

JUNIATA VALLEY YMCA

Summer Camp Parent Handbook

Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new and exciting season of YMCA summer camp. We are glad you are joining in the fun and excitement for SUMMER!

At our YMCA camp, health and safety is our first priority and we are here to make your child feel welcome. To help them quickly realize this is a place where they belong and can be themselves. We want every child to try new things, make new friends and be a part of something great!

We are here to help your child grow in every way. We meet them where they are, then give them opportunities to reach levels they never imagined. We're here to surround every child with support, guidance, and fantastic changes to discover and learn. A chance for kids to keep trying until they succeed.

We're here to show kids all they can accomplish when they believe in themselves. They thrive, knowing they can relax in a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment. The Y is here to help them flourish socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically. We cannot wait to serve you and your child this summer!

As you read through this handbook, you will get a better understanding of how our program operates. Our hope is that it will help prepare you and your child for a safe and fun camp experience. Set aside some time with your child to read this booklet, it will give you some suggestions to help prepare for our exciting summer together. However, if you have further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. We are very excited about this summer and we look forward to introducing your child to new friends and memories that will last a lifetime.

Sarah King
Program Director

Juniata Valley YMCA
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YMCA MISSION AND VALUES

OUR MISSION

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

OUR CAUSE

Strengthening the foundations of community is our cause. Every day, we work side-by-side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone, regardless of age, income, or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

The Y is proud of our history as a charity that is dedicated to helping improve the lives of others, with a focus on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Our primary purpose is to provide dependable, safe care in an environment that supports each child to reach their fullest potential. The purpose of every Y program is to help participants grow physically, emotionally, and spiritually. By providing challenging activities in both small and large group settings under the guidance of caring and well-trained staff members, the Y Programs give youth experiences and memories that can last a lifetime.

IMPROVE WELL-BEING

At the Y, we believe there are nine dimensions of well-being that we deliver through our programs. Still, well-being is an individualized concept; the things that help one person be well are not necessarily the same things that would help another be well. However, science has shown that certain things improve well-being for just about everyone. Things such as physical activity, having friends, spending time in a safe outdoor environment, and having a sense of purpose are well-researched behaviors that correlate to increased well-being.

Achievement - The confidence, competence, and satisfaction gleaned from learning, goal attainment, and skill building

Relationships - The individual bonds created with and among individuals

Belonging - Having the connection to and support of a family, group, or community

Character - Personally accepting and demonstrating positive values

Giving - Acting on the desire to be of service to others

Health - Practicing positive habits that include physical activity and healthy eating

Inspiration - The positive benefits derived from exposure to and engagement with art, culture, or nature

Meaning - Having a strong sense of hope, faith, and purpose

Safety - The state in which basic physical and emotional needs are being met



CORE VALUES

The Juniata Valley YMCA works to accomplish its mission by living and sharing the following core values:



CARING
We demonstrate sincere concern for others, their needs and well-being.

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RESPECT
We treat others as we would want to be treated and value the worth of every person

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HONESTY
We tell the truth and demonstrate reliability & trustworthiness.

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RESPONSIBILITY
We do what is right and are accountable for our choices & actions

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Contacting Program Leadership

The YMCA staff is here to serve your family; please take time to connect with the Director to discuss any information that will help with the daily care of your child and ensure that they have a successful summer. Our program leaders have very active schedules and are with groups of children during a majority of the programming times to ensure that all participants are having a positive experience. Please understand that staff might not be able to respond to phone calls and voicemails due to their focus on fostering a safe and fun environment for the participants. A member of the Program Staff will be available daily during Drop-Off and Pick-Up to answer any questions, receive feedback, and discuss ways to partner together to ensure your child has a great experience.

Contact Information:

Camp Director: Sarah King: prodir_jvymca@comcast.net or 717-248-5019 (best way to contact is through email)

Remind App: Download the app and use the code "2024ymcasu" to join our group. This is how we send out reminders, pictures, connect with parents, and important dates. The code will also be in the weekly newsletters!

What to Bring to Camp:

Listed below are items your child will need for camp ([label all items with camper's name](#)):

A Lunch and Snacks: Campers will need a bagged lunch each day. Most days there will not be a refrigerator or microwave available. Campers can purchase additional snacks and food at our vending machine or at concession stands on several of the trips. Please do not strictly rely on these other food options. Staff will not be responsible for lost or stolen money.

Afternoon Snack Program: We will be offering a free snack once a week for our "Wellness Wednesday" program. These snacks will be a fun and healthy treat the kids will assist in creating. Each child will receive this nutritious snack. If your child is picky, please make sure you provide them with additional snacks as well.

A Water Bottle: Please make sure they come with a water bottle every day. We have water fountains for them to fill them up with throughout the day.

Appropriate Clothing: Dress to get messy. NO sandals or open-toed shoes. Sneakers and socks must be worn. Campers should NOT wear good clothes. Camp is held indoors and out. Most days will be outside on some kind of adventure so please keep that in mind. Flip flops or slides are allowed for the pool and swimming.

