

**YWCA IS ON A MISSION**

**YWCA Summer Camps  
Parent Handbook  
2017**



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*Children's Camps in New York State Brochure Addendum*

*(Dated May 3, 2017)*

## **INTRODUCTION...**

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Hello campers and parents! We would like to take this time to welcome you to the YWCA. Whether you are returning from previous years or this is your first year at the YWCA, you will find important information about our policies and procedures in this handbook, which is updated each year.

The Summer Day Camp programs at the YWCA are licensed by the Westchester County Department of Health (DoH). The Camp license is renewed annually; a representative from the Department of Health inspects our staff, facility and quality of service before and during camp operations. The YWCA follows all protocol as outlined by DoH,

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any other questions that you may have.

We look forward to a great summer!

## **PHILOSOPHY...**

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The YWCA's Summer Day Camp programs provide rewarding age-appropriate activities in safe, structured, and positive environments. We believe that all programs for children must be based on a solid knowledge of the children served; how they learn, how they play, how they interact with adults, and with peers. YWCA Summer Day Camp programs offer opportunity for fun and learning for all.

## **YWCA MISSION...**

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The YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

## **STARTING CAMP...**

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**The following MUST be completed and submitted prior to your camper's start date:**

- Tuition paid in full
- All authorization forms
- All permission slips
- Medical forms and any additional instructions (doctor's note and original medicine container with dosage clearly marked)
- Self-administration medical forms for children participating on trips

**Camper daily needs: PLEASE LABEL ALL POSSESSIONS**

- Lunch and snack. All lunches will be refrigerated
- Change of clothes (for any messy activities)
- Swimsuit, towel, and plastic bag for wet items
- Backpack or tote bag
- Hat, cap, or visor for outdoor activities
- Sunscreen or insect repellent (if needed)
- **Sneakers or tevas must be worn\*\***
- Water bottle
- If corrective lenses are worn, an eyeglass strap is suggested

**Campers should NOT bring:**

- Electronic games, phones, devices, IPADs
- Personal toys
- Valuable jewelry
- Money(except for designated program activities)
- "Heelies"\*\*

*\*\*Campers wearing inappropriate footwear will be held from activities until they can be picked up or alternate footwear can be brought to camp. Protecting our campers' safety is our number one priority.*

***The YWCA is not responsible for any lost or stolen property.***

**For Campers participating on External Trips (ONLY CAMP FUNKIST)**

Trips are planned to educational and fun places. A Senior Camp Leader and first aid trained staff accompany each trip.

Campers MUST wear their camp shirt on trip days. Each camper will be given one camp shirt (Extra shirts are available for sale.)

**CREDITS/REFUNDS/WITHDRAWALS**

- **There are NO credits or refunds for absences due to illness, vacation, suspension, dismissal, or other reasons.**
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## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL...**

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### **ARRIVAL**

Parents must escort all children under 12 years old to the designated meeting area. Children must be under direct parent/guardian supervision until turned over to camp staff.

### **MEETING AREAS**

- Rockets and Little Funkist early drop-off takes place at the Playground. After 9:00AM, campers should go directly to the group homeroom location.
- Camp Funkist early drop-off for all other groups takes place at the rear parking lot. After 9:00AM, campers should meet their groups at the designated homeroom location.
- Gymnastics Summer Program drop-off is at the YWCA Front Entrance.

### **DISMISSAL**

Please pick up your child at the location designated for your specific Camp Program.

- You **MUST** sign your child out each day.
- Campers will be released **ONLY** to those persons listed on the camp pick-up authorization form.

### **LATE POLICY**

**There will be a \$25.00 charge for every 15 minutes** campers remain beyond designated pick-up times. Parents are asked to call the appropriate Camp Office or the YWCA Main Desk at (914) 949-6227 x127 if they are going to be late.

When a parent is delayed because of an emergency or other unforeseen circumstance, a staff member will remain with the child. After 30 minutes, the Director will be notified to determine further action, which may include contacting the Police Department.

In the case of chronic tardiness, a meeting will be required with the Director to work out a suitable pick-up procedure.

