Camp. Our Unit Leaders attend approximately 8-10 hours of additional training. Trainings include topics like: Day Camp specific academies, behavior management, health and safety, spirit and programming and much more.

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# MEDICATIONS

Permission to Administer Medication Form is required for any medication needed for a camper.

Medications must be brought in the original container with physician’s instructions. We will administer meds accordingly. It is helpful to store the meds in a zip lock bag with your child’s name.

YMCA staff will verify frequency of administration on our Permission to Administer Medication Form and the frequency logged into our master medication list. Meds will kept in the controlled possession of Y staff or stored in a locked facility.

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# INJURY/ILLNESS

Campers will be monitored throughout the day for any signs or symptoms of illness. If a camper is observed to possibly be ill or complains of illness that is not immediately explained by current conditions, Camp Leadership will be notified. If your camper becomes ill while at camp, we will contact you to pick him/ her up.

If your camper is injured, we will take necessary steps to provide first aid. An Ouch Report will be completed and given to you at pick-up. If we are unable to reach you in the event your camper needs further medical care, he/she will be transported to the hospital by a YMCA vehicle or ambulance.

# DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP

## Sign In / Sign Out Procedures

To ensure an efficient drop-off process, please make sure to follow all posted drop-off instructions. A signature from a parent, guardian or authorized adult is required in our daily sign-in sheet for your child to participate in camp activities.

## Authorization to Pick Up Camper

Only parents, Guardians and/or caregivers over the age of 18 are authorized to sign a camper in and out of our camp programs. If you need to add an individual to your authorized pick-up list, please make sure this is documented with our camp staff. All adults picking up a camper are required to present a government-issued photo ID everyday regardless of familiarity with our team.

## Late Arrivals

If campers arrive outside of the drop-off window, follow branch specific information for signing camper into camp. Please allow for a short delay.

## Late Pick-Ups

Children not picked up at the end of the camp day will be supervised by our staff. A fee of \$1 per minute will be charged when camp closes. For example, if camp ends at 4:30pm, and your camper is picked up at 4:56pm, there will be a charge of \$26. Every attempt will be made to contact parents or a listed authorized pick-up. A late fee will be assessed starting at 4:30pm according to our clock. If by 5:30pm all contacts are not reachable, and the child has not been picked up, Emergency Services will be contacted.

## Attendance

Please notify Camp Leadership if your child(ren) will not be attending camp on a specific day throughout the week. If your camper hasn't arrived by 9:30am, we will not expect them that day.

# WHAT TO PREPARE FOR

## What to Bring to Camp:

We will supply the atmosphere for a great camp experience and ask that you send your camper with the below items (please remember to label your camper's belongings):

- 2 snacks and lunch
- Hat and sunglasses
- Sweatshirt or light jacket
- Water bottle
- Sunscreen
- Closed-toe shoes
- Swimsuit and towel (if swimming)

## What Not to Bring to Camp:

The following are not allowed at camp:

- Personal toys
- Weapons
- Drugs
- Cell phones
- Trading cards
- Money
- Animals
- Electronics
- Alcohol
- Weapons (real or fake)
- Headphones or earbuds
- Items of personal or monetary value

## Clothing

Campers are required to wear closed-toe shoes and socks daily. San Diego weather, though seasonally warm, can be chilly in the mornings and evenings. Please pack warmer clothing for your camper to wear during those times. Most camp activities take place outside. We encourage you to send your child in old clothing so they can participate freely in activities like climbing, painting, etc.

Belongings are the responsibility of the camper. A backpack is helpful in keeping your camper's belongings in a safe place. Please clearly mark your camper's belongings with his/her name.

## Lunches / Snacks

Campers should eat a nutritious breakfast before being dropped off for camp and bring a healthy, non-perishable lunch each day. We do not provide meals or snacks for campers. Please note, we do not have the capacity to heat or refrigerate lunch items.

## Sunscreen

Parents should apply sunscreen before campers arrive to camp in the morning. We apply sunscreen multiple times throughout the day. If you do not want sunscreen applied to your camper, or would like a special type of sunscreen applied, please send a note to your child's Camp Unit Leader or talk to Camp Leadership each Monday and provide them with the special sunscreen.

## Swimming

Please see your camper’s camp calendar for specific swim days. **Campers who wish to swim must bring a swimsuit, towel, sunscreen and warm change of clothes.** All campers are required to take a swim test before swimming in the YMCA pool or beach on a daily basis. The swim test consists of jumping in deep water, returning to the surface, treading water for 60 seconds and swimming 25 yards (the length of the pool) on the surface with rudimentary side breathing. If a camper is unable to pass this test, or if a camper chooses not to take the swim test and cannot stand comfortably in the water (water no higher than the armpits), s/he will wear a life jacket in the pool and will stay in the closely supervised shallow end of the pool. During beach visits, if campers pass the test, they are allowed to go in waist-deep, if they do not pass, they are allowed to go in ankle-deep.

