



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# ACHIEVEMENT RELATIONSHIPS BELONGING

## Camp Parent Guide 2026 YMCA OF THE FOOTHILLS



### YMCA of the Foothills

**East Site:** La Canada Elementary

**West Site:** Girls Scouts House

**Specialty Camp:** Verdugo Hills YMCA

**Half Day Camp:** Verdugo Hills YMCA

**Kinder Camp:** La Canada Elementary

**Preschool Summer Session:**

Verdugo Hills YMCA

### Website:

[www.ymcafoothills.org/camp](http://www.ymcafoothills.org/camp)



## OUR CAUSE

We focus our work in three key areas Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility because nurturing the potential of kids, helping people live healthier, and supporting our neighbors are fundamental to a better community for everyone.

## OUR CAMP

At camp, kids develop skills, explore new activities, learn independence, make friends, and form assets that help them thrive!

### Camp Leadership

#### West Site & Onsite Camp

Chelsea Lawrence  
clawrence@ymcafoothills.org

#### East Site & Kinder Camp

Janette Ruiz  
jrui@ymcafoothills.org

#### Specialty & Half Day Camp

Ernesto Rafael  
Erafael@ymcafoothills.org

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### General Questions

YMCA Office 818  
790 0123  
www.ymcafoothills.org/camp

### Payments/Registration Debbie Pile

818 583 4733  
dpile@ymcafoothills.org

### Branch Director

Annie Azizian  
aazizian@ymcafoothills.org

### Camp Phones Numbers

#### **East Site & Kinder Camp**

818 426 0564

#### **West Site**

818 426 0556

#### **VHY, Specialty Camp, Half Day Camp**

818 357 1032

# CAMP COMMUNICATION

Our first and preferable method for communicating is face to face. When we see parents pick up and drop off, we want to be able to talk about your child's day rather than logistics. For the logistics part of camp communication, we rely on the important tools below:

## WEBSITE

- General information about camp
- Payment information
- Schedules
- <https://www.ymcafoothills.org/summercamp>

## CAMP RALLY NIGHT

- Get a snapshot of the new changes for camp and procedures
- Answers to all your questions:
- Day Camp Rally: May 21st @ 6:30pm via Zoom

## CAMP BULLETINS

- Welcome to summer camp letter
- Important information
- Logistics for the camp week

## SOCIAL MEDIA

- **YMCA of the Foothills Instagram:**  
[@ymcaofthefoothills](https://www.instagram.com/ymcaofthefoothills)

The **American Camp Association (ACA)** is a community of camp professionals who, for over 100 years, have joined together to share their knowledge and experience and to ensure the quality of camp programs. Because of their diverse 10,000 plus membership and their exceptional programs, children and adults have the opportunity to learn powerful lessons in community, character-building, skill development, and healthy living — lessons that can be learned nowhere else. As a leading authority in youth development, ACA works to preserve, promote, and improve the camp experience. The ACA association is committed to helping members and all camps provide:

- Camp communities committed to a safe, nurturing environment
- Caring, competent adult role models
- Healthy, developmentally appropriate experiences
- Service to the community and the natural world
- Opportunities for leadership and personal growth
- Discovery, experiential education, and learning opportunities
- Excellence and continuous self-improvement



**The ACA accredits over 2,400 camps. ACA-Accredited® camps meet up to 300 standards for health, safety, and program quality (Safety Tips/Accreditation). ACA works closely with other youth-serving organizations and associations. Founded in 1910, ACA is a tax-exempt corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the International Revenue Service code.**

# CAMP SCHEDULES

Camp schedules for all day camps are available online at [www.ymcafoothills.org/camp](http://www.ymcafoothills.org/camp). Camp schedules highlight the daily events and activities. Occasionally, we may need to make unscheduled changes! We will communicate these changes through emailed summer camp bulletins.

## Session Dates

Session A: June 8 - June 12

Session 1: June 15-June 19(No Camp June 19)

Session 2: June 22 - June 26

Session 3: June 29 - July 3rd (East Site Only)

Session 4: July 6 - July 10

Session 5: July 13 - July 17

Session 6: July 20 - July 24

Session 7: July 27 -July 31

Session 8: Aug 3 - Aug 7 (West Site Only)

Session 9: Aug 10 - Aug 14 (West Site Only)



# TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

Transportation will be provided for off-site field trips as well as swimming days (For East & West Site camp only) Camp buses are contracted with a third party vendor.

# IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

If you need to get in touch with your child for a family emergency, call the camp site phone number.

## Welcome to YMCA Summer Camp!

We're thrilled to have your child join us this summer at the YMCA of the Foothills! Thank you for trusting us to be a part of your child's growth and adventure. YMCA summer camp programs are designed to make a lasting impact, offering a fun and enriching experience that helps children develop important life skills in a supportive and exciting environment.

