



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WHITLEY COUNTY FAMILY YMCA SUMMER DAY CAMP HANDBOOK 2025



Whitley County Family YMCA
950 East Van Buren St. Columbia City, IN 46725
Phone: 260-244-9622 Fax:260-625-5083

Website: www.fwymca.org

WELCOME

Welcome to Y Day Camp! This Parent Handbook contains valuable information about policies and procedures for camp. Please read it carefully, then sign and return the Handbook Acknowledgement to the camp staff.

ABOUT THE Y

YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne:

The Y is the nation's leading nonprofit committed to strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

The Whitley County Branch is one of eight branches, in the YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne area. The YMCA is a non-for-profit agency supported by our membership, program participants, and donor contributions.

The Y associates people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, and religious affiliation into a worldwide fellowship based on Judeo-Christian principles. We strive to be the leading provider of affordable activities that promote healthy spirits, minds, and bodies for individuals and families in the Greater Fort Wayne area.

The Y is governed by a Board of Managers that is made up of concerned and interested local community leaders and YMCA members. Through regular meetings, the Board monitors ongoing operations, ascertains community needs, ensures the proper functioning of the organization, and provides leadership to the long range planning process for all YMCA's in the Greater Fort Wayne Association. The Board employs a CEO who, with other staff and volunteers, supervises the ongoing Branch Operations of the Y programs and services.

American Camp Association

Our Day Camp programs have obtained accreditation by the American Camp Association. Developed exclusively for camp programs, this nationally recognized accreditation process focuses on quality, health and safety issues and requires us to review every facet of our operation. Our camps have voluntarily submitted to this independent appraisal by camping experts through the American Camp Association.

The YMCA Mission Statement:

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

Character Development

Y's throughout the USA strive to implement our character development program exemplifying our core values of: CARING, HONESTY, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, and FAITH.

These core values provide a foundation that guide all Y programs, staff trainings, and operations. It is our job to give youth and adults experiences that help them develop a set of positive values, morals, and ethics to live by. The School-Age Childcare Staff strives to provide an environment focused on these Y core values. Students will be taught these core values on a consistent basis. Each child will be taught expectations of conduct while in the School-Age Childcare Program. Teaching the core values will allow students in our care to form a foundation that will provide a stable, secure base on which to build their lives.

Staff Qualifications

The quality and effectiveness of Y services for children are directly related to the skills and personal characteristics of the staff. Recruiting, selecting, training, and supporting the staff are essential, interrelated processes in ensuring the success and integrity of children's programs. The leaders are required to have experience in working with children, knowledge of recreation activities, and must model the Y's core values.

All Y staff are first aid and CPR certified. Background checks are conducted on all staff members. This includes a criminal background check, national sex offender public registry check, drug screen, and reference checks. We take pride in our staff training, which includes: emergency procedures, program planning, child abuse awareness, and other areas pertaining to child development.

Admissions Criteria

Campers must be between the ages of 5 (entering kindergarten) and 14 years old. Parents must register online or in house.

It is also our policy that every child be fully toilet trained and capable of using the facilities without assistance. We understand that accidents can occur, in which case, we would require that parents pick up their children immediately or provide clean attire.

Equal Access

The YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, in keeping with its mission to help all people realize their fullest potential, encourages and supports the participation of all children in Y Child Care Programs. We serve all children regardless of gender, race, color, nationality, religion, ethnicity, or disability. Consideration is given to the individual needs of every child and the ability of the program to meet those needs.

Special Needs

At the Y we aim to promote an inclusive environment where all children, whatever their needs, can learn and develop in a happy, caring, and educational environment. If your child has special needs (including disabilities, medicinal requirements, behavioral conditions, or child custody concerns, etc.), please indicate these on the health form and notify the staff.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for children who have special needs, provided a written request is made at least two weeks before the child's attendance. One-on-one aides are not provided by the Y, but will be accommodated if the family provides them, and they meet our hiring and volunteer criteria. Unless a family-provided personal aide accompanies them, children must possess the ability to self-monitor, be independently mobile, and the ability to reasonably foresee the consequences of their actions.

