



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# ACHIEVEMENT RELATIONSHIPS BELONGING

## Camp Parent Guide 2024 YMCA OF THE FOOTHILLS



### YMCA of the Foothills

**East Site:** La Canada Elementary

**West Site:** Girls Scouts House

**Specialty Camp:** Verdugo Hills YMCA

**Camp VHY:** Verdugo Hills YMCA

**Kinder Camp:** La Canada Elementary

**Preschool Camp:** Verdugo Hills YMCA

**Phone:** 818 790 0123

**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!

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

### General Questions

YMCA Office

818 790 0123

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

### Payments/Registration Debbie Pile

818 273 8849

[dpile@ymcafoothills.org](mailto:dpile@ymcafoothills.org)

### Branch Director

Annie Azizian

[aazizian@ymcafoothills.org](mailto:aazizian@ymcafoothills.org)

### Camp Phones Numbers

#### East Site

818 426 0564

#### West Site

818 426 0556

#### VHY & Specialty Camp

818 357 1032

#### Preschool Camp

818 273 8830

#### Kinder Camp

818 974 6649

Dear YMCA family,

**From Cradle to Community Well-Being**, it is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the YMCA of the Foothills!

Thank you for making an investment in your child's development. YMCA day camp programs can make a real difference in the life of your child. Our programs focus on the development of the whole child through character building activities, developmental assets and your child's learning experience outside of school. Your child will learn social skills, engage in academic and educational enrichment, participate in physical activity, connect with positive adults and strengthen positive lifelong habits.

Studies show that children who participate in YMCA programs:

- Are more cooperative with adults;
- Are more likely to resolve conflicts by talking instead of hitting or fighting;
- Improve their academic performance;
- Become caring, responsible adults.

The YMCA is committed to providing a family-friendly environment. With so many demands on today's families, you need all the support they can get. That is why before & after school, expanded learning and day camp programs at the YMCA are about more than "looking after kids"; It's about nurturing their development by providing a safe place to learn foundational skills, develop healthy, trusting relationships and build self-reliance. This is all accomplished through our values of **caring, honesty, respect** and **responsibility**. At the YMCA, we believe the values and skills learned early on are vital building blocks for quality of life and future success. That's why our youth development programs are staffed with people who understand the cognitive, physical and social development of kids, the need children have to feel connected and supported in trying new things and the caring and reinforcement parents and families need to help each other. Most importantly, children learn how to be their best selves. That makes for confident kids today, and contributing and engaged adults tomorrow.

The YMCA recognizes that out of school time provides the best opportunity to impact youth, through both programs and services. It is our vision to create youth development programs that support youth and their families and that eliminates barriers and inequities. Out of school time programs are vital to nurturing the ongoing success of youth; they provide youth with additional opportunities to learn important life skills and to reach developmental milestones. Each day we strive to lead with empathy, compassion and a kindred-spirit. This is what makes the Y so special – the Y offers all of us an opportunity to impact the well-being of our communities and neighbors in the most profound of ways.

The YMCA is a non-profit 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 School-Age programs. It explains everything from operations, policies and procedures to safety, activities and communication. If you have a question that is not covered in this handbook, please contact us at 818-790-0123 or [dpile@ymcaymcafoothills.org](mailto:dpile@ymcaymcafoothills.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,

Adam Franko  
Vice President, Operations  
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 principals 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 has the opportunity to 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.

At the Y, we believe we have something special—a sense of community—and that everyone should have access to it, along with the programs and services that help us learn, grow and thrive. With the help of our generous donors, we are proud to share the Y with children, seniors and families who otherwise might not have become part of our Y family. So, when you give to the Y, you make the Foothills Stronger. As the number one investment to change lives in the Foothills through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility, we will use our donors support to nurture children and teens, improve community health and well-being, and support those in need, right in your own neighborhood.