At the YMCA of the Foothills Summer Camps, we focus on the development of the whole child. Through character-building activities, outdoor adventures, and team challenges, your child will gain social skills, build confidence, and create lasting memories. They'll also have the chance to be active, connect with caring adults, and explore new things in a safe, supportive space.

Studies show that children who attend YMCA programs:

- Are more cooperative with others
- Are better at resolving conflicts peacefully
- Build stronger teamwork skills
- Become caring, responsible individuals

Our camps are not just about having fun (though we do plenty of that!); they are also about nurturing your child's development. Whether it's discovering new interests, making friends, or learning how to work together as a team, your child will leave camp with a sense of accomplishment and a positive outlook. We emphasize our core values of **caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility** throughout every activity and interaction.

At the YMCA, we understand that summer is an important time for growth, exploration, and making new connections. Our camp staff is dedicated to fostering a welcoming environment where every child can feel supported as they try new things, gain independence, and strengthen their sense of self. We believe these experiences lay the foundation for a healthy, successful future.

We're proud to be a part of your child's summer journey. YMCA summer camps are a place where fun and personal growth come together to create a truly special experience. We can't wait to watch your child grow, connect, and thrive throughout their time with us! The YMCA is a nonprofit charitable organization with a mission reflecting its rich heritage that reaches back to 1844 when the YMCA was founded. We're for **Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility**.

This publication is your guide to the YMCA and our Summer Camp programs. It explains everything from operations, policies and procedures to safety, activities, and communication. If you have any question that is not covered in our parent guide, please contact us at 818-790-0123 or [dpile@ymcafoothills.org](mailto:dpile@ymcafoothills.org) and one of our youth development team members will be happy to assist you.

We look forward to helping your child grow into their full potential as they explore **RELATIONSHIPS**, discover **BELONGING**, and gain **ACHIEVEMENT**, at the Y!

In community,

Camp Team  
YMCA of the Foothills

**OUR MISSION:** *The mission of the YMCA of the Foothills is to organize, develop, finance, and conduct programs for an association of persons of all ages that will, by putting Christian principles into practice, enrich the quality of their lives spiritually, mentally, physically, and socially.*

**OUR CAUSE:** The Y is made up of people from all backgrounds working together to strengthen their community. Together we work to ensure that everyone, regardless of ability, age, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender identity, ideology, immigrant status, income, race, sex or sexual orientation could reach their full potential. We share the core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility -- they guide everything we do. The Y is committed to providing programs and services that are inclusive and welcoming to all. We value an environment that fosters dignity, respect, fairness and appreciation for all aspects and dimensions of diversity.

**OUR VALUES:** All YMCA staff members, parents, guardians, members, and youth are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with our Four Core Values of Honesty, Caring, Respect and Responsibility.

- **Caring:** to demonstrate a sincere concern for others, for their needs and well-being. Related values: compassion, forgiveness, generosity, and kindness.
- **Honesty:** to tell the truth, to demonstrate reliability and trustworthiness through actions that are in keeping with my stated positions and beliefs. Related values: integrity and fairness.
- **Respect:** to treat others as I would want them to treat me, to value the worth of every person, including myself. Related values: acceptance, empathy, self-respect and tolerance.
- **Responsibility:** to do what is right--what I ought to do, to be accountable for my choices of behavior and actions and my promises. Related values: commitment, courage, good health, service and citizenship.

**WHO WE ARE:** The YMCA is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

- **Youth Development:** Nurturing the potential of every child and teen: Nine million youth are taking a greater interest in learning; making smarter life choices; and cultivating the values, skills and relationships that lead to positive behaviors, the pursuit of higher education and goal achievement.
- **Healthy Living:** Improving the nation's health and well-being: Millions of adults and youth receive the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve better health and well-being.
- **Social Responsibility:** Giving back and providing support to our neighbors: Across the country, the YMCA helps people give back and assist their neighbors by offering those opportunities to volunteer, advocate and support programs that strengthen community.

#### **YMCA PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY:**

- YMCA programs strive to provide a safe, secure & supportive environment that gives families peace of mind when they cannot be there themselves.
- We believe that a child's experience is dependent on family life and community life. YMCA programs strive to support the entire family with a variety of programming and character-
  - We believe that when youth are exposed to consistent displays of positive character traits, they will develop healthy self-esteem and a willingness to help others.
  - We believe that by supporting your local school, your child will experience success.
  - Our programs offer a comprehensive approach to your child's development by offering activities that strengthen, expand and provide real life context to information learned in the classroom.
  - We believe that building strong kids & strong families will strengthen the foundation of our communities.