## **ATTENDANCE...**

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### Daily Attendance

Attendance is taken at early-drop off locations and then again in each designated assembly space/classroom.

Attendance is also taken periodically throughout the day by the Head Counselors for on-site activities and off-site trips.

In addition, the YWCA Summer Camp programs use a buddy system to assist with camper safety.

## **CAMPER ORIENTATION...**

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At the start of each new session, campers will receive a brief orientation on the safety procedures and general policies for camp.

## **STAFF...**

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The YWCA takes reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure that all staff and volunteers, particularly those who work with children, are experienced, reliable, trustworthy, of sound character, and free from allegations of any form of child abuse and/or neglect. Steps include, but may not be limited to, an interview, review of credentials, reference checks from former employers and character references, NYS Central Register clearances on abuse and neglect, and on-going training, supervision and evaluation.

We cannot be responsible for any contractual relationships between families and staff or volunteers outside the workplace. **The YWCA strongly discourages such relationships between YWCA staff and volunteers and program participants including babysitting and the transporting of children.**

### **Waiver of Liability**

In the event that you engage the services of any YWCA staff member or volunteer for child care or baby-sitting services outside the YWCA's premises, the YWCA will not be responsible or liable for any acts or omissions of any of its staff members or volunteers while providing such services.

By acceptance of this handbook, you release, waive, discharge and covenant not to sue the YWCA and its director, Board of Directors, other staff members and other employees, from all claims, demands, losses or damages on account of any injury, caused, or alleged to be caused in whole or in part, by the acts or omissions of a staff member or volunteer while providing child care or baby-sitting services outside the YWCA premises pursuant to any agreement or arrangement made between a staff member or volunteer and yourself (and/or spouse or other guardian of your child).

## **CODE OF CONDUCT...**

In order to ensure a positive experience for all campers and staff, we ask that campers agree to the following rules:

- Follow directions of the counselors and Directors
- Cooperate with each other
- Respect each others' feelings and property
- Always tell the truth
- Clean up after himself/herself
- NO hitting, kicking, punching, pinching, or biting
- No bullying

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

In keeping with our mission to promote acceptance and tolerance for all people and in order to keep all the children in our program safe, the YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester, in accordance with its positive behavior policy, cannot allow any child in our program to hurt or be hurt by others. This can include physical, emotional, or verbal actions.

The YWCA has instituted the following policy:

- Any incident of the above behavior will be brought to the attention of the appropriate Summer Day Camp Program Director. Each incident will be handled on a case-by-case basis in an age appropriate fashion.

## **FOSTERING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR...**

The YWCA believes that when children are constructively and successfully engaged in activities, they will be most likely to behave appropriately. However, during times when behavior is less likely, the YWCA prefers to use a positive guidance approach for discipline. In other words, we offer constructive ways for participants to resolve conflicts by:

- Providing an environment, daily schedule and routines that meet the children's needs.
- Anticipating and eliminating potential problems and redirecting children to more acceptable behavior or activity.
- Listening and helping children expand their vocabulary.
- Allowing children quiet time if needed.
- Respecting children's feelings and allowing them choices.
- Treating each child as an individual.
- Helping children work together and to resolve their conflicts.
- Modeling desired behavior.
- Helping children recognize another child's feelings.
- Providing opportunities for conversations between peers and teachers.
- Never using negative discipline methods that hurt, humiliate, or frighten children.
- Allowing lots of time to practice social skills.
- Having patience and good humor!

## **SUSPENSION / DISMISSAL**

When a participant is consistently misbehaving, or the misbehavior is excessive, a Program Director will consult with the parent and/or guardian. If a resolution is to no avail, a suspension from the program may result.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY...**

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The YWCA Summer Camp Health Director and designated staff work with the YWCA on the health policy for children in our summer camps. The Health Director/Designee also assists in training staff on good health practices and with questions related to your child's health. Please note that, in addition to this handbook, the YWCA may issue updates to the health policy during the course of the summer as needed and in response to specific health issues.

The YWCA Summer Day Camp programs follow the guidelines of the Westchester County Department of Health. Our staff are required to have clearance through the State Central Registry.