**For your camper’s safety, all campers visiting the beach will be given brightly colored rash guards to wear throughout their visit.**

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# CAMP SAFETY

## Camper to Staff Ratios

YMCA will maintain the following staff-camper ratios:

- |                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| » 5 year olds     | 1:6  |
| » 6-8 years old   | 1:8  |
| » 9-14 years old  | 1:10 |
| » 15-18 years old | 1:12 |

## Bathroom Procedures:

No camper is ever alone or one-on-one with a staff member. All campers will take trips to the bathroom with the entire camp and/or camp groups of at least three campers escorted by camp staff. Campers will only use bathrooms inspected for safety by camp staff.

## Camper Lunch/Snack Time Space

Most groups will use their designated camp space for lunch and snack times. Other common spaces may also be utilized.

Youth and staff will wash/sanitize hands before and after eating.

Staff may help open food but must:

- Ensure hands are cleaned and sanitized prior.
- Clean and sanitize hands before and after.

## Rainy Day/Excessive Heat Plan

When weather conditions are prohibitive to operating camp outdoors, groups may be displaced from their assigned group locations. Each facility will have an alternate facility plan, indicating appropriate assigned group spaces.

Staff will reschedule activities for the affected time period to operate safely in a more limited space. This may necessitate less active recreation and more self-directed project-based activities.

## Guests

No unauthorized guests will be permitted to visit camp groups during the program day.

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# OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## Y Staff & Babysitting

YMCA of the USA policy states that our staff (while employed at the YMCA) are not permitted to babysit for or interact with campers outside of our programs. Please help us in upholding this policy.

## Children With Special Needs

Parents often request that a specific staff person be designated to facilitate their child's participation, in a large group setting, if their child might not otherwise be successful in this environment. We will consider requests for additional support and work with you to determine whether your child can be fully integrated into camp without additional support, or if they would benefit from having an Adaptive Program Leader assist them in camp.

Please contact the Camp Director or Coordinator to initiate an enrollment request and help us prepare a great experience for your camper. Space is limited.

## Scholarships

As a mission-driven nonprofit organization, the YMCA is committed to serving everyone in our community and ensure they have the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive — which is why we provide financial aid through our ACCESS Scholarship Program. Visit your local branch or email [memberservices@ymcasd.org](mailto:memberservices@ymcasd.org) to discuss options that are available to you.



# YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY CAMPER BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

At camp, we foster an inclusive environment filled with friendship, respect, and character development. Campers that cannot participate within the rules and expectations of camp, or are adversely affecting the experience of other children, may result in one or more of the following:

- A telephone call home to the parent or guardian to discuss the behavior.
- Meeting with the Camp Leader, Camp Director, or Executive Director to discuss the behavior.
- Use of behavior reports.
- Immediate pick-up.
- Suspension.
- Being separated from the camp program.



## AS A CAMPER I WILL:

- 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.
- Have FUN, but not at the expense of others.
- Show respect to camp staff and cooperate fully with their instructions.
- Respect the rights 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 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 not tolerated.
- Respect the property of others and camp, which includes no stealing, property damage, graffiti or vandalism.
- Remain with the group and within the boundaries that have been set.
- Remember that physical displays of affection or of a romantic nature are not allowed under any circumstances.
- 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 camp.
- Have lots of FUN, learn, grow and have a GREAT time!

# YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY POSITIVE GUIDANCE POLICY

## General Standards for Positive Guidance:

1. Guidance focuses on the expected, appropriate behavior, rather than on the negative, inappropriate behavior.
2. Guidance is a process of teaching, learning and positive reinforcement.
3. Set developmentally appropriate guidelines for campers.
4. Verbal abuse or name calling is not permitted. Guidance will not be associated with food, rest or toilet training.
5. Corporal (physical) punishment will never be allowed.
6. Procedure requires organized process of guidance. Limits are set to foster caring, honest, respectful, responsible and self-sufficient campers. Positive guidance is integrated into the overall program plan of the camper care setting.
7. Behavioral concerns of individual campers are not discussed with other parents.

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## Summary:

At YMCA Camp, we want every camper to have the best experience possible – full of fun, learning and growth. We strive to create an environment in which every camper is supported to engage in behaviors that are safe and represent our core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. We ask that parents and guardians partner with our staff to reinforce these expectations with campers. Assistance to identify and support positive behavior strategies that work for your child may be requested via a quick chat during pick up or drop off, a phone call or a meeting as needed. Behaviors that are severely or consistently unsafe or unkind may result in the camper being removed from the program, however our goal is to work together to support positive experiences for all.

We thank you for your time and attention to this important information. Frequently asked questions are also included online. For any questions, suggestions or concerns, please reach out to the Day Camp Director.

