

YDAY CAMP™

We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.



PARENT HANDBOOK

A Note from the Camp Staff

Welcome to Summer Camp 2010. The YMCA of the East Bay, and the Hilltop Family YMCA, are proud to offer quality camping for your child. We adhere to stringent standards regarding leader – to –child ratios, staff training and off site risk management and safety procedures. Our curriculum provides children with exciting opportunities to meet new friends, learn new skills, and character values in a fun environment.

We have planned an exciting summer of fun and adventure for your child. This handbook is designed to answer some frequently asked questions. Please read it thoroughly and keep for easy reference. We look forward to a safe Summer Camp.

Sincerely,

Hilltop Family YMCA
RJ Natal
Youth & Family Director

MISSION / PHILOSOPHY

Mission

The YMCA of the East Bay is committed to strengthening and enriching the development of individuals and families through quality programs and services that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

Philosophy

The goal of the YMCA camping program is to help strengthen and to support kids to grow spiritually, mentally, and physically. Through intentionally planned activities, YMCA programs help develop people to their fullest potential.

YMCA DAY CAMP GOALS & OBJECTIVES

1. The purpose of YMCA Day Camp is to help campers grow spiritually, mentally, and physically, using a campsite, challenging activities, and trained, caring staff.
2. The following YMCA programs objectives are to be met by the day camp program:
 - ◆ Grow personally
 - ◆ Learn values
 - ◆ Improve personal and family relationships
 - ◆ Become better leaders and supporters
 - ◆ Appreciate diversity
 - ◆ Develop specific skills
 - ◆ Have fun
3. The day camp program promotes the four character development values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

YMCA CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Since the founding of the YMCA, it has been our mission to build strong kids, strong families and strong communities by offering programs and services that teach people to accept and demonstrate the important character values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. We believe character development is the most important aspect of what we do. YMCA Character Development is a challenge for all of us – staff, volunteers, participants and parents – to accept and demonstrate positive values.

While none of us are perfect, we can strive to improve. The YMCA believes good character makes a better family member, volunteer and community member.

PAYMENT POLICY

Refund Policy

All deposits are non-refundable. Any cancellations with at least two (2) weeks notice will be given a credit voucher for other YMCA programs, less the deposit.

Transfer Policy

Two weeks notice must be given in order to transfer fees (minus the deposit) to other sessions. (If space allows)

Deposit

For any program that requires a deposit, the deposit is applied toward the fee. Deposits are not refundable.

Third Party Payment Policy

Families that receive subsidy from another agency are still required to register children at the YMCA and submit all necessary paperwork. For all payments that the agency denies, parents will be required to make all necessary payments.

MEMBERSHIP

The YMCA of the East Bay is a membership organization. Membership dues enable the YMCA to continue its work to provide programs that build strong kids, strong families, and a strong community. Membership is required to participate in all YMCA programs.

WHAT TO BRING

Bag lunch

Please bring a healthy bag lunch and drink marked with your child's name every day. There will be no time or place to buy lunches or drinks. Refrigeration cannot be provided so please do not send perishable items. We will also be unable to heat food. A goal of the YMCA is to promote good nutrition for children. Please keep that in mind as you pack your child's lunch for camp.

Snack

Please bring a morning & afternoon healthy snack each day

Backpack

A backpack is the best way to keep track of your child's belongings. Please label your child's backpack on the inside (for safety reasons your child's name should not be visible to strangers), as many bags look alike. Never send your child with more belongings than what fits in to the backpack.

Sunscreen

Please apply sunscreen to your child before camp each day. We also ask that you send sunscreen (SPF 30 - recommended) with your child to camp daily and a staff person will help apply it throughout the day.

Clothing

Please send your child to camp in comfortable, “play” clothing. Children will be doing arts-n-crafts, going to parks, playgrounds, beaches, and various other places in the Bay Area; clothes may get soiled. Children should not wear clothing that will restrict activity.

Soft-soled shoes (i.e. sneakers) are most appropriate for camp. Only special events such as hiking, swimming or sports camps will present the need for additional shoes.

Weather will always vary, so please send a warm sweater or jacket. Please label all clothing as lost items frequently appear at camp. All lost-n-found items are kept for 2 weeks.

Please make sure that all swimwear is age appropriate and take into consideration that the ages of the children your child will be swimming with may vary considerably.

Do Not Bring

Please do not bring personal items to camp (walkmans, skateboards, radios, game boys, pokemon, water guns, sharp objects, video games etc.) We are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Spending Money

Please do not send spending money with your child. Camp fees cover the cost of all materials and entrance fees needed. Announcements will be made beforehand if campers are allowed to bring souvenir money on special trips.

FIELD TRIPS / SWIMMING

Field Trips

Please pay close attention to your child’s weekly calendar so that you will be aware of special departure and return times for field trips. Please do not schedule appointments for your child on these days. If your child misses the bus, no alternative care will be provided.

Schedules are subject to change. Please check at the sign in desk for delays or changes in daily schedule.

Parent Information

Each day, please consult the “parent information” table located at the sign-in/out location at camp. **This is the most efficient way for the camp to disseminate information to parents.** Any changes in schedule, important information, or interesting opportunities will be posted on this table.