Each child is required to have a physical examination and immunizations as outlined by the Westchester County Department of Health guidelines.

## **FIRE DRILLS...**

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The YWCA performs routine fire drills throughout the summer. This information is shared with summer program participants (campers and parents) to create awareness and a comfort with the routine.

During a fire drill, you child's counselor will direct all of the children outside. Head Counselors and Program Directors will help the group stay together and proceed in a quiet, calm fashion outside the building. Upon exiting the building, counselors will take attendance of the campers in their charge as they proceed to the designated assembly area.

For outdoor activities, counselors will lead their group to the designated assembly area and take attendance of all campers in their charge.

Assigned staff conduct routine "sweeps" of rooms, bathrooms and other spaces to confirm that all individuals have left the building.

Once the all clear signal has been confirmed, campers return to their regularly scheduled activities.

Staff receive regular training on the YWCA's emergency procedures. Campers also receive an orientation to safety protocol at the start of each session.

## **WATER SAFETY...**

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Our goal is to safely introduce and teach swimming skills to children and to provide for fun in the water.

On the first day of swimming, campers are assessed and placed in ability based lesson groups. *(Please see notes on page 13 for summer camp swim program.)*

They will also be designated as a "swimmer" or "non-swimmer". Campers are issued color coded swim caps that correspond to their swimming ability status. Swim caps are worn at all times in the pool. Replacement caps will be provided for a fee.

The "buddy system" is employed at all swim periods.



## **ILLNESS...**

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### **Parents are asked to keep a child home for the following health issues:**

- Fever (of 100°F or higher)
- Diarrhea
- Contagious disease/condition such as: lice, flu, ringworm, chicken pox, pinkeye, strep throat, impetigo, etc.
- Rash
- Vomiting

The YWCA should be notified if a child is to be absent or if a child has been exposed to a communicable disease.

### **Children must be symptom free for 24 hours without medication before they may return to camp.**

A doctor's note of clearance to return is required after a 4-day absence from camp.

Parents will be notified immediately if a child becomes ill or is injured while attending a YWCA Summer Day Camp program. Parents will be asked to arrange for pick up of their child as soon as possible. Incident reports are filed in cases of injury. Please notify us in writing of any changes in your emergency contact information.

If emergency treatment should be required, 911 will be called.

## **MEDICATION...**

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All medications must be clearly labeled in an original container and accompanied with a completed consent form with specific instructions. Medications must be given directly to the Camp Nurse. Physician and parent signatures are required on the consent form, with specific administering instructions. The physician must specify the dosage, time to be given and when to terminate the medication. A separate consent is necessary for each medication.

All medications will be kept locked by the on-site Camp Nurse/Health Director Designee and logged when taken.

Additionally, campers are asked to complete a self-administration form.

**A self-administration form is required for campers in YWCA Camp groups that participate in off-site trips unless camper is accompanied by parent on these trips.**

## **SPECIAL NEEDS SERVICES...**

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The YWCA's mission and philosophy reflects the policy of inclusion. We make every reasonable accommodation necessary to enroll children with disabilities into our program. Parents are asked to forward copies of IEP or 504 plans. If determined eligible, your child can receive support services integrated into the everyday program. Please note however, the YWCA has limited resources for these services.

We recommend that families with special needs children contact the Camp Director as soon as possible to identify the specific support services and availability of same. Once these slots are allotted, we may not be able to accept additional campers with special needs.

## **POLICY ON CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT...**

Each staff member and volunteer has been screened by New York State to verify that they have not been the subject of an abuse or neglect complaint. The YWCA Summer Camp Health Director and Camp Directors are required to report suspected child abuse, endangerment, or neglect. Reports will be made to the appropriate state and local authorities.

If a staff member observes a child being treated harshly by any adult, whether YWCA staff or outside person, they may address the issue with their YWCA Supervisor.

YWCA staff are instructed to ask a parent who arrives at the program impaired by either drugs or alcohol, and is potentially unable to safely transport a child home, to find another means of transportation.