**FAMILY SELF-EVALUATION:** Is this program the right fit for my Child? It is important for each parent, guardian, or authorized representative to evaluate if a YMCA camp, is appropriate for their child. Families should use the following bullets to determine if the YMCA program matches their child's need:

- **Primary Care Groups:** At the YMCA, children are organized in Primary Care Groups, with 1 paid YMCA staff member for every 10 children.
- **One-To-One Services:** Children who may need to be accompanied to a YMCA program by a one-to-one aide or a shadow, must complete a form. Once received, the YMCA will review the information provided and connect with the family to discuss an intake plan for the one-to-one aide/shadow and the agency of which the one-to-one aide/shadow is employed. The YMCA Camp Directors Department and the YMCA Director of the program or program leadership team will connect with the family to determine the level of the child's needs and to better understand the strategies and techniques needed to help the child be successful in the program. The YMCA program will do its best to meet the needs of the child, with the hope that the program is able to provide for the child's individual needs. The one to one service must stay with the child for the entire time they're at camp.

**The YMCA does not accept, nor take any financial responsibilities in securing a one-to-one aide or shadow for any child. In addition, the one-to-one aide or shadow must be provided by a reputable agency; the YMCA cannot accept one-to-one aides or shadows hired by the family. Please note that for the safety and security of our program facilities, YMCA staff members and participants, the YMCA has developed an intake process that all outside one-to-one aides and their employers (the agency) must complete before the one-to-one aide/shadow can provide services at the Y. This process includes background checks, fingerprint scans, insurance requirements, health records, online training in child abuse prevention and workplace harassment, etc., and can take up to 30 days for processing from start-to-finish. It is highly recommended that families connected with the YMCA begin the intake process at least 30 days prior to the child's first day. The YMCA is unable to expedite the process for any family, regardless of the urgency for care; the YMCA has a responsibility to ensure that the intake process is completed and confirmed before permitting an outside adult from an outside agency in a YMCA program. The YMCA is a group-centered program that provides group-centered care and supervision for children; children must be able to function in a group along with up to 10 other children.**

**\*\*\* Under no circumstances will the YMCA accept a child into a program who is not on our registration list.**

**Absence Allowance:**

The YMCA does not provide credits or make-up for program days missed. There are no adjustments in camp fees for absences, non-participation, or emergency closings (except a National Emergency), once the child is registered in the program. The frequency and occurrence of the child's attendance has no bearing on the program fees. Camp fees cover the YMCA's direct operating expenses (i.e., staffing, materials, activity fees, etc.). All of these must be available to each child in camp. When a child is registered in camp, the YMCA reserves space, time, staffing, and provisions for the child, whether the child attends.

**Sign In/Out Procedures:** Parents, guardians and authorized representatives must follow all sign-out procedures at pick-up. This includes using a full signature, logging the accurate time, and providing ID, when requested by a YMCA staff member.

Children may not escort or sign themselves out of program. Children will only be released to a parent, guardian or authorized representative who is 18 years-old or older. Children may not be signed out of the program by a sibling under 18. Please let a YMCA staff member know if special accommodation is needed. Failure of parent, guardian or authorized representative to use fully legible signatures may result in child's termination from the program.

**Authorized Pick-Up List:** Children will only be released to their parent, guardian or an authorized representative. For everyone's protection, only persons authorized (must be 18 years or older), in writing, by the parent, guardian or authorized representative, may remove a child from the program. Parents, guardians, or authorized representatives must provide complete information on authorized persons including full name. The YMCA staff members will question anyone who is unfamiliar to them and ask for identification to check their authorization. Anyone without proper authorization will be stopped from taking a child. If someone other than those persons authorized on the registration form will be picking up the child, the parent, guardian or authorized representative must notify the YMCA Director of the program, in writing. YMCA staff members are not permitted to sign children out of the program. Often, YMCA staff members rotate shifts throughout the week. For this reason, it is important that parents, guardians, or authorized representatives always carry their photo ID when coming to check a child out of the program.

**BOTH PARENTS' RIGHT TO PICK-UP:** Under the laws of the State of California, all legal parents or guardians may have the right to pick up their child, unless a court document is provided to the YMCA restricting that right to one or more legal parents and/or guardians. The enrolling parent or guardian who chooses not to include the child's other legal parent or guardian on the authorized pick-up list, must file an official court document (e.g., current restraining order, sole custody decree, divorce decree stating sole custody) with the YMCA for the YMCA program to enforce the restrictions. Absent of an official court document, the program may release the child to either parent or guardian, if parent or guardian documents his paternity/her maternity of the child.

**Visitation, Custody and Restraining Court Orders:** In providing program services, there may be occasions where YMCA staff members are required to handle disputes among parents or guardians, arising out of court-issued restraining orders and custody and visitation orders. These orders are likely to be transmitted by parents to the YMCA to put the YMCA on notice of Court-issued visitation restrictions regarding their children.

