



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

ACTIVE, SAFE & HAVING FUN

YMCA of Bristol SummerCamp Parent Handbook
Summer 2025



YMCA OF BRISTOL

GENERAL CHILDCARE INFORMATION

We're excited that you've chosen YMCA of Bristol's Summer Day Camp. Our Day Camp is designed with your child in mind. Our staff believes that every child should have a chance to grow and shine in a caring and encouraging environment.

This Parent Manual provides information to help you and your child have a successful camp experience. Please read everything carefully, and let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We're looking forward to the best summer ever.

We take pride in our youth staff, directors and leadership staff. If your experience is not a positive one, please contact your Camp Director.

Thank you to you and your family for choosing the Y. We appreciate your partnership.

STAFF

The YMCA prides itself on hiring quality staff that embody our Mission and have a passion for being a positive role model for children. Many of our counselors are high school and college students. Staff members are selected through a comprehensive application and interview process, and often have previous experience in other YMCA programs.

Each staff member completes staff training that emphasizes the importance of safety, child development and fun.

SUMMERCAMPDAYS&HOURSOF OPERATION

Child Care is available at the Y Monday through Friday, with the following exceptions:*

- Memorial Day (5/26/2025)
 - Independence Day (7/4/2025)
- * Additional days may be added at the discretion of the Childcare Director

Camp hours are from 9:00 am and 5:00 pm with early drop off starting at 7:00 am and late pick up until 6:00 pm

Camp: Campers must be signed in and out every day of attendance, to ensure the safety of every child. Pre-camp drop-off occurs from 7:00-9:00 am

Post-camp pick-up occurs from 5:00-6:00 pm.

We will have a staff member greet you at your vehicle, check ID, and have you sign your child out. Parents will not be able to drop off late or pick up early (between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm) due to camp changes.

All Camp programs close at 6:00 pm.

APPLICATION & REQUIRED PAPERWORK

All parents must complete a Summer Day Camp application for each child attending the program and return it upon registration.

The Y's Summer Camp programs admit children 5-11 year olds. Children 12-15 year olds may apply for our leaders program.

The YMCA of Bristol will address physically challenged and special needs children on a per request basis with the hope that we can serve all children who come to us.

The Y does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender or national/ethnic origin in administration, of its personnel and admissions policies.

If your child needs 1-on-1 assistance, it is your responsibility to provide it for your child(ren), as the YMCA of Bristol does not have the ability to do so.

It is our hope to have a culturally diverse population within our staff, participants and programs.

COMMUNICATION

For immediate assistance and in case of emergency, the best mode of communication is to call the Y directly (423-968-3133). If we must get in contact with you due to an emergency, we will call the numbers listed on your child care application in priority order. If we are unable to reach a parent or guardian, we will call the emergency contacts. There are many other ways that we communicate with our members, or program participants including the following:

- www.bristolyymca.net
- Email updates
- Direct mail
- Follow YMCA of Bristol on Facebook and Instagram
- YMCA of Bristol APP
- Remind me APP

YMCA staff will provide you with periodic updates about your child's participation in camp. We strive to communicate effectively about our programs through newsletters, posted signs about upcoming events, emails, and staff communication during Rides In/Out. If you have questions, please feel free to contact your Camp Director.



FOOD POLICY

Lunches must be in an appropriate container that is labeled with the child's name.

Remember: We are not able to refrigerate or heat up lunches, so plan your child's meal accordingly. You may pack a couple of snacks that are camp appropriate.

FOOD ALLERGIES/OUTSIDE FOOD

The health and safety of our children is of the utmost importance. It is imperative that the Summer Camp staff is aware of any food allergies at the time of enrollment.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

The Y will make every effort to provide care in the event of inclement weather; however, the safety of the children and staff are our primary responsibility. The Y could close and/or adjust the inclement policy due to hazardous weather conditions. We will follow the same procedures to contact you regarding closings and/or adjustments to the policy as outlined previously.

In the event of severe rain, lightning or other unsafe conditions, activities will be modified as necessary to ensure the safety of all participants.

DAILY SCHEDULE

For Summer Camp programs, the schedule will be comprised of a gross motor movement period, academic enrichment/reading time, programmed and free-time activities.

WHAT TO BRING

All children should bring a backpack to carry their belongings. The backpack should be clearly marked with the child's name.

Some children may benefit from bringing an extra set of clothes in their backpack

Swimsuit and towel are needed every day.

Generic Sunscreen is available at camp by the Y, but if your child needs a special kind, you may send it with the camper in its original container with the child's name on it.