***Staff are not allowed to release a child(ren) to go home with an impaired adult and may take other action to ensure the safety of the child(ren).***

New York State law requires that a child under the age of 4 must be in a federally approved car safety seat when riding in a motor vehicle. Children ages 4-10 must be securely buckled into a seatbelt in the back seat. Parents/guardians are held responsible for complying with this law.

These policies are set forth as required by the NYS DoH and Department of Social Services Child Care licensing guidelines. These procedures are implemented in good faith for the welfare of the children served at the YWCA.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY...**

Information kept in each child's folder is confidential. This includes the information form, authorizations and medical forms. This information is for the use of parents and staff who work directly with your child. No information will be released from a child's file without the written consent of the parent or as required by law. All information pertaining to your family such as financial, health, or other personal matter will be considered confidential.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...**

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### **What is the ratio of counselors to campers?**

#### **Gymnastics Summer Camp**

All ages 1 counselor to 7 children

#### **Camp Funkist**

For children ages 4 1 counselor to 5 children

For children ages 5 1 counselor to 5 children

For children ages 6-9 1 counselor to 8 children

For children ages 10+ 1 counselor to 10 children

***For children with developmental disabilities.*** Pre-notification to the YWCA summer programs is required in order to set-up appropriate staff/camper coverage as needed.

### **What about separation issues for younger campers?**

Some children take time to adjust to a new environment, and each child is different. Our group leaders are qualified educators with experience in dealing with adjustment and separation issues.

### **How long are the periods? What time is lunch?**

Activity periods are designed to provide ample time for active participation and learning. Please see your group schedule.

### **What if my child forgets his/her lunch?**

We will call you to inform you that your child does not have lunch.

You may drop it off at a later time, or give verbal permission for one time purchase of lunch from the on-site café. Parents will be responsible for making the required payments directly to the vendor.

### **What is your policy on peanuts/nuts?**

We ask ALL parents NOT to put peanut butter or items processed with peanuts/nuts in camp lunches.

### **What if my child doesn't want to swim?**

We will gently encourage your child to participate in instructional and recreational swimming however, it is not required. If your child does not wish to swim at all, please write a note to the Head Counselor.

### **Is there instructional swim? Free swim? How many times per week?**

You will be provided with the weekly schedule of general activities and special events. In general, instructional swim is provided to all campers.

### **How do you handle bullying? Do you discuss hitting/ spitting/biting and other behavioral issues with your staff?**

The YWCA has a "no bullying" policy.

Staff receives training as well as ongoing coaching in resolving these issues.

### **What if my child is new and doesn't know anyone?**

We work with all children, often using games and fun activities to help them fit in and feel welcome.

**What if my child gets hurt?**

For any injury requiring more than a band-aid, the child will be brought to the Camp Health Director or designee; you will be notified by the Camp Nurse or designee.

**CAMP FUNKIST - TRIPS****What are the procedures for trips? When do they travel?**

All campers have to wear their camp T-shirts for safety purposes, and don't forget to pack a lunch

- All Stars, Blazers and Champions travel on Tuesdays
- Dynamos, Eagles, Funkist Plus travel on Wednesdays
- There are a few exceptions, Please see the camp calendar

**What about money, lunch, cost, etc... Will we receive separate information on all of this?**

We will let you know the destination and any additional information in advance of each trip.

**What if I am late? Is there a fee?**

There is a late pickup fee of \$25.00 for the first 15 minutes and a \$1.00 for every minute thereafter for campers not registered for extended day camp.

**What kind of sports skills will the campers be learning?**

Campers will be developing team skills as well as gross and fine motor skills.

Gymnastics Summer Camp focuses on building strength and abilities in this sport in a non-competitive manner.

**What does the visual arts program consist of?**

The art program consists of short and long term projects that reinforce the children's creativity and sense of personal accomplishments

**Will my child be bringing home projects? - YES****Can we celebrate our child's birthday at camp?**

Birthdays are important events for children. Your child is welcome to celebrate his/her birthday at camp. Parents may send a special snack to share with the entire camp group. Please let the Head Counselor know if you intend to send in any special treats. We also ask that any treat be nut-free.