**Visitation/Custody Court Orders:** Apart from a Sole Custody Order or a No Visitation Order (like a restraining order; see next bullet), the YMCA will not get involved in the enforcement of a visitation order as long as both parents have custody of the child. YMCA staff members may only release children to the authorized/legal parents or guardians of the child. Unless the YMCA program is provided with a court order specifying loss of custody privileges or a restraining order against one of the parents or guardians, the child will be released to the child's parents or guardian. While the YMCA understands that this may upset parents who might be frustrated by the other parent or guardian's lack of regard for a set schedule, it is not the YMCA's role to monitor that schedule. Rather, the YMCA staff members will politely remind the parent that any violation of visitation or custody schedules should be addressed with their lawyer.

- **Restraining Orders/Sole Custody Orders/No Visitation Orders:** If a parent presents a YMCA staff member with a restraining order, sole custody order or no visitation order, the YMCA staff member will forward the document to a supervisor for review by the YMCA Risk Management department. The YMCA will review the court document to determine who the protected person(s) is/are and determine which children are specifically listed in the order. In situations where one parent is seeking to contact and/or procure the child from a YMCA program in violation of a restraining order, the YMCA staff member will take the following steps:
  - The YMCA staff member will politely remind the restricted parent that there is a Court Order in place restricting that parent from removing the child from the YMCA.
  - A YMCA supervisor will be contacted to come to the program site and support the YMCA staff members, if necessary.
  - A YMCA staff member will contact the other parents and inform them of the situation.
  - If necessary, the YMCA staff member will call 911 (if necessary, the YMCA staff member will bypass the first three bullets and immediately contact 911)

All pertinent information about any court orders related to the child must be available to the YMCA staff members from the outset of enrollment and that a continuing bond of trust and mutual partnership exists for the child's benefit. Therefore, a parent, guardian or authorized representative has the obligation to disclose any court orders at the time of the child's enrollment and on an ongoing basis; and provide the YMCA program with a copy of the court orders to keep on file at the YMCA office. Parents, please do not wait until the other parent, guardian is at the YMCA program site to pick up their child, to disclose to the YMCA that there is a court order in place. Absent of court documentation filed at the YMCA, the YMCA will have no choice but to release the child to their legal parent, guardian. Please do not ask the YMCA staff members to play mediator. YMCA staff members unfortunately cannot relay messages between separated parents.

## **Lunch & Snacks**

All campers **must** bring their own sack lunch and beverage daily (except when noted in the camp schedule). Send non-perishable food items only, as refrigeration is not available. We recommend packing a snack to eat mid-morning and afternoon. **Camp is a "nut free" environment. Do not send any nut products to camp with your camper.** If your camper forgets their lunch, we will provide them with one and charge \$10 to your account. Camp staff will encourage campers to eat their lunch. However, they will not force campers to eat.

**FOOD ALLERGIES:** If a child has an allergy of any kind, please inform a YMCA staff member on the child's first day. In addition, if the child requires an EpiPen, please contact [Camp Leadership Team](#) before the child's first day of camp, as the YMCA requires Health Related Services forms to be on file for the child, prior to their first day.

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** YMCA programs will participate in multiple activities throughout the camp. During these events, YMCA staff members and the YMCA Marketing department may take photos to incorporate in marketing materials that may be used and reused to promote YMCA programs. These photographs will be used only on YMCA promotional materials.

**Clothing:** Campers are required to wear close-toe and heeled shoes. We recommend campers dress in "play clothes" or clothes that you won't mind getting dirty. Belongings are the responsibility of the child, not the staff.

**Sunscreen:** Apply sunscreen to your child daily before bringing them to camp. We ask each camper brings additional sunscreen to camp. On designed swim days, provide your child with a swimsuit, towel, hat and goggles if needed. All campers must have some form of sunscreen to apply multiple times per day.

**Camp T-Shirt:** Additional YMCA camp T-shirt will be available for purchase of \$12. **Camp Shirts are required to be worn on all field trip days. A camper will not be able to go on a trip without a camp shirt.**

**Swimming:** All campers must pass a swim test to swim without a life jacket. On swim days, have your camper dressed in their swimsuit under their clothes and include a large Zip-Lock type bag to hold their wet items.

**Field Trip:** Check the weekly camp bulletin for the most up to date field trip information.

- All campers must wear their camp shirts. Additional shirts can be purchased for \$12
- Buses will not wait if your camper is late. If you miss the bus, your child will not attend the field trip
- Return times may vary. If possible, updates will be sent to parents
- All field trips are cashless. Please send your camper an activated visa/master gift card. Counselors are not responsible for funds spent by your camper.

## **FAMILY INFORMATION**

**OPEN DOOR POLICY:** Parents, guardians and authorized representatives are welcome to contact the YMCA Camp Leadership Team at any time during the YMCA Director's working shift. Parents, guardians and authorized representatives are also welcomed to have brief conversations with the Site Leads of the program at pick-up and drop-off.