The Y nurtures the potential of every child and teen by supporting their unique youth development journey through holistic programming. From cradle to career, the Y provides all youth with the tools and resources they need to succeed in life. With so many demands on today's families and the increased focus on early brain development, families need all the support they can get to nurture their child's potential. Our YMCA before & after school, expanded learning and day camp programs focus on holistically nurturing child development by providing a safe and healthy place for children to learn foundational skills, develop healthy, trusting relationships, and build self-reliance through the Y values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. YMCA Youth Development programs share one thing: they are about discovery. Children have the opportunity to explore **nature, find their talents, try new activities, gain independence and make lasting friendships and memories. And, of course, they have a lot of fun too!**

### **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-based curriculum.
- We believe in focusing on your child's abilities rather than their shortcomings.
- We believe that when youth are exposed to consistent displays of positive character traits, they will develop a 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 holistic 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.

### **PROGRAM GOALS**

- o **BELONGING:** We provide a safe and inclusive environment, so that every youth feels welcome and finds a place to belong.
- o **ACHIEVEMENT:** We provide thoughtful program activities to help youth gain new knowledge, skills and abilities; build confidence; and discover who they are. We do this through three areas: Academics, Enrichment & Recreation.
- o **RELATIONSHIPS:** We facilitate relationships with and among youth, creating a space for them to make new friends and develop strong relationships with staff.
  
- o Gain confidence in individual abilities
- o Learn how to work together as a team (while maintaining physical distancing)
- o Develop leadership skills
- o Learn independence and self-reliance away from home
- o Acquire an appreciation for nature
- o Have a chance to understand one's self and one's values a little better

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 Internal Revenue Service code.**

# WELCOME TO THE YMCA OF THE FOOTHILLS



## WHERE KIDS GO TO

### **Adventure**

We're here to inspire kids to play together, build friendships and memories that will create a lifetime of laughable moments.

### **Explore**

We're here so that every kid can experience something brand new. Showing them that if they believe in themselves, anything is possible

### **Discover**

We're here to make you kid feel welcomed, feel comfortable being themselves and know they're a part of something great!

### **Be Challenged**

We're here to help your camper reach their full potential as they are challenged through an energetic and high paced program.

## WHAT MAKES THE Y CAMPS SPECIAL?

1. Y Camp activities create a foundation for building emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills in your camper
2. Y Camps are led by caring and trained youth developers who are dedicated to bringing out what is special and unique about your camper
3. At Y Camp you feel the welcoming and inclusive environment of Y camp in everything that we do
4. At Y Camp, integrating activity with nature is a priority that allows your camper to experience how great it feels to disconnect from electronics and connect with the great outdoors
5. At Y Camp, your camper will gain independence, confidence, and develop a sense of responsibility for themselves

# CAMP COMMUNICATION

Our first and preferable method for communicating is face to face. When we see parents at 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 29<sup>th</sup> @ 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
- **Remind app for East & West Site:** Code will be provided





# PAYMENT POLICIES

You may reserve a space in any Y Camp for your child with a **Nonrefundable** deposit.



## CAMP CREDIT GUIDELINES

We understand that a situation may arise that requires you to change your summer plans. Here are our credit guidelines:

- The Thursday before the week of camp:  
You may request a credit up to 100% of the fee
- Before the first day of the camp session:  
You may request a credit up to 50% of the fee
- After the first day of camp:  
We are unable to accept any requests for credits
- Y-credits may be used by any member of your family for any YMCA of the Foothills program. All requests must be submitted in writing
- **No refunds will be issued, only Y credit**

## BILLING

The balance for each camp is due two weeks before the session begins. If your payment balance is not received by FRIDAY, the deposit will be forfeited, and the camper's registration will be cancelled. This allows us proper time to prepare ratios and create our family groups for the week. All registrations received less than one week before camp starts must pay in full at the time of registration.

We require your camp fees be ***automatically*** drafted from your checking account, MasterCard, Visa, Discover, or American Express credit cards.

Any day of registration will be charged an additional \$25.

**\*\* If you do not pay by the payment due date your child will be dropped from camp session. This helps us prepare proper camper to staff ratios.**

## PRORATING CAMPS

We believe that a true camp experience is a weeklong experience. Additionally, we pay our service partners, purchase supplies, materials, and schedule staff in advance of each session. For this reason, we are not able to prorate camps.