No child will be denied acceptance unless his or her presence would pose a significant risk to himself or herself, or to the general population, as determined by the staff. However, if the Y cannot meet the child's need through reasonable accommodations, the placement cannot be accepted. Decisions are made on a per case basis.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Session Times

All camp sessions are one week in length, Monday through Friday. Camp begins at 8:30 a.m. each day and ends at 4:30 p.m. Extended care beginning at 6:30 a.m. and ending at 6:00 p.m. is available for no additional charge.

Pre-Camp

The camp day for all camps is from 8:30am-4:30pm. However, knowing that this time does not fit into some parents work schedules we offer pre-camp and post-camp at no additional charge. Campers may be dropped off between 6:30am-8:30am and picked up as late as 6:00pm. Our camp day begins with opening ceremonies at 8:30am. Please be flexible as between the hours of 8:00-8:30am we are transitioning from our pre-camp locations to our opening ceremonies location.

If dropping off after 9:00am you may have to take your child to his or her group. Please be flexible and understand that you may be catching your child's group in transition, and you may have to wait to sign in your child until they have made it to their new location. For the safety of the children in the program, sign-in boards must remain with the staff anytime a camp leaves the building. Please try to drop off your camper before 8:30am to avoid the frustration of trying to find your child's camp.

Post Camp

Please be prepared to show photo identification when you come to pick-up your camper. Campers must be picked-up by 6:00pm (according to the YMCA clock), or you will be charged a late fee. This fee will be charged to your account to be paid off ASAP (\$1.00 per child / per minute starting at 6:05pm). All campers must be signed in and out by an authorized adult 18 years of age or older.

If picking up before 4:30pm you may have to find the location of your child's specific group and pick up him or her from that location.

Please be flexible and understand that you may be catching your child's group in transition and you may have to wait to sign out your child until they have made it to their new location. For the safety of the children in the program, sign-out boards must remain with the staff anytime a camp leaves the building.

Daily Needs: Please mark all items clearly with camper's full name.

- Sunscreen (Please apply prior to attending camp and we will reapply as needed)
- Bug Spray
- Water Bottle
- Sack Lunch & Drink
- Morning and Afternoon Snacks Recommended
- Gym Shoes (Flip flops and sandals are not conducive to active play and walking)
- Swimsuit & Towel
- Backpack or Durable Bag for belongings
- Plastic Bag for wet suits and towels
- Comfortable Play Clothing (Dress for weather and messy activities)

Items Not Needed

Some personal belongings are not conducive to the child's experience at camp because they may get lost, broken, stolen, or may be unsafe. Do not bring the following items to camp:

- Money
- iPods, CD players, MP3 players

- Trading cards, video games, or any other toys
- Animals/Pets (w/o prior YMCA Consent)
- No Drugs or Alcohol
- No sports equipment that would be destructive to your child or other participants
- No cell phones
- No weapons, sharp objects, firearms, explosives, etc.

We are not responsible for any of these items should a camper make the poor choice to bring them. Due to the nature of our program damages and theft of personal items is possible. If participants are caught with any of the above items the staff reserves the right to confiscate them.

Test. Mark. Protect (Swim Testing)

All campers intending to swim in the deep end of the pool (past the buoy rope) will be required to complete a swim test. If passed they will be considered "Green Band Approved" which will allow them to swim in the deep end of any of the YMCA's of Greater Fort Wayne. If the camper does not pass or does not wish to take the swim test they must stay in the shallow end of the pool. Lifejackets are available upon request, but life jackets are not equivalent to passing a swim test and campers wearing life jackets must stay in the shallow end of the pool.

Testing age starts at 8 years old. Any child 7 years and younger that cannot pass the swim test will be required to wear a life jacket. Children between the ages of 6 and 7 that pass the swim test will be allowed to swim in the shallow area, not passing the buoy rope, without a life jacket.

Snack/Lunch Guidelines

Nutrition is a very important aspect of each camp day. When packing your child's lunch please remember that what goes in their tummies will affect how they feel the rest of the day! Healthy choices are always encouraged! **If your child has an allergy please be sure to inform the staff of the specific details including the severity.** Y camp is a candy, junk food, and soda pop free zone.

