



# NEW RIVER YMCA SUMMER DAY CAMP PARENT HANDBOOK

*We're excited that you've chosen YMCA Summer Day Camp. Day Camp is designed with your child in mind. Our staff believes that every child should have a chance to grow and shine in a caring and encouraging environment.*

*This Parent Manual provides information to help you and your child have a successful camp experience. Please read everything carefully, and let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We're looking forward to the best summer ever.*

## COMMUNICATION

YMCA staff will provide you with periodic updates about your child's participation in camp. We strive to communicate effectively about our programs through Classdojo, posted signs about upcoming events, emails, and staff communication during Rides In/Out. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Senior Program Director Lamont Singleton, [lamont.singleton@newriverymca.org](mailto:lamont.singleton@newriverymca.org).

## WRITTEN NOTES

Parents email New River Administration, [admin@newriverymca.org](mailto:admin@newriverymca.org) or written notes in instances of:

- Early pickup
- Pickup by someone other than those designated as emergency contacts with pickup authorization on your child's account
- Medication needs (Please review the "Health & Safety" section.)
- Modified activities, extra help or additional support for your child

## CUSTODY

Please alert New River Administration, [admin@newriverymca.org](mailto:admin@newriverymca.org) of child custody arrangements. It is imperative that official, current court documents are maintained in your child's file if custody or visitation is a concern. Without court orders, we cannot withhold a child from his/her parent. Based on the information that you share with your director, he/she will tell you if additional documentation is required. If additional information is required, you may send it to New River Administration, [admin@newriverymca.org](mailto:admin@newriverymca.org)

The parent(s) who registers the child for camp is responsible for payments. We cannot subdivide fees.

If parents are separated or divorced with joint custody, both parents must provide written consent for all names on the Emergency Contacts & Authorized Pickups list.

## **WHAT TO WEAR**

Dress appropriately for outdoor activities, play, and the weather. Activities will take place inside and outside.

- All shoes must be closed-toe. Sneakers are recommended.
- A cap or hat for sun protection is advisable.
- All belongings should be clearly marked with the child's name and phone number.

## **WHAT TO BRING**

All children should bring a backpack to carry their belongings. The backpack should be clearly marked with the child's name and phone number.

Rising kindergartners should bring a change of clothing.

Sunscreen and insect repellent (optional). New River YMCA day camp staff will **not apply sunscreen**.

Campers should bring a water bottle that can be refilled at our many water coolers around camp.

Toys, personal listening devices, portable game devices, cell phones, trading cards, stuffed animals, pets and money should stay at home. The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items.

## **LUNCHES AND SNACKS**

Breakfast will be provided for Jacksonville - Clyde Erwin; a menu will be provided before the start of the week. Individuals with special dietary needs are encouraged to bring their lunch to ensure their specific requirements are met.

Jacksonville-Clyde Erwin, Sneads Ferry-Dixon, and Swansboro-Queens Creek will need to bring a packed lunch and snacks.

Full-day participants should bring a nutritious lunch, beverages/water bottle and two snacks.

Half-day participants should bring a nutritious lunch, one snack and a beverage/water bottle.

Non-perishable items are recommended.

We recommend small, cooler-type lunch boxes, clearly marked with the child's name and phone number.

Healthy snack options include fresh fruit, raisins, pretzels, small granola bars and 100-calorie snack packs.

Water, sugar-free beverages, and six-ounce servings of 100% fruit juice are healthy beverage options.

Participants are not allowed to purchase items from the vending machines, nor do they have access to a refrigerator or microwave.

## **CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**

Devotions are a daily time for campers to reflect on goals, experiences and positive behaviors. If you have questions about this part of our day, please talk with your child's camp director.

## **ADA POLICY**

We're committed to providing equal opportunity and access to all children.

The New River YMCA does not discriminate against any individual based on disability or any individual's association or relationship with an individual with a disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations offered at any of its locations.

Everyone who attends YMCA programs has unique needs. We are better when we take time to find out what those needs are, build empathy and understanding, and respond to individuals appropriately. The YMCA offers inclusive, welcoming programs dedicated to serving those needs in the best way possible.

Because every person is unique, we address each request individually. Your child's success and safety in our programs are our top priorities; therefore, we respectfully ask parents and caregivers to inform the YMCA, prior to the start of the program, of any special needs which may require special accommodations, so we can work together to support your child in reaching their full potential.