# CAMP FOR ALL

At the Y, we want to ensure that all youth are able to participate in camp regardless of their financial situation. We offer program assistance by appointment only.

## **Assistance Program Facts/Standards**

- The Y uses program assistance as a tool to support families in need who are drawn to its mission
- The Y provides program assistance on a need basis
- Any parent applying for assistance must attend a brief meeting
- The Y determines need through a process that is equitable for all applicants.
- Any family may apply
- One application per family (not per student)
- Assistance program forms must be completed and submitted each summer
- The Y offers up to 25% of financial assistance.
- For inquiries on Financial Assistance, contact Annie Azizian at [aazizian@ymcafoothills.org](mailto:aazizian@ymcafoothills.org)

# 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 due to fun! We will communicate these changes through emailed summer camp bulletins.

## Session Dates

Session 1: June 10 - June 14

Session 2: June 17 - June 21 (No Camp June 19<sup>th</sup>)

Session 3: June 24 - June 28

Session 4: July 1 - July 5 (No Camp July 4<sup>th</sup>) \***East Site Only**

Session 5: July 8 - July 12

Session 6: July 15 - July 19

Session 7: July 22 - July 26

Session 8: July 29 - Aug 2

Session 9: Aug 5 - Aug 9

Session B: Aug 12-16 (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.

## DAY CAMP STAFF

Because of their energy and enthusiasm, many times our camp staff are labeled as “youthful”. All our camp staff have graduated high school or are at least 18 years of age, many are either college graduates and/or students working on undergraduate or graduate degrees in child development, education, or recreation fields. All staff are CPR, FirstAid, and AED certified.

Our staff undergoes a thorough interview process and background check. All camp staff attend 24-hour mandatory training before the start of camp.

## LEADERS IN TRAINING (LIT)

Our Leaders in Training (LIT) program is designed to give our past campers a place where they can grow. Transitioning from camper to LIT will provide them with the opportunity to work as a team, gain confidence, and learn key communication skills to develop into leaders.

## GRATUITIES

Although our staff works long, challenging hours, it is our policy that employees are not to accept gratuities. If you wish, we suggest a donation to help ensure that all children get a chance to attend camp.

## BABYSITTING

Although Y-camp staff work well with children, our policy is that staff get supervisor approval to babysit for families involved in our Y programs.



# BEHAVIOR POLICY

All our camp staff are trained and expected to resolve behavior problems in a positive manner. Staff are trained to speak with the camper, allow him/her to take time to reflect about the problem, discuss the problem/solution and then let the camper return to the activity.

In more severe cases, the camper will be kept out of an activity and the parent may be asked to pick up their camper. If a parent is called, we expect the camper to be picked up within 30 minutes of the phone call. Together, parents and Y staff will work out a custom-designed behavior modification plan.



In the event the problems persist, the camper may be suspended or expelled from camp. Some acts (i.e., fighting, intentionally harming others, theft, possession of weapons, drugs, etc.) may result in immediate suspension or expulsion. We cannot grant credits for missed program days due to behavior problems.

# GENERAL CAMP INFORMATION

## CLOTHING

Campers are required to wear close-toe and heeled shoes. We strongly recommend that

campers dress in “play clothes” or clothes that you won’t mind if they get dirty. Belongings are the responsibility of the child, not the staff. A backpack is helpful in keeping your child’s belongings in a safe place. Please clearly mark all your camper’s belongings with his/ her name, *ESPECIALLY THE CAMP SHIRT*. We encourage all campers to leave expensive items at home (including new clothes, handheld games, toys, cards, etc.)

## SUNSCREEN

Please apply sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) to your child daily BEFORE bringing him/her to camp. We ask that each camper brings additional sunscreen to camp. On designated swimdays, provide your child with a swimsuit, towel, hat, and a long-sleeved shirt for sun protection. All campers must have some form of sunscreen to apply multiple times per day.

## CAMP T-SHIRT

Additional YMCA camp t-shirts will be available for purchase (\$10 each). **Camp shirts are required to be worn on all field trip days.** A camper cannot go on a trip without a camp shirt. Please mark your camper’s shirt with his/her name.