Please keep in mind the following suggestions:

- Pack extra drinks and a refillable water bottle
- Send foods that are easy to eat and don't require cooking or refrigeration
- Strive for a litter-less lunch (reusable containers)
- Label your child's lunch with first and last name

Sunscreen Policy

For the safety of the children and staff in our program, the YMCA asks that parent(s)/guardian(s) apply their child's sunscreen each morning prior to attending camp. Please send additional sunscreen for reapplications during the day.

Lost & Found

The camp lost and found will be located in the elementary classroom at the YMCA. Simply check with the camp staff about the procedures for returning items to campers. Labeling camper's items will reduce the risk of items being lost. Unclaimed items may be donated to local clothing bank.

Telephone Policy

Typically, campers are not allowed to make calls from camp. In cases where consultation is required with a parent or guardian, a camp counselor will accompany the camper to the phone where a call will be placed. On occasion, a counselor may call the parent or

guardian to discuss behavior or special circumstances. Please refrain from sending personal cell phones with your child(ren).

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures

The safety of every child is a priority of the Y. Following Sign-In and Sign-Out procedures helps ensure the safety of your child and allows staff to determine which children are present at any given time.

Sign-Out

All children must be signed out of the program by a parent/guardian or an authorized adult (at least 18 years old). When a child is picked up from the program the parent/guardian or authorized adult must come to the designated area and sign the child out of the program by initialing next to the child's name on the attendance roster. No child will be released from the program without an adult initial. All adults picking up children must be prepared to show I.D. so staff can verify their identity. For your child's protection, anyone without proper I.D. will be stopped from taking a child from the program and the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.

If someone other than the parent/guardian or those on the authorization list needs to pick up your child, you must notify the Y staff in writing at least one day in advance.

Any restricted individual must have a restraining order on file with the director.

Late Pick-Up

Y childcare ends at 6:00 p.m. and our staff is scheduled to leave. If you are running late, please notify your camp director. A late pick up fee will be assessed after the program closes. There will be an additional charge of \$1.00 per child, per minute starting at 6:05 p.m. payable to the YMCA. You will receive a receipt for your payment.

Parents who have not notified the camp director they will be late can expect the following sequence of events to occur. These steps are necessary to ensure the safety of the child as well as Y staff members.

- 6:00 p.m. Program closes. Staff member in charge begins calling parent work number to check for problems or miscommunications. If contact is not made, alternative contacts listed on the registration form will be called.
- 6:30 p.m. Staff member in charge contacts team leader, program director, and local authorities to apprise them of the situation.
- 6:45 p.m. If there is no contact from the parent and no other safe option, the child will be turned over to the city or county police department.

You risk dismissal from the program if:

- You fail to pay the late fee.
- You are late picking up your child three times within a 30-day period.

Parents must keep the Y office and camp staff notified of phone number changes for work, home, and emergency contacts at all times.

Marketing

Regularly, the Y takes photographs, film footage, or tape recordings of our programs. This media may include your child's image or voice and is used only for purposes of promoting or interpreting Y programs. Parent or guardian permission is required for this and is part of your registration process.

Staff Relationships Outside of Y Program

For the safety and protection of your child and our staff, Y employees are not allowed to babysit for program participants, spend time outside of program with our families, transport children in their private vehicles, or contact families by personal phone, email, or internet. Please do NOT put our staff at risk of losing their position with us by asking them to do so.

Inclement Weather

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily camp schedule. Parents are asked to dress their children appropriately for the weather conditions. A light sweater or jacket may be needed in the mornings.