If you have questions about ADA accommodations at the YMCA, please contact Senior Program Director Lamont Singleton, [lamont@singleton@newriverymca.org](mailto:lamont@singleton@newriverymca.org).

## **MEDICINE PROCEDURES**

Please do not pack medication with your child's belongings. Parents (not the child) must bring necessary medications to the program office. Medications must be in their original containers with

written instructions for dispensing. A [Medication Distribution Form](#) must be provided for staff to dispense all over the counter medications including topical ointments, teething gel, diapering creams, lotions, sprays, creams and powders.

Generally, children are prohibited from having medication with them, unless the medication is dispensed on their person (such as an insulin pump) or a doctor has specifically indicated in writing that the child may self-administer and safety precautions are met for the safe handling of the medication. If a doctor has given this written permission, a copy must be provided to the YMCA. A parent or guardian must give the medication to the program staff.

For safety reasons, all medications are stored and locked in the program office.

## **WHEN TO STAY HOME**

Please do not send your child to YMCA programs with any of the following symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Excessive coughing
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Fever
- Head lice
- Undiagnosed rash, sore, or other skin condition
- Any other contagious disease or symptom

A child must be diarrhea, vomiting and fever-free for a full 24 hours before returning to the program. A physician's note may be required before re-admitting a child to the program.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event of severe rain, lightning or other unsafe conditions, activities will be modified as necessary to ensure the safety of all participants.

On **CODE ORANGE** days, outdoor activities are modified with frequent water breaks and play in shady areas.

On **CODE RED** days, activities are modified with field trips or indoor play depending on the program site.

Severe weather may affect the pickup process. In cases of driving rain and/or lightning, staff will keep children sheltered until conditions improve. This may slow down the pickup process, requiring drivers to wait. The safety of YMCA children and staff is our first priority.

Parents may come inside or into the sheltered areas at their own risk to pick up their child during severe weather conditions.

## **DROP OFF & PICKUP**

Specific Drop off and pickup procedures may vary from camp to camp. Please check with your Camp Director for details. Parents may check campers in or out at any time during the day by stopping at the camp lobby. Parents will be asked to present a photo ID at the time of pickup.

### **Pickup Procedures**

At pickup time, children will only be released to parents, legal guardians and those designated as emergency contacts with pickup on your child's account.

Drivers must display YMCA pickup cards or photo identification.

If you plan to have anyone else pick up your child, you must notify a youth director or office manager in writing/email New River Administration, [admin@newriverymca.org](mailto:admin@newriverymca.org).

Parents who drop off or pick up children outside of scheduled times, YMCA staff will sign the child in and/or out at the program.

Severe weather may affect the pickup process. In cases of driving rain and/or lightning, staff will keep children sheltered until conditions improve. This may slow down the pickup process, requiring drivers to wait. The safety of YMCA children and staff is our first priority.

The YMCA/our staff or volunteers do not buckle children of any age into their car seats or fasten seatbelts, even when requested by the parents. We make every effort to be efficient in the Rides Out line. We provide parking spaces or space for a parent to pull up so they can secure their own child.

### **Pickup Cards**

To ensure the safety of all participants, parents will receive pickup cards. Please clearly print your child's first and last name on the card and display it on the car windshield at pickup time. YMCA staff will request a picture ID from anyone who attempts to pick up a child without displaying a card. If you need additional cards for sitters, grandparents, etc., please ask at the program office. If a questionable situation arises, staff will hold the child until a parent has been contacted. A driver's license may be requested for identification.

### **Pickup Late Fees**

A late fee is charged for children picked up after the last pickup time. The late fee is \$5 for the first 10 minutes past pickup time and \$1 for each additional minute thereafter. Two staff members will remain with the child until a parent arrives.

## **OFFSITE TRAVEL**

All New River YMCA drivers are required to attend a driver's training class. Drivers are required to have a current North Carolina Commercial Driver's License (CDL) before being allowed to transport children on our large buses. All drivers have been background checked and CDL Drivers are required to receive a physical as part of their licensing requirement.

All YMCA buses undergo regular maintenance and inspections as part of the Y's ongoing vehicle maintenance program.

