



2022 PARENT GUIDE TO DAY CAMP

YMCA Camp Clay

YMCA of Van Wert County

WELCOME

Thank you for enrolling your child in the Day Camp Program with the YMCA of Van Wert County. Here at YMCA Camp Clay, we truly believe there is no substitute for the camping experience and for the meaningful friendships that we build. We recognize how important it is to provide a fun and educational summer opportunity for your child. In order to be successful, we need your help and cooperation with the guidelines on the following pages. This packet contains important information for both you and your camper to prepare for camp.

This packet is intended to guide you through the camping experience from a first timer's point of view. Please feel free to contact us at any time if you have a question that is not answered in the following pages. Information Thank you for choosing to share your child with us this summer!

In the Spirit of Camping,

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IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. Balance due date – **ALL BALANCES MUST BE PAID AT THE TIME OF RESERVATION.**
2. Health forms: All health forms are **DUE 1 WEEK PRIOR** to camp start dates.
3. Medication bottle instructions- Medications must be in **ORIGINAL** prescription bottles, clearly labeled. Please see page four for more detailed instructions.

REQUIRED FORMS

Please take the time to fill out the required forms carefully and return them to the Y at least 1 week prior to your child's camp session. These can be found in this packet. These forms are to ensure that your child has a safe and fun week at camp. We encourage you to make a photocopy of each form for your own records and to bring these extra forms with you guaranteeing that your check-in runs as smoothly as possible. Campers cannot be admitted without completed paperwork. If your child is attending more than one session of camp, you need to only fill out one set of forms.



- Confidentiality, Health and Release Form - Campers will not be accepted at camp without a fully completed and signed health form. This form provides important medical information.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the camper's parent/guardian to provide for the camper's own accident and health coverage while participating in activities with YMCA Camp Clay. This information will help our staff provide better programs and supervision for your child. All information is **CONFIDENTIAL**. Please be as specific as possible. You know your child best and your answers will help us provide the best possible experience. The release form is used to authorize specific individuals **INCLUDING PARENT/GUARDIANS** to pick-up your child from camp.

- Allergy and Medication Log: This form provides important medical information.
- Liability Release Form: This must be filled out for all campers.

INFORMATION REGARDING EVERYDAY AT CAMP

Camp Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- **The camp entrance is off Liberty Union Rd.** Take the drive back past the clay center to the gated entrance at the far end of the parking lot.
- Our camp program begins at 8:00am.
- Whether it is a first time camper or a veteran camper, arrival at camp can be a time of apprehension, excitement, and wonder. The best thing you can do for your child is get him/her checked in, kiss the child good-bye, and let the counselor take it from there.
- The Day Camp program ends at 4:00pm. You must sign out with your camper's counselor by presenting a photo ID. Campers will be released only to adults on the authorized Parent Release Form.

Early Pick Up and Departure

- Due to the nature of Day Camp programming, please understand that early departures can be challenging. We will accommodate all written and verbal requests for early departure.
- Due to supervision guidelines, we are unable to offer temporary care for early departures away from the group.

Counselors

- Campers will be assigned a counselor for the week. Groups are co-ed. These groups will be their 'friends group' for the entire week.

Meals and Snacks

- Camp does not provide meal service. The parent/guardian will be responsible to send their camper with a lunch daily.
- Day Campers can bring a snack to camp with them. Camp Clay tries to provide an afternoon snack each day. Most Camp provided snacks are donations from local businesses. If your camper has an allergy it is best to bring a snack.

WHAT TO PACK

- It is recommended that each camper bring a backpack to carry items with them daily.
- Please remember that packing TOO much will become a strain on your camper as they carry their bag with them most of the day.
- It is important to include your camper in packing their own bag each morning to help them better identify all of their personal belongings.
- Please label all items sent to camp with your child's first and last name.

What To Bring Daily:

- Swim suit (1piece suggested)
- Towel
- Water Bottle
- Hat
- Raingear (if needed)
- Lunch w/ afternoon snack
- Sunscreen/Bug spray

Please DO NOT Bring:

- * MP3 Players/IPODs
- * Portable video games
- * Pocket Knife
- * Anything of Value
- * Personal sports equipment
- * Trading cards (Pokémon, etc.)
- * Cell Phones

YMCA Camp Clay is proud to be a **Tech-Free Zone. Please help us make sure that your camper does not have any electronic equipment, electronic games, or personal music players in their possession.

Cell Phones

Please express your trust in our camp staff and in your own child by insisting that cell phones stay at home.