Heat/O-zone Advisories

At the Y we are committed to the safety of all children. All precautions will be taken to prevent heat related injuries. Staff are trained to do the following for your camper:

- Make sure there are frequent water breaks
- Lower physical activities
- Act as role models, applying sunscreen & wearing hats outside
- Make sure campers are in the shade or indoors whenever possible
- Make sure there are opportunities for children to reapply sunscreen
- Watch for the signs of heat exhaustion

Rain/Thunderstorms

If it rains, camp will continue as normal. If it thunderstorms we will seek shelter immediately and stay there until it subsides. Should there be a tornado warning, all children and staff will go to the predetermined safe room. They will sit on the floor against the wall until the threat passes. Monthly drills are done for safety purposes.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Medication During Program

Any medication that needs to be administered during program hours must:

- Be accompanied by "Permission to Medicate" form. (Available at each site)
- Be brought directly to the camp director in its original container with the child's name, physician's name, and drug name on the container.
- Have specific doctor instruction for dosage, times, etc. The Y can only administer medication according to original instructions on label. If direction from parent is different, the parent must provide a physician's written change.
- No over-the-counter medication, including aspirin, cough medicine etc. will be given without a doctor's written consent.
- Staff cannot administer amounts other than specified on bottle or split pills.
- Medication will not be administered past expiration date.

Child Illness

For the sake of your child and others, if a child has a temperature of over 100 degrees, is vomiting, or shows other signs of illness, parents are asked to keep the participant at home. Parents must notify their Y Site of the absence and the nature of the illness. If this happens during program hours we will call you and ask that you pick your child up within one hour.

Illness/Injury Occurring During Program Hours

The Y does not aim to exclude children from the program unnecessarily. The Y's illness/injury policies are based on the following criteria:

- Preventable public health practices
- The comfort and safety of the sick child

- The staff's ability to accommodate or care for a sick child
- The protection of the other students, staff and parents from communicable disease conditions

If your child becomes ill and/or injured, they will be isolated from the other children and you will be contacted to pick him or her up within one hour of notification (depending on the severity of the injury or illness). The YMCA is not equipped to handle ill/injured children beyond securing their immediate comfort. If you cannot be reached, we will contact someone you've authorized from your emergency contact on the Health and Registration form for immediate pick up. Please be sure to keep the YMCA and your Site Director informed of any changes in your work or emergency phone numbers. In an emergency, medical aid will be sought immediately.

Communicable Disease

Communicable diseases are diseases that are transmitted from one individual to another and easily spread among children. Common communicable diseases among children are head lice, pink eye, ringworm and chickenpox. The following policies have been created to reduce the spread of communicable diseases.

Head Lice

The Y reserves the right to inspect your child's head in the event lice is suspected in order to protect all of the other students, staff, and parents

- In the event nits/head lice are found among your child, a parent/guardian must pick up the child within one hour of the notification.
- The Y will notify all parents of all head lice/nits cases when found or reported.
- If nits/head lice are found outside of the Y care, parents/guardians must contact the Director immediately so proper notification can be made to the other parents.
- Students with nits/head lice must not return to Y care until 24 hours after first treatment is complete.

Same policies apply to all other communicable diseases.

Confidentiality

Student's records are kept within groups, as staff needs to access them regularly. Any information in a child's record that is sensitive will be kept in a secure place.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Philosophy

The Y strives to maintain a positive approach to managing children's behavior at all times. "Discipline" is the process of teaching self-control and the ability to live within limitations and agreed upon guidelines. The staff and children at each site establish expected behavior guidelines. Positive behavior is self-rewarding and allows for program activities to occur. When children choose to behave outside the guidelines, some consequence is required to avoid future problems. The overall safety of all children in the program is our highest priority.

Children's Rules

It is our intent that each child enjoys the planned activities by understanding that they are responsible for their actions. With prior knowledge of our basic rules of safety and good conduct, each child is made aware of how to exercise self-discipline and to understand that we are here to assist her or him and that we expect them to succeed. Rules for behavior are posted at every Y site. Character Development is an important part of our program.

Process

When positive behavior is displayed, the consequence is participation and enjoyment of planned activities. In cases of negative or inappropriate behavior, the follow process will be employed.