## **STAFF**

The YMCA prides itself on hiring quality staff that embody our Mission and have a passion for being a positive role model for children. Many of our counselors are high school and college students. Staff members are selected through a comprehensive application and interview process.

Each staff member completes over 30 hours of staff training throughout the summer that emphasizes the importance of safety, child development and fun. The YMCA strives to maintain a 1:15 ratio for youth camp programs.

We want you, as a parent or guardian, to know about staff behaviors that we consider appropriate, such as side hugs, high fives, praise and program-related discussions. Examples of inappropriate behavior include lap sitting, full front hugs, rough play, profanity, harassment, overly personal discussions and receiving personal gifts from counselors.

### **Outside Contact Policies**

During staff time off or when no longer employed with the YMCA, these persons are private citizens and are not subject to our employment rules and procedures.

### **Babysitting Policy**

It is our policy not to endorse or recommend staff as babysitters. Any babysitting arrangements with present or former YMCA staff shall be based on the judgment of the parent or guardian.

## **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

The goal of The New River YMCA is to meaningfully include all youth and provide accommodations in our programs when needed. To help us achieve this goal, we respectfully ask parents or guardians to inform the YMCA, prior to the start of the program, of any special circumstances which may affect your child's ability to participate. By providing information regarding the strengths and needs of your child, the staff can prepare helpful accommodations that will better serve all children in our programs.

Upon being informed of such circumstances, the Senior Program Director or other staff member may request a meeting to gather more information and discuss the accommodations that can be created to successfully include your child.

## **ACTIVITIES**

Activities are fun games, crafts, sports, etc. that are done without the expectation of skill development and/or achievement. Typically, these are focused on fun, friendships and general play.

## **SAFETY AT CAMP**

We want to remind you of YMCA policies and practices that help keep our YMCA youth programs secure for your child.

Many of our summer day camps and after school programs are operated at local schools. As partners with our schools, we are required to keep all doors closed and locked at all times. Sometimes, a staff member may stand in an open doorway, but you should expect that our entry points for our programs at schools will always be closed and locked. If you need assistance at any of our sites operated on YMCA property or offsite, text or call our site phones to reach a staff member. Parents have limited access to program spaces and will be accompanied by a YMCA staff member while in the space.

Parents, family members and any other authorized adult must show their photo I.D. or pick-up card in order to pick up children in our care. Please make sure your emergency contacts are up to date in your online portal and that you've checked the box for "allowed to pick up." Please also confirm that we have the most up-to-date phone numbers for you and your family.

All YMCA Summer Day Camp staff must complete a variety of trainings that include child abuse prevention, bullying prevention and a variety of other topics on how to keep children safe in a variety of situations.

Thank you to you and your family for choosing the Y. We appreciate your partnership.

## **YOUTH CODE OF CONDUCT**

At the New River YMCA, our behavior expectations and discipline procedures are based on our core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith. We believe in creating a safe, secure and fun environment where all youth have the opportunity to learn the importance of demonstrating good character. We believe that in order to do this, all youth need to know and understand the rules and expectations for appropriate behavior. We also believe that when youth do not follow the rules or when they demonstrate inappropriate behavior, we have an opportunity to help youth learn from their mistakes.

The YMCA promotes behavior guidance and discipline through creating a positive environment, developing structure and clear limits, promoting social and emotional learning, reinforcing our core values and addressing challenging behaviors.

The New River YMCA youth programs use six simple rules to communicate behavior expectations to the youth in our care. The purpose of these rules is to ensure the safety of our campers and staff and to create a positive environment for all. These rules are:

1. Listen and follow directions.
2. Do what's right.
3. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
4. Try everything and do your best.
5. Be Kind. If you see or hear something unkind, say something.
6. Be safe and have fun!

All youth are expected to follow the rules established by the YMCA for the safety of all youth in the program. Your cooperation and support ensure that all youth have a safe and fun experience.

The YMCA does not allow the following behaviors including but not limited to:

- Any action that could threaten the physical, mental or emotional safety of the youth, other youth or staff.
- I understand language or behavior that diminishes others on the basis of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or religion is prohibited and will not be tolerated.
- Destructive behavior
- Behavior that is a violation of personal boundaries or is of a habitual nature and negatively impacts the program, and/or safety and enjoyment of others
- Behavior or language that is of a sexual nature
- Some behaviors could result in immediate suspension or dismissal.