Camp Clay has a "no-cell phone" policy. Not only are cell phones expensive to replace when they are lost or damaged at camp, but cell phones also interfere with your camper becoming more independent. We understand that parents take a leap of faith when you send your children to spend time away from home. Unfortunately, when well-intentioned parents send a cell phone to camp 'just in case' the camper needs to call home, the message is, "We love you but don't trust that you are ready to solve challenges on your own." Having a cell phone also prevents our counselors and staff from addressing problems that might arise and using that experience to help your child grow.

We agree to tell you if your child is experiencing a challenge in their adjustment to camp. You can help by talking to your child before they leave for camp and telling them that there is always someone they can reach out to, whether it be their counselor, a camp specialist, or the Camp Director. Cell phones brought to camp will be kept in a locked office and returned to the parent at checkout.

First Day of Camp-Monday

Campers will arrive at the Day Camp on Monday. Staff will check to make sure that the required forms have been received.

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE

Camp keeps campers busy each day. Below is a sample schedule for each day.

8:00	Check in
8:30	Day Opening
9:00	Activity 1
10:00	Activity 2
11:00	Lunch/Clean up
11:30	Choice time
12:00	Activity 3
1:00	Activity 4
2:15	Free Swim (Aqua Park)
3:30	Change time
4:00	Pick up

Medications

- All medications, except asthma inhalers and epi-pens, are to be kept secured.
- "Medications" include over the counter items like Tylenol, Sudafed, and vitamins/supplements, etc.
- The Camp Director or Day Camp coordinator will administer prescribed medications according to the directions.
- Medication must be in the **original prescription bottle, according to State Law. Medications can only be administered according to the directions on the container.** Prescribed medication must be clearly marked with:
 1. Child's name
 2. Name of medication
 3. Directions for administration
 4. Name of physician
- Medications must be turned in directly to the DC coordinator or Camp Director on Monday morning at check in.



GENERAL CAMP POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

(See additional policies regarding Covid-19 on the final page)

Illness Policy

Please do not send your child to camp if they are ill and/or running a fever. Children must be symptom free for at least 24 hours prior to returning. If a child becomes ill during camp, a parent or emergency contact will be notified to pick up the child.

All items should be clearly marked with the camper's name to prevent loss.

Please do not bring anything of value as we cannot insure its safety. Children tend to borrow, loan, exchange, forget, and find clothes from others. We will try to get it all straight before they return home, but....

Lost and Found/ Personal Property

YMCA Camp Clay will not be responsible for clothing and personal property brought from home. While the staff will help your child, it is considered the responsibility of the camper to keep belongings together. A lost & found box is located at camp. Unclaimed lost & found property will be kept for one week and then donated to local charities.

YMCA Core Values

The YMCA's mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. YMCA Camp Clay's core values are Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. Our entire camp family is expected to promote themselves in such a way as to role model these values. We welcome and celebrate all religious affiliations and denominations.

Expectations

Campers are expected to behave in a safe, Caring, Honest, Respectful, Responsible and Inclusive manner at all times. This is implemented with great care and respect by all camp staff. Failure to abide by these rules and guidelines can result in dismissal from camp. No refunds are given if a child leaves early because of homesickness or for disruptive behavior as determined by the Camp Director.

At YMCA Camp Clay, we expect campers to:

- Follow camp rules
- Have a positive attitude
- Try new things!
- Be cooperative and helpful
- Maintain open communication
- Have fun!

Rainy Days

In the event of a rainy day, camp remains in operation. Regular camp activities will continue during light rain conditions. During more severe weather including lightning and thunder or extreme heat, we alter a typical day's schedule and plan indoor/alternate activities.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, we will make every attempt to notify parents. If necessary, emergency transportation will be handled by 911, and local emergency services.

Payment, Refunds and Cancellation Policies

CAMP FEES

Please take note that we are unable to pro-rate weekly camp fees. All camp fees MUST BE PAID at the time of registration.

CHANGES, CANCELLATIONS, AND REFUNDS

As indicated on the Summer Registration Form:

- No shows for a registered camp will result in the forfeiture of the full camp fee.
- Campers are expected to behave in a Caring, Honest, Respectful, Responsible and Inclusive manner at all times. Failure to abide by Camp's rules and guidelines can result in dismissal from camp. No refunds are given if a child leaves early because of homesickness or for disruptive behavior as determined by the Camp Director.

We understand that unforeseen circumstances arise that may not allow your child to attend camp. Please do not hesitate to contact us so we can discuss the best option for your child and family.