- **Redirection:** Every effort will be made to help the child understand the inappropriateness of his or her actions and agree to an alternate form of behavior. When the conflict is child-to-child, every effort will be made to have them reason together face-to-face with staff facilitating.
- **Removal from the Specific Activity:** When redirection has been pursued and behavior has not changed, removing the child from the activity involved for an appropriate amount of time is necessary. The removal time will be age appropriate. Other duty-oriented consequences suitable to the inappropriate behavior may also be utilized at this stage.
- **Write-ups:** When the child is not successful in correcting the behavior, or the behavior is of a serious nature, a behavior write-up will occur. This write-up will be discussed with the child and parent, and requires a parent signature. If a child receives three write-ups a parent conference is required.
- **Removal from the Program:** If the above process has not resulted in corrected behavior, the child may be removed from the program.

Serious Behavior Issues

When a child has a serious discipline problem, on any one occasion, the parent may be called by staff and asked to pick up the child within one hour of the call. Should it be decided by Y staff that a child poses a serious problem; the child may be suspended from the program for a period of one to five days or may be re-moved from the program entirely. No child will be allowed to continue in the program who becomes a safety hazard to him/herself or others. In addition to behavior management procedures outlined above, parents must be aware that a child may be released from the program, without refund, for the following misconduct:

- Leaving Y care premises without permission, or going into unauthorized areas
- Using foul language, being rude or discourteous to staff and other children
- Defacing property
- Physical Violence (fighting, biting, putting hands on another child, threatening)
- Bringing or using any illegal substances and weapons
- Any demonstration of sexual contact/words
- Any behavior that jeopardizes the safety of staff or participants
- Stealing

Other Behavior Related Issues

No staff member will ever, strike, swear at, abuse, or threaten with physical intimidation either a child or parent. No staff member will allow a child to be stricken, sworn at, abused or physically intimidated by anyone else in the program. No staff member will ever solicit or accept gratuities in consideration for any treatment of a child.

Parent Conferences

Informal or formal conferences may be requested by staff or parents regarding their child's behavior. Typically, conferences are requested after multiple behavior reports or extreme changes in a child's demeanor. We cannot emphasize enough how important it is that you share changes occurring at home or at school. Staff can better provide for a child's needs when we are aware of changes.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Program Fees and Parent Payment Contract

Payment is due in full by the Thursday of the week prior to your child attending camp. If payment is not made by Thursday evening, there will be a \$5 late fee added to your account. If payment is not made by Friday evening, there will be a \$10 late fee added to your account. If payment is not made Monday morning at time of drop off your child will not be allowed to stay at camp that day, and will not be allowed to attend camp until balance is paid in full.

You are responsible for payment on all weeks that your child is registered. If a cancellation needs to be made, it needs to be made on or before the Monday prior to the week that needs cancelled. In emergency situations for cancelled scheduled weeks, please notify the Program Director. **Refunded weeks are not guaranteed, but will be processed based on emergency situations.**

Payments are set up through automatic bill pay through your bank at time of registration.

Financial Assistance

We believe that no one should be turned away due to inability to pay. The YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne is a non-profit organization committed to strengthening the foundations of our community, one child at a time. Our Annual Campaign is a Y initiative that provides scholarships for programs and memberships to children and families in need. Those families unable to pay the full cost of participation are encouraged to apply, you are welcome to pick up an application at our membership desk or download an application from the website, www.fwymca.org. Please let the Camp Director know if you are currently receiving or in the process of applying for financial assistance.

Late Payment

A late fee of \$5.00 will be assessed when payment is not received by Thursday evening. If payment has not been made by Friday evening there will be a \$10 late fee added to your account. After the third late payment, the fee will increase to \$15.00 per occurrence.

Delinquent Accounts

When payment on an account falls two days behind, the parent/guardian will be notified that their child cannot return to the program. Your child may return when the account is brought current or payment arrangements are made. If parent/guardian has been notified of delinquent account and sends their child to the program anyway, staff will call to have the child immediately picked up.

Insufficient Funds

If payment to the childcare program is returned due to insufficient funds, the parent/guardian is responsible for immediately issuing another payment plus all NSF fees that are assessed. After two returned checks, payment must be in the form of a money order payable at the site, or cash/credit card at the Whitley County Family Y Branch.

Tax Information

A tax statement including all expenses for the previous year can be found on your YMCA Daxko account. **Our tax ID number is: 35-0886850.**