The YMCA uses positive discipline which means staff members promote desired behaviors through teaching and reinforcement. Staff will redirect or problem-solve with youth when they are not displaying desired behaviors, rather than restrict behaviors by taking away opportunities or controlling youth with fear of punishment. We believe this approach focuses on the needs of the youth and contributes positively to the youth's overall development. Staff shall use positive discipline, which shall include the following:

- Communicate to youth using positive statements
- Encourage youth, with adult support, to use their own words and solutions in order to resolve interpersonal conflicts
- Communicate with youth by getting on their level and talking to them in a calm, quiet manner about the behavior that is expected



- There are times when restrictions may be necessary and will most likely be directly linked to the health, safety or well-being of the youth or others. The YMCA staff does not use corporal punishment under any circumstance. In the event of a youth harming themselves, another youth, or an adult, staff may physically restrain the youth to ensure safety.

## **BULLYING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Bullying is any unwanted behavior that involves a power imbalance. Here at the Y, our goal is to stop bullying, and we encourage our participants, parents, and staff to be Upstanders. An Upstander is one who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. If there is disclosure, discovery, or suspicion of bullying we will handle each instance case by case and with care. At the Y we are building a caring, respectful, honest, and responsible community for all; the safety of our program participants is our main concern.

Conversely, we define conflict as a disagreement or argument in which both sides express their views and there is an equal power balance. We believe conflict with resolution is a natural and important part of Youth Development. Conflict can be constructive if managed in the right way. We will identify and resolve conflicts in a healthy and proactive fashion. The conflict resolution skills we learn and practice will make a positive impact on our Y programs and in every child's future.

## **YOUTH AND TEEN PROGRAM TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES**

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish clear rules and expectations for the use of technology within YMCA programs and facilities. These guidelines are intended to protect the privacy and safety of participants, as well as to ensure that technology is used in a responsible and mission-focused way.

Cell phones, smart watches and other devices should not be in use during program hours unless given explicit permission from YMCA Staff. If permission is given, staff should have the ability to view screens at all times and participants should not share screens or use someone else's device. Participants and parents should work through their Y program office to contact one another during program hours.

Online or app-based bullying, harassment, or unwanted contact will not be tolerated. Should the YMCA become aware of any online behavior that violates YMCA Behavior Expectations or policies, participants are subject to disciplinary action in line with the YMCA Discipline Policies.

Should participants be found to have shared, searched or to have downloaded content that goes against the YMCA Behavior Expectations or policies, or is contrary to the Y's Mission, participants are subject to disciplinary action in line with the YMCA Discipline Policy. While the YMCA is not responsible for virtual content shared in and outside of program hours, we will investigate and/or hold

accountable participants who share content that goes against YMCA policies, Behavior Expectations or is contrary to YMCA Mission and Values.

Our YMCA staff are not allowed to communicate one-on-one with participants using social media, apps, texting or phone calls. This includes participants “friending” staff on social media. Messages between staff and participants under the age of 18 must include a parent or guardian. There are three exceptions to this rule:

1. Texting/phone calls between YMCA staff and teen participants with parent permission (signed program registration form) when the staff member is using a YMCA issued device.
2. Communication related to YMCA employment between a YMCA staff member with a teen who is also a YMCA employee.
3. Communication with a participant who is over the age of 18.

Unwanted recording, or picture taking of participants is prohibited. Authorized YMCA staff will take pictures for the purpose of parent communication and program promotion.

Some teen programs may have Instagram or other social media accounts associated with the programs. In these cases, the following guidelines will be followed:

- Marketing and Communications should be included as an Admin on all social media accounts/closed groups.
- Private/direct messages sent through social media accounts or closed groups to the Marketing and Communications department.

Should participants be found in violation of these expectations or utilizing their device outside of the standard expectations of the YMCA, the participant is subject to disciplinary action in line with the YMCA Discipline Policy. This may include, but not be limited to, revoking phone usage, requiring phone to be turned off and stored during program hours, or program suspension or dismissal.

The YMCA is not responsible for any personal items damaged, lost or stolen at our programs. If a participant or anyone on YMCA property causes damage to property belonging to the New River YMCA or another individual due to negligence, misuse or unsanctioned activity or behaviors, the YMCA reserves the right to charge a damage repair assessment fee.