Swimsuit & Towel: Campers should pack a swimsuit, towel and a plastic bag for their wet swimsuit everyday in a backpack clearly labeled with their name.

Sunscreens: We strongly encourage you to apply sunscreen to your child prior to coming to camp. We also recommend you send sunscreen to camp with your child. Please make sure it is labeled with your child's name. Our staff will assist your child in applying sunscreen as necessary. We also encourage you to send a shirt that your child can swim in, especially if he/she is prone to burn. We have extra sunscreen on hand if it is forgotten but please try to bring your own.

Great Attitude: Campers need to be prepared to have an active day outdoors. A **good night's sleep** and **breakfast** are essential for a healthy camper. Swimming, sports, games, arts & crafts and much more will be offered during a regular camp day. Our goal is to keep everyone active and engaged throughout the day.

What NOT to Bring to Camp:

The following items are not allowed in YMCA Day Camp programs: knives or weapons of any kind (including chains); alcohol, drugs or tobacco products; cell phones; personal video games, toys or card games; radio, tape or MP3 players; iPods, iPads or Kindles. Please help us maintain a safe environment by not allowing your child to bring any of these items to the program. During arrival time, campers are allowed on a device while we wait for all the kids to arrive. They must stay put away after that if you decide to bring them. Electronics will also be allowed during traveling IF counselors say so. If guidelines on electronics is not followed, we will not allow them at all. **The Juniata Valley YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items.**

Important Information:

Lost and Found: To ensure your camper goes home with everything they came to camp with, please make sure you are labeling everything your camper brings. We have a lost and found but at the end of each week it will be emptied out and any items remaining will be donated to a shelter. The lost and found will be located by the sign in and out. We will be asking campers if anything is there's when it's found.

Rainy Days: Camp is held rain or shine. We will be conducting activities inside and outside (providing that there is no lightning). Please dress your child accordingly. Don't forget a raincoat or poncho.

Extreme Heat Days: If it is determined that the campers are in a heat emergency, the staff will take all precautions to protect campers from the effects of the heat throughout their day at camp. Children will be provided with plenty of water breaks and rest periods in a cool place. Depending on the itinerary of that day will determine if a change needs to be made. Parents will be contacted through the Remind App if needed.

Financial Procedures and Information:

Payment Schedules/Deadlines: Your camp fee is payable by EFT, cash, online payment or by phone to our YMCA office. This payment is due on the Monday of the week attending. For your convenience, we have attached a calendar for your records to remind you of when each payment is due. Camp is paid per week with the rates as follows. If you sign up for 9 or more weeks, you will receive a 10% discount.

- Members: \$165/week
- Nonmembers: \$200/week

Financial Assistance: YMCAs are charitable organizations here to serve people of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, and incomes. The YMCA is community-based and believes that its programs and services should be available to everyone. That's why we offer our scholarship program, which is a program that allows us to give a free week of camp to a family in need. **Charitable contributions to the YMCA enable us to provide financial assistance.** If you are interested in donated, please visit our website at www.jvymca.org for further details.

Procedures & Guidelines:

Health Policy: The YMCA Day Camp programs are equipped to care only for children who are in good health. Children may NOT attend the program if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- fever of 100 degrees or more
- vomiting or diarrhea
- severe nasal or eye discharge
- an unidentified rash
- a contagious disease (chicken pox, measles, lice, ring worm, etc.)

If a child is prescribed antibiotics, the child must be on the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to the camp program. If your child has a communicable disease, please notify the Camp Director as soon as possible. If a camper becomes ill while at camp, parents will be contacted to make necessary arrangements for pick up.

Your child can return to camp when:

- temperature is steadily below 100 degrees for 24 hours without medication
- an infection has been diagnosed and child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours
- it has been 24 hours since the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea
- nasal discharge is not thick yellow or green
- rash has subsided, or a physician has determined that it is not contagious
- head lice/nits have been treated and there is no sign of nits
- ring worm has been treated and covered

Injury Procedures: Camp staff will utilize basic first aid. In all cases of serious illness or accident, the Camp Director will contact the parent or guardian. In the event he/she cannot be reached, the signed authorization on the child's emergency card will allow the YMCA to secure prompt treatment. Injuries requiring ambulance service and medical attention are the financial responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Medication Policy: All prescribed oral or topical medication for your camper, which must be administered during program hours, requires **written permission** from the parent and written instruction from the physician or dentist. The medication must be in its original container labeled with the camper's name, dates, amount, and frequency of dosage clearly labeled. Medication forms must accompany prescription.

Telephone Policy: Emergency calls to campers should be done through the YMCA camp phone. The Camp Director will be contacted and, if necessary, will return the call. Typically, campers are not allowed to make calls from camp. In cases where consultation is required with a parent or guardian, camp staff will accompany the camper to the phone where a call will be placed. On occasion, a staff member may call to discuss behavior or special circumstances.