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR FAMILIES**

- The parent, guardian and authorized representative should keep the YMCA program informed about changes going on in the child's life that might affect his/her behavior.
- YMCA staff members will keep parents, guardians and authorized representatives informed of their child's progress, on both good and bad days.
- Feel free to make an appointment or conference call appointment with the YMCA Leader of the program.
- Give the YMCA program and the YMCA Leader of the program suggestions on effective means to encourage the child's positive behavior.
- Help the YMCA program praise the child for a job well done.
- You are not alone; the YMCA is here to help!

**APPROPRIATE CONDUCT:** It is important that parents, guardians, and authorized representatives of the child role model positive behavior while at the YMCA program. Parents, guardians, and authorized representatives can also be asked to leave the program, if their behavior is deemed inappropriate. If there is a problem with the program or with a YMCA staff member, please contact the YMCA Camp Leadership Team. This will help to avoid any confrontations that might be uncomfortable for the children, other parents, guardians, authorized representatives, authorized visitors, and YMCA staff members. Parents, guardians, authorized representatives, and authorized visitors are expected to behave respectfully when communicating with YMCA staff members. Any inappropriate behavior, abuse or harassment will result in the suspension or cancellation of the child's registration. This includes yelling, threatening or other perceived aggressive behavior. Please note that refunds will not be issued if a child's enrollment is suspended or terminated due to inappropriate behavior, abuse or harassment from a parent, guardian, or authorized representative. Parents, guardians, or authorized representatives who believe something is unsatisfactory, should speak with the YMCA Director of the program, immediately.

All parents, guardians, authorized representatives, and authorized visitors must follow the YMCA's positive discipline policy with their children while they are on YMCA premises. Parents, guardians, and authorized representatives may not discipline children who are not their own at the program site. This policy includes all parents/guardians and any adult, visitor, authorized designee, or authorized representative associated with the child. All are expected to conduct themselves appropriately when dealing with the YMCA and with YMCA personnel. Conduct in YMCA programs, program sites and YMCA branches must be conducive to a diverse constituency where people of all ages and backgrounds feel welcome and safe. YMCA members and guests are expected to behave in a civilized manner towards one another and towards YMCA Staff members, always.

**EMAIL COMMUNICATION TO YMCA STAFF MEMBERS:** Families may email the YMCA Camp Leadership of the program regarding any concerns about camp or the YMCA at [jruiz@ymcafoothills.org](mailto:jruiz@ymcafoothills.org) or [clawrence@ymcafoothills.org](mailto:clawrence@ymcafoothills.org) . The YMCA believes that face to face conversations is most preferred when dealing with sensitive issues or concerns.

## **ADDITIONAL POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

**PROGRAM COMMITMENT TO INCLUDE CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** YMCA staff members strive to respond to the needs of each child in a group care setting. Parents, guardians, and authorized representatives should be familiar with the YMCA's staff-to-child ratios for the program type they are registering the child. The YMCA provides opportunities for involvement in groups, with a balance of counselor-directed and child-initiated activities. The YMCA Program is, however, unable to provide one-to-one care for any child except on an intermittent basis, such as injuries, immediate disciplinary issues, and certain personal care needs customarily provided to other children.

The YMCA program welcomes all children. To the extent it can do so, the YMCA program will provide services to children with disabilities or any special needs in the same manner as services provided for other children of comparable age. It is essential that all pertinent information about the child's needs be available to YMCA staff members from the outset of registration and that a continuing bond of trust and mutual partnership exists for the benefit of the child. Therefore, a parent, guardian or authorized representative has the obligation to disclose significant medical, physical, or behavioral issues at the time of the child's enrollment and on an ongoing basis.

If it is unclear whether the YMCA camp can accommodate the unique needs of a child, the YMCA will arrive at a final decision by reviewing the circumstances on a case-by-case basis. Such review will be comprised of most, if not all, of the following steps, unless such process would not meaningfully contribute to a final decision:

- Program Leadership will meet with the child and family, either via conference call or virtual meeting.
- Program Leadership will observe the child in the program setting.
- Program Leadership will assess the YMCA staff members' ability to handle the various manifestations of the child's special needs, and consider whether additional training, the cost of which is not unreasonable, would mitigate the difficulty.
- Program Leadership will observe the child's adaptation to the group of children.
- Program Leadership will discuss the child's needs with the YMCA staff members and supervisor.
- If possible, the child will be enrolled for a trial period.
- A discussion of possible, necessary accommodations will be undertaken and those accommodations that are reasonable and do not fundamentally alter the nature of the group program service offered, will be implemented.
- If the child's attendance cannot be accommodated because the accommodation needed are unreasonable or alter the nature of the service, the parents, guardians, or authorized representatives will be informed, without delay.

In addition, and accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, the YMCA is prohibited from discrimination based on race, color national origin, sex, age, or disability, for nutrition programs.