Swimming

Winter camp will have three to five swim days per week; please check your child’s weekly calendar for swim days.

Please send proper swimming attire (no cutoff/ shorts), a towel, and a plastic bag for wet clothing. Parents should provide swim caps. Non – swimmers will be provided with alternate activities.

SIGN IN / OUT PROCEDURES

It is YMCA policy that each child must be signed in and out by a parent or authorized parent representative every day on the sign-in/out sheet. ID and a full signature will be required.

The YMCA maintains no responsibility for the child once he/she is signed out of the program.

If a child has not been picked up by the close of the camp day, the parents/guardian will attempt to be reached along with the emergency contact. If no one can be reached after 45 minutes, the Department of Social Services will be called.

Children will be released only to those authorized persons designated on the child’s release form.

Those persons not known to the staff may be asked to show photo identification, this includes persons named on your authorization form.

The YMCA must release a child to his/her parent or legal guardian unless we have a current court order forbidding this action.

ABSENCES / LATENESS

Absences/Lateness

Please inform the camp director if you know that your child will be absent or late. We do not give refunds or credits for missed days.

Late Pick Ups

All children not picked up by the end of camp day will be assessed the late fee of \$1.00 for every minute. All charges are due at time of pick up or before your child returns to camp.

DAILY HEALTH

Your child's basic health status will be observed daily. This is a general health observation, which is informal. If your child appears to be showing signs of illness, a more formal evaluation will be completed (temperature, swollen glands, or sore throat, etc.) If staff determines the child to be ill, the parent will be called to pick up the child.

Please do not bring sick children to camp. Children need to be well enough to participate in all activities offered.

MEDICATIONS / ILLNESS

Medications

Please note any special medication needs on your child's health history/Registration Form. Medication must be in the possession of a director or camp leader, with complete written instructions for administering it; please include exact dosage and time to be administered. All medication must be in its original container. This applies to all medications, including prescriptions and non-prescriptions.

Illnesses

Please make arrangements to keep sick children at home.

FIRST AID

All camp staff has the knowledge of basic first aid & CPR. In addition, designated staff is certified in Basic First Aid, CPR and safety training. A first Aid kit is kept on hand at each campsite.

DICIPLINE POLICY / BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Any trouble your child is having outside of camp may affect their behavior at the YMCA. Please keep the staff informed of any issues so we can be sensitive to your child's needs. The YMCA would like to work as a team with your family for the betterment of your child. This will enable us to provide the best environment for your child's growth and development.

Our first step is being proactive in our approach towards behavior management. We take action steps before a situation occurs. The more we know about a child. The easier it will be for us to be able to take this step. We also use positive reinforcement by consistently acknowledging good behavior.

The expectations listed below in bold are general expectations we have for all of our programs participants. The campsite will have these posted, and develop site-specific rules for each expectation. There are sample rules listed here beneath the expectations.

Respect for others

- ◇ Keep your hands to yourself
- ◇ No harming each other physically (by hitting, kicking etc.) or emotionally (name calling, excluding others)

Safety first

- ◇ Listen to your camp leader at all times
- ◇ Report unsafe behavior to a camp leader

Speak for yourself/ listen attentively

- ◇ Express yourself positively
- ◇ Be open to other beliefs and ideas

Be Responsible

- ◇ Clean your own messes
- ◇ Help out when asked

If a situation does occur, we will do one of the following:

1. We will give the child a natural and logical consequence to their action.
2. We will discuss this with them to help them understand the connection between their action and the consequence.
3. If it is necessary, the child will be removed from the group in the company of their camp leader. This gives the child a chance to cool off and be able to discuss the situation with their leader in a calm and productive manner.

WE DO NOT EVER USE CORPORAL PUNISHMENT. The YMCA staff is committed to providing a program in which all children can succeed. In the event that a child's negative behavior cannot be improved through discussion between leader and child, the following steps will be taken:

1. Staff will inform the parent of the behavior and seek additional suggestions on how to handle the child's behavior.
2. If the behavior continues, the parents will be asked to come to the YMCA and meet the staff to work out a plan to resolve the situation.
3. If none of the above measures are effective, your child will be asked to leave the program. The safety of all the children is very important to the YMCA.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING PROCEDURES

In the event that there is an accusation of child abuse, the YMCA will take prompt and immediate action.

The YMCA will make a report in accordance with relevant state or local child abuse reporting requirements and will cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal authority involved.

General Release of Liability

For your records, the following is the release you signed on the registration form.

The health history is correct, so far as I know, and the person herein has permission to engage in all prescribed program activities. I give permission to the physician selected by the YMCA to order x-rays, routine tests, and treatment for the health of my child, and in the event I cannot be reached in an emergency, I hereby give permission to the physician selected by the YMCA to hospitalize, secure proper treatment for, and to order injection and/or anesthesia and/or surgery for my child named above. Recognizing the YMCA will do its best to ensure a safe experience, I understand that certain dangers or accidents may occur. I hereby release the YMCA of the East Bay from all responsibility and liability of any nature, including claims for injury, death, loss or damage, resulting from my child's participation in program activities. Photos of my child may be used for promotional purposes. This form may be photocopied for use away from the program site. I authorize the YMCA staff to apply sunscreen to my child's exposed skin, on an as-needed basis.