## LUNCH & SNACKS

All campers **must** bring their own sack lunch and beverage daily (except when noted in the camp schedule). Please send nonperishable 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.

## SWIMMING

Swim time activities will be based on age on designated swim days.

Please note your camper’s swim time on the camp schedule. All campers must pass a swim test to swim in the deep end of the pool. 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.

## Personal Property

The Y is not responsible for camper possessions or money that are lost or stolen. The best way to prevent the loss of property is to leave valuables at home. Please keep new jackets, expensive clothing, handheld video games, personal stereos/radios/IPODS/ IPADS, expensive watches, cell phones, money, toys, card games, expensive water bottles and other items at home. **Do not bring any pets, drugs, alcohol, knives, weapons, cigarettes, E-cigs, or any dangerous substances to camp.** Additionally, the YMCA is not responsible for any damage done to vehicles. We strongly encourage parents to label all clothing and possessions. Every Friday afternoon, we will display all the lost and found articles so you can claim them. All unclaimed items will be held for a week and then donated to a local charity.

## Cell Phones

We encourage campers to keep their cell phones at home. However, if your camper has a cell phone the YMCA will not be responsible for lost, damaged or stolen phones. Additionally, counselors cannot monitor the amount of cell phone usage by your camper.

## Field Trips

- Please check the weekly camp bulletin for the most up to date field trip information.
- All Campers must wear their camp shirt. An Additional shirt can be purchased for \$10.
- Unfortunately, buses will not wait for late campers on trip days.
- To ensure we leave on time and can enjoy the trip as long as possible, please be on time.
- Return times may vary. If possible updates will be sent to parents.
- All field trips are **cashless** (unless otherwise noted). Please send your camper with an **activated** Visa/Mastercard reusable gift card. Counselors are not responsible for funds spent by your camper.



# DROP OFF / PICK UP INFORMATION

## CAMP FORMS

Camp Doc Health forms will be emailed to parents after registration. All forms must be completed before camper's first day.

## SIGNING IN & OUT PROCEDURES

All campers must be signed (with a full signature) into camp and out of camp daily. No one under the age of 18 years old may sign in or out a camper, even with permission from the parent.

## AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP A CAMPER

Only adults authorized in writing by you, the parent/guardian, will be allowed to pick up your camper. All adults picking up are required to identify themselves with a photo ID. PLEASE inform camp staff if someone else is picking up your child who is not listed on your authorization and health form, please notify us in writing, as this will help eliminate delays. **If a camper's natural parent is listed as unauthorized to pick up, we must have a court order on file.**

**Campers who are not picked up by 6pm will be charged \$1 per minute, per child. After 6:15 you will be charged \$5 per minute, per child.**

**If we have not been contacted by you by 6:30, and we have not been able to get ahold of your listed emergency contacts, we will contact the local police station for further instructions. Continued late pickup will result in camp termination.**

**If a site leader calls you to pick up your camper for any reason (i.e., sick, injured, behavior), they need to be picked up immediately. Failure to pick up your camper will result in cancellation of future weeks.**

# Health and Wellness

## SICK POLICY

If your child is experiencing any flu or cold symptoms, please keep your child home. Parents will be called to pick up if your child appears to be sick. Campers need to be picked up within 30 minutes of being notified.

## COVID-19

The YMCA of the Foothills follows Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Requirements.

## LICE

If a counselor discovers lice, including nits, in a camper's hair, the camper will be sent home. The camper cannot return until treatment is given and is lice and nit free.

## MEDICATIONS

If a camper needs to take medication while they are in our care, please do the following:

- Please give the medication directly to the counselor at check in
- Prescribed medication must be in the original container with the label attached.
- Complete a medicine slip with directions for administering the medication, including the dosage and time(s) to be given. Please sign the slip.
- Over the counter medication, such as Tylenol, Advil, etc, must be checked in with a counselor and have instructions from the parent.
- Any medication not checked in will be confiscated and given back to the parent.

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.