Swimming: The Juniata Valley YMCA offers many diverse activities throughout the summer and swimming is part of the day camp experience. We abide by YMCA of the USA swimming standards and ensure the highest standard of safety. We do require every camper to take a swim test, even if they are an excellent swimmer. According to the results of the swim test, your child will wear a color-coded bracelet. This allows the staff members and lifeguards at your camp to acknowledge the different swimming levels of each camper. If your camper is a beginning swimmer, we will provide flotation devices. We encourage all of our campers to participate in swim time, where applicable. We swim test every Monday if needed.

Emergency Closures: If weather reports are threatening, please check your Remind App or our Facebook page for any updates. It doesn't happen often but, if we need to close early or close completely, we will make you aware. Please watch for announcements.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Drop-Off & Sign-In

Every morning when you come in to drop your child off, you will need to sign them in with the time and your initials. If you have any questions that morning, there will be a program staff member either in the gym or out by the sign in sheet. Please make sure your child has everything they need for the day when getting dropped off.

Pick-Up & Check-Out

Pick up is very similar to drop off. You will sign your child out with the time and your initials. For you and your child's protection, children will not be released to any person other than the parent or other person authorized to pick up the child on the enrollment form. As a precaution, the staff will request photo identification at the time of sign out until they are familiar with you and the people on your pick-up list.

If you need to pick-up during a time the day, please make sure a camp staff member is notified. If it is a day that we are going to be traveling, we will need to know before hand to make a plan.

Authorized Pick-Up Agents

At the time of enrollment, parents are to provide all court ordered paperwork if any parties are not able to have contact with a child enrolled in YMCA Programs. Paperwork must be an official court ordered document and indicate who is the primary residential parent or if both parents have shared parental custody, and updated annually.

Children will not be released to any person other than the parent or other persons authorized to pick up the child on the enrollment form. Authorization to pick up a child is given in the child-care application. Any changes to the pick-up list must be in writing and completed in the presence of a YMCA Staff Member. Phone calls, fax requests or emails are not accepted.

Our staff cannot legally refuse to release a child to a verified natural parent unless there is a court order in the child's file stating that the parent does not have custodial rights. Only the courts can give us that right. For your child's safety, we encourage you to contact another person on your child's authorized pick-up list if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Late Pick-Up

Many of our programs operate in a shared space and are unable to continue providing care after our scheduled closing time. Our programs close at 5pm and if your child is not picked up by the end of the program, then a late fee will be charged to you and collected at pick-up. If it is 6:01pm, then it is time for our program to close and you will be charged a fee. The fee is \$5 per 10-minute interval and will be added to your account automatically. To avoid having to pay a late fee, we strongly urge you to have additional emergency numbers and people available to pick up your child. The additional contact information must be written on the list of who can pick up your child. Local authorities will be contacted if no one can pick up the child. We do understand that things come up and traffic can be challenging even in the best of times, however, a phone call for being late will not excuse you from late fees.

Behavior Management:

General Guidelines:

Guiding the behavior of children, helping them develop core values, and building healthy personalities are important tasks that adults must take seriously.

Children are entitled to a pleasant environment at camp. Therefore, children who display chronic disruptive behavior may be dismissed from the program. Such behavior is defined as “verbal or physical activity which may involve, but is not limited to, behavior that requires constant attention from the staff, inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, abuses the staff and/or ignores or disobeys the rules that guide behavior during the day at camp.”

If a child cannot adjust to the camp setting and behave appropriately, then the child may be dismissed. Reasonable efforts will be made to help children acclimate to the camp setting.

Action Steps:

The YMCA believes that children learn self-control for appropriate and responsible behavior when adults treat them with dignity and use proper techniques:

- Guide children by setting clear, consistent, and fair limits for behavior
- Value mistakes as learning opportunities
- Redirect children to more acceptable behavior or activities
- Make eye contact and listen when children talk about their feelings and frustrations
- Guide children to resolve their own conflicts and model skills that help them to solve problems
- Patiently remind children of rules and their rationale as needed
- Use effective praise that is immediate, sincere and specific
- State directions in a positive fashion

Discipline Policy:

When the traditional action steps are not successful, there are four steps we follow at the Juniata Valley YMCA regarding discipline. They are as follows:

- Step 1: Verbal warning to the child and parent. Incident will be documented in the child’s file
- Step 2: Written warning to the parent
- Step 3: Suspension from the program (1-3 days)
- Step 4: Dismissal from the program**

**In extreme cases, your child may be suspended or terminated from the program (i.e. a violent act against another child or staff member would be considered extreme). If this occurs, the weekly fee will still be due.

We look forward to serving you and your child(ren) this summer! Please let us know if you have any specific questions. Thank you for choosing the Juniata Valley YMCA!