**CHILDREN WITH CELL PHONES:** Parents, guardians or authorized representatives should encourage their child to leave their cell phones at home. If children bring cell phones to the program, they will be asked to leave them in their bag or backpack. Children are not to use cell phones while attending YMCA programs. Cell phones can easily be stolen or misplaced. Parents, guardians, and authorized representatives are more than welcome to contact the child directly at the program site. The YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen electronics, cellular phones, or any personal items.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR PERSONAL BELONGINGS/LOST & FOUND:** The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal items that children, parents, guardians, or authorized representatives may bring to the YMCA program site, including on designated theme or share days. All personal items brought to the YMCA program site, by the child, parent, guardian, and authorized representative are brought to the YMCA program site at their own risk. Parents, guardians, and authorized representatives should check the child's backpack and cubby at the end of each day. Found items will be stored at the YMCA for up to two (2) weeks. When possible, the items found will be returned to the owner, if the item is claimed. Found items that are not claimed within two (2) weeks will be donated and given away.

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY ON CHILD GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE**

**CHILDREN'S APPROPRIATE CONDUCT:** It is the goal of the YMCA camp to create a safe and nurturing environment in which children can learn, grow, and thrive. To achieve this goal, the YMCA of the foothills has instituted the following Positive Discipline Procedures that outline the YMCAs childcare philosophy, expectations, and processes for dealing with discipline issues.

Positive Discipline is designed to teach children how to become responsible, respectful, and resourceful members of their communities. It also teaches important social and life skills, such as concern for others, problem solving and cooperation.

Further, Positive Discipline focuses on the positive points of behavior, based on the idea that there are no bad children, good and bad behaviors. At the YMCA, good behavior is acknowledged and reinforced, with a focus on solutions, rather than punishment. The YMCA believes children in YMCA programs can exercise self-discipline if they know the YMCA program's expectations in advance, including the basic rules of safety and good conduct.

The YMCA expects all participants to follow these basic principles:

- Treat others in the way that they want to be treated (the platinum rule).
- Learn to follow directions and program expectations.
- Demonstrate respectful and responsible behavior.
- Be polite and kind.
- Safety first.
- Speak for yourself and listen attentively.
- Follow the YMCA Four Core Values: Caring, Respect, Honesty, and Responsibility.

**Philosophy:** The YMCA strives to maintain a positive approach to always managing children’s behavior. “Discipline” is the process of teaching self-control and the ability to live within limitations and agreed upon guidelines. The YMCA staff

members and children at each program establish expected behavior guidelines. Positive behavior is self-rewarding and allows for program activities to occur. When children choose to behave outside of the guidelines, some consequence is required to avoid future problems. The overall safety of all children in the program is the YMCA’s highest priority.

**Process:**

1. To encourage good behavior, we review our rules and expectations with the children in our programs periodically. However, sometimes children choose to behave outside of these established guidelines. In such cases, consequences will be instituted to avoid future problems.
2. If a child engages in behavior that negatively impacts the safety or health of anyone in the program or themselves, the YMCA will determine what course of action needs to take place.
3. When the child exhibits inappropriate behavior, the YMCA utilizes tools to ensure that there is communication between the YMCA and the child’s parent/guardian or authorized representative. These tools include Behavior Reports and Behavior Contracts. If a child is suspended from the program, a family conference between the parent/guardian or authorized representative of the child and the Camp Leadership Team, is required for the child to return to the program.
4. The YMCA embraces the spirit of “One Y.” Behavior Contracts and Behavior Reports are shared with YMCA staff members when the child transfers from the YMCA program to another YMCA program. The terms, limits and consequences imposed and listed in a YMCA Behavior Contract and/or Behavior Report remain in place, even when the child transfers to a different program location.
5. No credits, refunds or reimbursements of any kind will be issued for any type of early dismissal, suspension, expulsion or hours or days missed due to disciplinary issues.

**BEHAVIOR RELATED ISSUES:** In addition to behavior management procedures outlined above, parents, guardians or authorized representatives must be aware that:

- No YMCA staff member may ever strike, swear at, abuse, or threaten with physical intimidation either a child or a parent, guardian, or authorized representative.
- No YMCA staff member will allow a child to be stricken, sworn at, abused, or physically intimidated by anyone else in the program.
- No child will be allowed to continue in the program that becomes a safety hazard to themselves or others.
- No YMCA staff member will ever solicit or accept gratuities in consideration for any treatment of a child.
- No parent, guardian or authorized representative will be allowed to harass, threaten, or display violent/intimidating behavior towards YMCA staff members, children, or other members.

**BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT:** The safety of a child is the highest priority for setting behavior management procedures. When a child has a serious discipline problem, (on any ONE occasion), the parent, guardian or authorized representative may be called by a YMCA staff member to request that the child be picked up within one hour of the call. Examples of serious discipline may include but not limited to:

- Hitting another child
- Threatening or intimidating others
- Injuring another child or YMCA staff member
- Leaving the program site and/or refusing to remain with their group.
- Use of foul language or being repeatedly disrespectful towards a YMCA staff member
- Defacing YMCA or school property
- Stealing
- Behaviors or actions that cause themselves or other to violate state, county, and local health orders.

Should it be decided by the YMCA Camp Leadership Team that a child poses a serious discipline problem, the child may be suspended from the program. If a child is suspended or removed from the YMCA program, the YMCA will not issue any refunds or credits for any program fees paid.

YMCA programs on school campuses adhere to all school rules.

**BULLYING POLICY:** Bullying is when one or more people exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick, or put down another person with the intent to hurt another. Bullying happens when a person or a group of people wants to have power over another and use their power to get their way. Bullying can also happen in cyberspace using emails, social media, text messages and the like. At the YMCA, there are firm policies against ANY type of bullying. Any type of bullying is grounds to suspend a student from attending. Every person has the right to have the best possible experience, and by working together as a team to identify and manage bullying, the YMCA can help ensure that all children have a great time in the program. Parents, guardians, or authorized representatives should report any instances of alleged bullying to the YMCA Director of the program or a member of the program leadership team.

**ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY:** YMCA has a zero-tolerance policy for serious behavior infractions. Since the goal of the YMCA is to provide a healthy, safe and fun environment, inappropriate behaviors have no place. **The behaviors listed below are grounds for immediate removal from YMCA programs for the remainder of the current day, and additional days as deemed necessary by YMCA the YMCA staff members.** Each incident will be considered case-by-case to determine if the child can function in a group setting while at the YMCA.

- Any behavior that endangers the health and safety of children or YMCA staff members, including behaviors that violates state, county, and local public health orders.
- Leaving the program site without permission or refusing to remain with assigned group.
- Inappropriate touching of other children or sexual misconduct
- Theft, defacing, or destruction of property belonging to the YMCA or others.
- Verbal abuse or threats, bullying, or name-calling.
- Any kind of physical assault such as hitting, kicking, or biting

**Children found with weapons or dangerous objects are immediately terminated from the YMCA program.**

Do not bring any pets, drugs, alcohol, knives, weapons, cigarettes, e-cigs or any dangerous substances to camp.

## **HEALTH, SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

**YMCA CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION:** The YMCA maintains a policy of Child Abuse Prevention practices, which include procedures related to:

- Employee reference checking, hiring criteria, and fingerprinting.
- Training and supervision requirements for YMCA staff members
- YMCA Staff members relationships with children
- Unscheduled program site visitation by YMCA supervisory staff members and Board of Manager volunteers.

YMCA staff members are not allowed to baby-sit, tutor, socialize, or transport children at any time outside of the YMCA program. These policies are enacted to protect parents, guardians, authorized representatives, children, and YMCA staff members from actual occurrences of child abuse and allegations of abuse. For more information contact the YMCA Director of the program.

In the event the YMCA discovers an alleged abuse of a child, the California Child Abuse Reporting Law Penal Code Sections 11165-11174.3., requires, by law, that if a child care service personnel (those responsible for the custodial care of a child) has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused, he/she must report that alleged abuse to the Child Abuse Hotline of the Department of Child and Family Services, immediately.

**HEALTH RELATED SERVICES:** The well-being and safety of children is the number one priority of the YMCA. Prior to enrolling, parents, guardians, or authorized representatives must notify the YMCA if their child requires Health-Related Incidental Medical Services. The YMCA requires additional documentation to be provided by the parent, guardian or authorized representative, the child's physician.

Any medication which needs to be administered during programming hours must:

- Be accompanied by the approved medical forms.
- Be brought directly to the YMCA Camp Leadership in its original container with the child's name, physician's name, and drug name clearly labeled on the container; and
- Have specific written instructions for dosage amounts, times, etc.

YMCA staff members are not permitted to administer any over-the-counter medication, such as aspirin and cough medicine without having written instruction and dosage given by the child's physician. All medication including inhalers, cough drops, ointments, etc. must be kept locked in a cabinet or in the possession of a YMCA staff member assigned to the child's counselor. YMCA staff members cannot split pills. YMCA staff members cannot administer medication dosages other than what is specified on the prescription bottle label unless it is in writing by the child's physician and approved by the YMCA Risk Management department.

All paperwork related to Health-Related Services must be submitted and approved prior to the child's first day. Please consider that some forms must be completed and signed by a physician. Parents, guardians, or authorized representatives should email the YMCA at [dpile@ymcafoothills.org](mailto:dpile@ymcafoothills.org) to request forms or additional information related to Health-Related Services that may be needed for their child.