## Summer Camp Swim Program at the YWCA

The YWCA Aquatics Department is pleased to provide guided instructional activities and free swim for the agency's summer camp programs. Evaluation time is set aside each Monday to assess skill levels of new campers. This is done for safety reasons. Campers are grouped by skill set and swimming ability into three groups: **Red**, **Blue**, **Green**. Here is a guide to our swim levels:

- **Red Cap Swimmers.**\* These swimmers may or may not be a little fearful of the water. They may not want to put their face in the water and/or lack proper body position to keep them horizontal. Some might not be as fearful of the water but still not able to keep their head up and tread water.
- **Blue Cap Swimmers.** In this level you will find swimmers who can keep their head up and tread for about 60 or more seconds, can put face in and may not have the best body position but can still move in the water. Most can do front crawl with some rotary breathing.
- **Green Cap Swimmers.** These are the more experienced swimmers. In this level you will see swimmers displaying good body position on front and back. Must be able to do rotary breathing and tread water for 90 seconds.

\*The Red caps are our shallow end swimmers or beginners. This level is designed to show our campers the proper way to blow bubbles, kick, float, enter and exit the pool safely, and front crawl with face in the water. If your child is a red cap this is not a bad thing by any means. It just lets the Aquatic and Camp staff know that as a safety precaution, your child will be taking their swim lessons in the shallow end of the pool. However if a camper is showing signs of improvement, it is then entirely up to the swim instructor to move a camper up. The camper will then be reevaluated and placed in the proper level.

We encourage all participants to also consider signing up for the YWCA's regular lesson program, either for group or private lessons.

Please feel free to reach out to the Aquatics Department with any questions.

Thank you and happy swimming.

**YWCA Aquatics Department**  
**515 North Street, White Plains, NY 10605**

Pool Office: (914) 949-6227 x152  
Aquatics Director: (914) 949-6227 x110  
Private Lessons: (914) 949-6227 x152  
Email: pool@ywcawpcw.org

## **Getting in Touch with Us!**

The YWCA uses email to communicate general program information and to provide updates during the camp season. Campers will also bring home flyers and written newsletters. Please let us know if you are not receiving emails from us.

## **Contact Info**

YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester  
515 North Street  
White Plains, NY 10605  
Phone: (914)-949-6227  
Website: [www.ywcawpcw.org](http://www.ywcawpcw.org)

## **Camp Funkist**

Program Director  
Howard Kirschner  
*Phone:* (914) 949-6227 x168  
*Email:* [campfunkist@ywcawpcw.org](mailto:campfunkist@ywcawpcw.org)

Assistant Program Directors  
Donna Caprioni, Jennifer Tracey  
*Phone:* (914) 949-6227 x168

## **Gymnastics Summer Program**

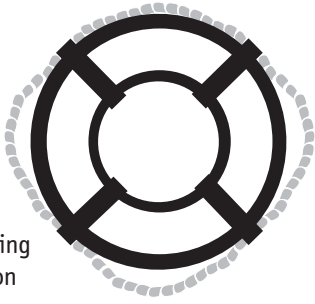
Program Director  
Melissa Luciano  
*Phone:* (914) 949-6227 x200  
*Email:* [mluciano@ywcawpcw.org](mailto:mluciano@ywcawpcw.org)

**For assistance with children with developmental disabilities contact:** (914) 949-6227 x108

## Camp Safety

### Are the camp facilities and activities safe?

The camp operator must develop a written plan to include maintenance of facilities, provisions for training staff members and orientation of campers, supervision of campers, campsite hazards, emergency procedures and drills, safety procedures and equipment for program activities.



## Swimming

### Are waterfront personnel qualified?

### Are campers always supervised while in the water?

All waterfront activities at camps in New York State must be supervised by an experienced certified lifeguard or water safety instructor. On site, one qualified lifeguard is required for every 25 bathers. All aquatic staff are required to be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Camps that use off-site pools or beaches operated by others must make special arrangements to provide a safe activity. Even off site, the camp remains responsible for supervising campers.