Please note that medical reasons allow you to receive a refund or to have your money paid transferred to another session. We must have written documentation from your medical doctor.

Homesickness and Behavior

Homesickness is usually a result of the discomfort of being in strange surroundings. The Camp Staff is trained to deal with homesickness by providing extra patience and attention and by keeping the camper active. Most campers quickly recover because they are having so much fun. You will be called if there is a serious problem. The general rule of "no news is good news" stand true at YMCA Camp Clay as we are working with the staff to give all of our campers an amazing experience.

If you are feeling apprehensive about sending your child off or your child is feeling nervous, there is a lot of great information on the internet and books to help both parents and campers have a successful camp experience. We know that it is as hard for the parents as it is for the campers to be away from each other, so we encourage you to look for information. A helpful resource we found is **The Summer Camp Handbook** and **The Secret Ingredients to Summer Camp Success** DVD/CD set by Dr. Chris Thurber, www.campspirit.com. Another great resource can be found on the American Camping Association website, www.acacamps.org under Parents and Families as well as **Home Sick and Happy** by Michael Thompson.

The following excerpts are taken from Dr. Chris Thurber's website, www.campspirit.com. Dr. Chris Thurber is a board-certified clinical psychologist, author, consultant, and father. A graduate of Harvard University, Chris co-authored the critically acclaimed "Summer Camp Handbook," the premier preparatory resource for new campers and families. He has more than 30 years of camping experience and had written numerous book chapters and scholarly articles on homesickness prevention and child development. (Please note that YMCA Camp Clay does not receive anything from Dr. Chris Thurber, we merely are giving parents a resource that we feel is helpful.)

What are the Top 5 things I can do to help prepare for Summer Camp?

1. Don't make a "pick up deal."

Promising, "If you feel homesick, I will come and get you" undermines children's confidence and dramatically intensifies homesickness. Instead, normalize their anxiety, talk positively about camp and view The Secret Ingredients of Summer Camp Success.

2. Double check the camp's packing list.

Many seasons of experience have helped your child's camp directors refine the packing list to include all the essentials. So, if it says, "stick bug repellent," don't buy spray. If it says "no electronics," then leave the video games at home.

3. Spend "practice time" away from home.

Nothing builds confidence and teaches a child how to cope with time away from home better than.... (you guessed it)...time away from home. That weekend at your folks' will do wonders for their adjustment.

4. Label everything.

It is easy to lose things at camp, but if you want it back, it's got to have your name on it. Label everything from your t-shirts to your water bottle. And leave really expensive things at home.

5. Double check the opening and closing dates and times.

Start camp off on a smooth note by arriving on time and on the right day. Use a wall calendar in the months prior to opening day to make an exciting countdown to the big day.

Why is my attitude as a parent key to my child's summer camp success?

The cornerstone of homesickness prevention is parents' attitudes. When parents express confidence, optimism, and a positive attitude about camp, children follow their lead. It's normal for children to ask, in the months prior to opening day, "What if I feel homesick at camp?" Sadly, many well-intentioned parents provide an answer that virtually guarantees intense homesickness. "If you feel homesick," they say, "I'll come and get you." This is what camp professionals regrettably refer to as "The Pick Up Deal."

The tragedy of "The Pick Up Deal," is how it undermines children's confidence in themselves and gives them something about which to be preoccupied. When you think about it, the subtext of the promise "If you feel homesick, I'll come and get you" is basically "I have so little confidence in your ability to cope with these feelings that I think the only solution is for me to come and rescue you." In **The Secret Ingredients of Summer Camp**, you will learn the best way to respond to children's questions and concerns about staying at camp. You'll also learn the best ways to reply to a homesick letter, the best homesickness preparation tips, and the best ways to provide support for your child. – End of Dr. Thurber excerpts.

Behavioral Expectations and Guidelines

The YMCA recognizes that positive discipline teaches and encourages the healthy development of a child's self-esteem. The YMCA does not allow the use of corporal or physical punishment. Instead, caregivers employ positive discipline techniques, which include praising, calling attention to appropriate behavior, and acting as positive role models to influence and reinforce positive behavior. Camp reinforces positive behavior through the use of behavioral contracts. The staff sets limits that are developmentally appropriate and consistently enforced.

Staff will encourage and assist all children in following the camp rules. All campers will be given an orientation on the first day of camp. All questions will be answered and the rules will be explained during this orientation.

What can I do to find out if bullying is occurring?