**GENERAL ALLERGIES:** Parents, guardians, or authorized representatives must inform the YMCA Director of the program about any allergy their child may have and list the allergy information in the child's enrollment packet so that the YMCA staff members can take the right precautions to protect the child's health. If a child has severe allergies or those that require medical response, additional forms may be required from the parent, guardian, or authorized representative prior to the child's first day of program. YMCA staff members are not formally trained in how to use an EpiPen.

It is the parent, guardian, or authorized representative's responsibility to teach and train YMCA staff members on how to utilize the child's EpiPen, if it needs to be used.

**ILLNESS DURING PROGRAM HOURS:** If a child becomes ill while in program, she/he will be isolated from the other children and the parent, guardian or authorized representative will be contacted to pick-up their child immediately. It is imperative that parents, guardians, or authorized representatives have an emergency pick-up plan for when their child is ill at the program. YMCA staff members will make every effort to screen children at sign-in, ensuring that children who appear ill or whose parents, guardians or authorized representatives disclose recent illness, are not permitted to enter the program until they are well, and it is safe enough for them to return. The YMCA is not equipped to handle ill children beyond securing their immediate comfort. If a parent, guardian, or authorized representative is contacted, the parent, guardian or authorized representative will need to make quick arrangements to pick up their child within one hour or less. Parents, guardians, or authorized representatives must ensure that the YMCA program always has their most up-to-date contact information and emergency numbers. If a parent, guardian, or authorized representative cannot be reached, YMCA staff members will contact contacts on the child's authorized pick-up list. The YMCA utilizes the Department of Health and Human Services communicable disease chart as a guide.

Parents, guardians, and authorized representatives will be notified in writing when a communicable disease has been introduced into the program. Parents, guardians, or authorized representatives should notify a YMCA staff member immediately if their child contracts a communicable disease.

The parent, guardian, or authorized representative is responsible for ensuring the YMCA has updated contact information. By participating in this program, the parent, guardian, or authorized representative agrees to be **READILY AVAILABLE** to pick-up their child from the program, within one-hour or less, if the program informs them that their child is sick or ill. Parents, guardians, and authorized representatives must ensure that all necessary arrangements are made to ensure that someone is able to pick up the child immediately, upon notification that the child is sick. Failure to do so may result in the child and family's immediate dismissal from the program.

**CHILD ILLNESS:** For the sake of the health and well-being of all YMCA staff members and children in the YMCA program, if a child has a temperature of one full degree over normal, is vomiting, shows other signs of illness (rash, diarrhea, sore throat, etc.) they may not attend the YMCA program. Parents, guardians, or authorized representatives must notify the YMCA Director of the program of the absence AND the nature of the absence on the day of the illness.

- **Fever:** If a child has a fever, he/she cannot attend care. If a child develops a fever at the YMCA, the parent, guardian, or authorized representative will be called to pick up their child immediately.
- **Communicable Diseases (i.e., chicken pox, measles):** The parent, guardian or authorized representative is asked to inform the YMCA if their child contracts a communicable disease. The YMCA is required by the DPH to inform other parents, guardians, or authorized representatives. The child will not be named in the communication. The child may come back when cleared by a doctor. For chicken pox, all the spots must be dry. The YMCA reserves the right to request a doctor's release to participate in a communicable disease.

**LICE:** The YMCA has a No Live Lice Policy as a health standard intended to keep children's lice free and able to attend the YMCA program. Lice are one of the most common communicable occurrences in childhood. Parents, guardians, or authorized representatives can help prevent the spread of lice by conducting routine screening, early detection, and removal of lice and nits. Should a child contract lice or nits, the parent, guardian, or authorized representative should inform the YMCA Director of the program. Once the child has been treated, they will be allowed to return to the program. YMCA staff members may continue to monitor (conduct daily checks) and if live lice or eggs are found again, then the treatment will need to be repeated. Should there be an outbreak of lice, parents, guardians, or authorized representatives will be notified in writing. The program will be properly treated. The YMCA's priority is the safety and well-being of all children in the program.

**INJURIES DURING PROGRAM HOURS:** If a child is injured during program hours, the YMCA staff member in charge will take whatever steps may be necessary to obtain emergency medical care as warranted. These steps may include but are not limited to:

- Provide immediate first aid.
- Attempt to contact a parent, guardian, or authorized representative.
- Call 911 for medical treatment.

## **CONCLUSION**

At YMCA of the Foothills, we are **deeply committed** to maintaining a **safe, respectful, and abuse-free** environment for all participants. By implementing these safety guidelines, supervision strategies, and reporting procedures, we strive to **protect and empower every participant** who joins our programs.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the YMCA at **818-790-0123** or visit our website at [www.ymcafoothills.org/camp](http://www.ymcafoothills.org/camp).

This handbook is meant to be a guide to inform parents about some of the most important and frequently asked questions. Not all policies are included in this handbook. YMCA staff reserves the right to enforce and change policies as needed.