Some children's camps use sites for swimming that are not inspected by local health departments. Parental permission is required in these instances, and the camp must follow established guidelines to protect campers.

While campers are involved in aquatic activities on site, there must be one counselor for every 10 campers eight years or older; there must be one counselor for every eight children aged six and seven; and one counselor for every six children younger than six years old. When swimming off-site, there must be one counselor for every eight campers six years or older and one counselor for every six campers younger than six years.



**Are bathing areas marked off for various swimming skills? Are campers tested to determine their level of swimming ability before participating in aquatic activities? Are nonswimmers kept in water less than chest deep? Is the buddy system used? Are campers required to wear life preservers when boating or canoeing?**

New York State regulation requires that the answers to all these questions must be "yes."

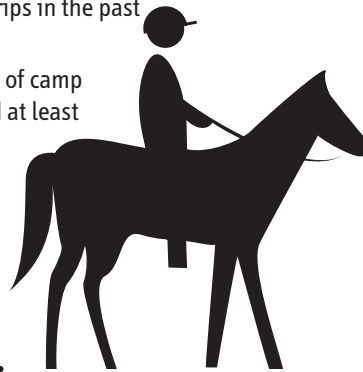
## Camp Trips

**Are camp trips supervised by counselors who have the maturity and experience to make decisions that could affect the safety of campers?**

All trips must be supervised by a trip leader who is at least 18 years old and competent in the activity. Counselors must accompany trips and all staff must review the safety plan prior to the trip.

Counselors should have the skills and expertise in the camp activity (canoeing, rock-climbing, etc.) to handle any emergency that might arise. Ask whether the camp has conducted similar trips in the past without incident.

In New York State, the drivers of camp vehicles must be licensed and at least 18-years-old. Seat belts must be worn when provided and vehicle capacities not exceeded. When transporting children in a truck, only a truck cab can be used.



## Sports and Activities

**How are activities in craft shops supervised, especially when campers are using dangerous tools, such as power saws and lathes? Are archery and rifle ranges at a safe distance from activity centers? Are spectators protected at baseball fields and similar areas? Do players wear protective equipment?**

State regulation requires that archery, riflery and horseback riding be supervised by counselors with special training in those activities.

## Fire Safety

**Are there periodic fire drills for both campers and staff? Does each floor of every building have fire exits in two different locations? Are flammable materials (gasoline, pool chemicals, etc.) stored away from activity centers and kept under lock and key? Are functioning smoke detectors located in every sleeping room?**

All of the above are mandatory in New York State.



## Location and Facilities

**Are barriers erected against such natural hazards as cliffs and swamps? Are foot trails located away from such dangerous areas and from heavily traveled roads and highways? Do the camp facilities (bunks, bathrooms, mess hall, recreation facilities) meet your aesthetic tastes and those of your child? Is the camp located in an area that will not aggravate your child's allergies? Will your child be required to perform chores, such as cleaning or cooking?**

For information on the camp's location and facilities, visit the camp or interview the camp operator by telephone, prior to making a decision to enroll your child at the camp.

## Nutrition

**Are good health practices observed in the camp kitchens, dining areas and food services? Does the camp serve food your child likes?**

At camps in New York State, food must be prepared from inspected sources. Food preparation and handling activities are reviewed to assure safe and sanitary practices. Kitchen employees must be healthy and follow hygienic practices. Potentially hazardous food must be maintained below 45°F or above 140°F.



## Rights and Responsibilities

The regulatory program of the New York State Department of Health places specific responsibilities on camp operators, and on local health departments that enforce department regulations. Following is a summary of rights and responsibilities:

### Rights of Parents and Guardians

- To be informed by the camp director, or his or her designee, of any incident involving your child, including serious injury, illness or abuse.
- To review inspection and investigation reports for a camp, which are maintained by the local health department issuing the camp a permit to operate (present and past reports are available).
- To review the required written camp plans. These are on file at both the camp and the health department issuing the permit to operate.