Bullying among peers is growing daily in the United States. At Camp, we train our staff on preventing, recognizing, and dealing with bullying. However, we need your help as the parent to ward off and correct bullying behavior and to get bullied children to speak up when they are bullied.

Dr. Joel Haber, PhD, www.RespectU.com, has 20+ years' experience in violence prevention and has worked with thousands of children and adults who are victims of bullying, bullies, or bystanders. Below are excerpts from his website and studies:

What is it? Bullying is any intentional, repeated hurtful act- including inflicting physical pain, name-calling, exclusion, defacing property, hurtful pranks and public humiliation. You can be part of the solution-through awareness, insight, and action.

Prevention is the best cure. Use dinner time as an opportunity to ask your children about school and the specifics of their experience every day. Remember, that your tone and listening skills is critical to whether or not your child will have these conversations with you in an honest way.

AFTER CAMP

- Our pledge is to put your children in the company of the most trustworthy and capable young adults we can hire. Counselors who are well suited to the task of caring for campers. The effort we put into screening and selecting our staff is part of that pledge. Our staff work with your children in the context of a visible, well scrutinized environment that has many built-in checks and balances. Counselors are supervised by senior staff and guided by clear, firm policies regarding behavior. Their actions are also visible to co-workers and campers.
- By hiring them we do not recommend them as babysitters, nannies, or child companions outside of camp. In general, we discourage our staff from having contact with your children after camp since we cannot supervise their actions outside of camp programs. We hire our staff for the camp season. We do not take responsibility for their behavior off season.
- As a parent you are, of course, free to make your own choice in this matter. While we cannot keep you from allowing your child to visit one of our staff members, in so doing you take full responsibility. We also know many children exchange contact information (e.g. email address, profile name, cell phone numbers) with counselors without our or your specific awareness or permission. We recommend that you as the parent supervise your child's online activities just as you do other aspects of their life in your home, and oversee any off-season contact between staff members and your child. You take full responsibility to oversee any contact that results.

YMCA SUMMER CAMP 2022 REGISTRATION FORM

Weekly Camp Fees: \$90 Members \$130 Non-members

Color Wars Career Week Animal Planet Build It Week Disney Camp
 Wacky Science Adventure Camp 3,2,1, Blast off Dinosaurs Week Splash week
(check all that apply)

Participant Information

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____ **Age:** _____ (**Male**) or (**Female**)

Mailing Address: _____

Grade as of 2021: _____ **Shirt Size:** () YS () YM () YL () AS () AM () AL

Contact Information

Mother's Name: _____ **Employer:** _____

Primary Phone #: _____ **Cell/Work:** _____

Father's Name: _____ **Employer:** _____

Primary Phone #: _____ **Cell/Work :** _____

Custody Schedule (if applicable) If there is a court order restricting visitation/pickup, a copy must be provided , by state law, to the YMCA Office.

Child's Doctor: _____ **Phone #:** _____

Address: _____

Insurance Co./HMO _____

Subscriber's Name: _____ **Group #:** _____

Insurance ID #: _____

Child's Allergies (list all): _____

Special Medications Needed (list all needed while under Y care)

EMERGENCY CONTACTS: please list Persons authorized to pick up child and/or contact in case of illness
If parents cannot be reached.

1. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

2. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Please List Any Persons **PROHIBITED BY LAW** from picking up your child:

1. Name: _____ Relationship _____

2. Name: _____ Relationship: _____

I give my permission to the YMCA of Van Wert County to participate in all camp activities to include but not limited to Y transportation, climbing wall, aqua park and use my child's photo in news articles, publications, flyers, and school/program web sites.

Parent's Signature _____

Child's Name (please print) _____ **Parent's Name** (please print): _____

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____ Age: _____ () Male or () Female

Please tell us a little bit about your camper(s):

Child lives with: Both Parents Mother Father Other _____

Has your camper(s) experienced any recent life changes that may effect their time at camp _____

Please Circle the words that best describe your camper:

Shy Friendly Quiet Outgoing Leader Follower Active

Does your camper make friends: Easily Fairly Easily With Difficulty

Does your camper express feelings: Easily Fairly Easily With Difficulty

Does your camper have any accommodation needs?: _____

Child is looking forward to camp with: Enthusiasm Caution Anxiety/Fear

What serious fears does your camper have?: _____

What do you consider your camper's strengths and weaknesses?: _____

What can our staff do to better help your child if they become upset?: _____

What is the best way to help your child incorporate into their group?: _____

What other information might help our staff better understand your child?: _____