### Responsibilities of the Camp Operator

- To inform you and the local health department if your child is involved in any serious injury, illness or abuse incident.
- To screen the background and qualifications of all staff.
- To train staff about their duties.
- To provide supervision for all campers 24 hours a day at overnight camps, and during hours of operation for day camps.
- To maintain all camp physical facilities in a safe and sanitary condition.
- To provide safe and wholesome meals.
- To have and follow required written plans for camp safety, health and fire safety.
- To notify the parent or guardian, with the enrollment application or enrollment contract, that:
  - the camp must have a permit to operate from the New York State Department of Health or the designated permit-issuing official;

- the camp is required to be inspected twice yearly; and
- the inspection reports and required plans are filed (address of state, county or city health department) and available for their review.

### Responsibilities of Local Health Departments

- To review and approve the required written camp plans for compliance.
- To inspect camps to assure that: (1) all physical facilities are properly operated and maintained; and (2) adequate supervision exists to provide a healthy and safe environment in accordance with the New York State Sanitary Code.
- To issue a permit to operate when the required plans and inspection results are satisfactory.
- To investigate reports of serious incidents of injury, illness and all allegations of abuse or maltreatment.
- When requested, to provide parents or guardians of prospective campers an opportunity to review inspection reports and required plans.

The time and effort spent in selecting the camp your youngster will attend is important. Keep in touch, especially if it is your child's first camp experience. If possible, visit the camp before and during the camping season.

### Information

For further information about New York State health laws relating to summer camps, call the State Health Department's Bureau of Community Environmental Health and Food Protection in Troy at 1-(800) 458-1158, ext. 27600.



# Children's Camps in New York State



In New York State, summer camps must have a state, city or county health department permit to operate legally. These permits are issued only if the camp is in compliance with the state's health regulations. The permit to operate must be displayed in a conspicuous place on the premises.

The camp must be inspected twice yearly by a health department representative. At least one inspection must be made during the time the camp is in operation. Each camp is checked to make sure that the physical facilities are safe and that supervision is adequate.

When choosing a summer camp for your child, consider the following:

### Staff Credentials/Supervision

#### What are the qualifications of the camp director?

The New York State Health Code requires that the director of an overnight camp be at least 25-years-old or hold a bachelor's degree; a day camp director must be at least 21-years-old.

All directors must have experience in camping administration or supervision. Camp directors' backgrounds are screened by the Office of Children and Family Services Central Register Database for reported incidents of child abuse and maltreatment. Their backgrounds are also screened by the Health Department for criminal convictions. Only individuals who are considered to pose no risk to campers are accepted by the Health Department as camp directors.

#### What are the qualifications of the camp counselors and how are campers supervised?

Counselors must have experience in camping and supervision of children or have completed an acceptable training course. Stringent counselor-to-camper ratios and staff qualifications are mandated for supervision of swimming, archery, riflery and camp trip activities.

At overnight camps, 80 percent of the camps' counselors must be at least 18-years-old; up to 20 percent may be 17-years-old. There must be at least one counselor for every 10 children aged eight years or older, and one

counselor for every eight children younger than eight years old.

At day camps, counselors must be 16 years of age or older. There must be a minimum of one counselor for every 12 children.

Camps that must provide at least 10 counselors may choose to use counselors-in-training (CITs) to meet 10 percent of the required number of counselors. These CITs must be at least 16 years of age at an overnight camp and 15 years of age at a day camp. They must work with senior staff, have had previous experience as a camper and complete a training program. Ask the camp operator if any of their counselors are CITs and how they are used to supervise campers.

**Ask about the camp's staff and supervision procedures, including discipline policies. Do they meet your expectations?**

### Health

**Ask about medical coverage and when you will be notified if your child becomes ill or injured. Is a doctor or nurse in residence or on call for campers at all times?**

Physicians or nursing services must be available. All summer camps in New York State are required to have a health director and a written medical plan approved by the Health Department. The written plan must include, among other things, provisions for medical, nursing and first aid services. Injuries and illnesses must be reported to the Health Department and are thoroughly reviewed.

#### Does the camp require medical records for campers?

Camps must keep current medical history reports on file for all campers. Be sure to detail your child's history of immunization, illness, disability or allergy. Specify special diets and activity restrictions. Provide instruction for any medication your child must take.