Campers should bring a water bottle that can be refilled at our many water coolers around camp with their name on it.

CELLPHONES ARE NOT PERMITTED AND MAY BE HELD BY STAFF FOR SAFETY

Toys, personal listening devices, portable game devices, trading cards, stuffed animals, jewelry, and money should stay at home. The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items.

DRESS POLICY

- Children should wear comfortable and appropriate clothing for indoor and outdoor activities. We use washable paints and crayons; however, clothing can still get stained. We do not reimburse for clothing rips, stains or normal wear and tear. It is expected that parents will provide proper seasonal clothing and bathing suit with towel for swimming.
- **CLOSED TOE SHOES MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES**
Open toed shoes can be a safety hazard to your child. Please have your child wear closed toed shoes for safety purposes. This includes Chacos, Flip Flops, Crocks, etc. Sneakers are recommended.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Whenever the Y transports children, parents can be confident that every precaution will be taken to ensure your child's safety.

We ensure your child's safety by being alert to potential dangers, eliminating or avoiding these dangers, and knowing what to do when an emergency occurs. At no time will a child be permitted to put their arms, hand or head out of the vehicle's windows.

No roughhousing will be tolerated at any time. Loading and unloading children will happen only when the vehicle is pulled up to a curb, the side of the road or in a driveway. We will only release children in our care to an authorized adult.

OFF-SITE TRAVEL

Campers will take part in a field trip and off-site travel daily.

Our Drivers

All YMCA of Bristol drivers are required to hold a current CDL (Commercial Driver License) before being allowed to transport children in our buses. CDL Drivers are required to receive a physical as part of their licensing requirement.

Transportation

All YMCA buses undergo regular maintenance and inspections as part of the Y's ongoing vehicle maintenance program.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY & ADDITIONAL FEES

PAYMENT POLICY

Camp: Camp payments are drafted each Monday prior to the start of the week your child is attending camp. A \$25 deposit is due for each week of camp upon registration to reserve your spot. *Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable*. Parents are responsible for full payment for each week a camper is registered for, unless a two week notice is given, or injury/illness occurs (with a Doctor's note).

LATE OR RETURNED PAYMENT FEE POLICY

Payments made after the deadline will be assessed an additional \$10 late fee.

Your child will be removed from the program if:

- Fees become more than two weeks late.
- Your child is absent for more than two weeks without payment

If your check or draft is returned for any reason, a \$10 returned check fee will be assessed. If more than two checks are returned, the Y will be unable to accept your personal checks. At that time, all future program fees must be paid in cash or money order in advance.

TERMINATION POLICY

If you are withdrawing your child from our program, prior written notification is required to the Child Care Director.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Y is able to provide financial assistance based on HUD guidelines, thanks to generous supporters of our annual giving campaign. We understand that financial hardships may happen at unexpected times during the year, and we work quickly to provide financial assistance to families based upon their ability to pay. If your family has trouble affording care, please contact Member Services regarding financial assistance options.

If you wish to apply for financial assistance, please obtain an application from Member Services or on-line at bristolymca.net. All scholarships are awarded based on availability of scholarship funds. Financial Assistance can be awarded up to 40% on a case by case basis.



PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Parents are expected to sign their children in upon arrival in the morning and sign them out before leaving in the afternoon. There is a sign-in/sign-out tablet available as you enter the program. All persons signing children in/out must be at least 16 years of age, and carry valid photo ID.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICKUP

Authorization to pick up a child is given in the Summer Camp application. We will not release your child to a person not authorized in writing by the custodial parent. Identification will be requested of anyone that we do not know. 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.

CUSTODY

Please alert the YMCA Camp office of child custody arrangements. It is imperative that official, current court documents are maintained in your child's file if custody or visitation is a concern. Without court orders, we cannot withhold a child from their parent. Based on the information that you share with your director, they will tell you if additional documentation is required.

If parents are separated or divorced with joint custody, both parents must provide written consent for all names on the Emergency Contacts & Authorized Pickups list.

DROP OFF/PICK UP PROCEDURES

At pickup time, children will only be released to parents, legal guardians and those designated as emergency contacts with pickup on your child's account.

If you plan to have anyone else pick up your child, you must notify camp staff in writing.

YMCA staff or volunteers do not buckle children of any age into their car seats or fasten seat-belts, even when requested by the parents. We make every effort to be efficient in the pickup line. We provide space for a parent to pull up so they can secure their own child.

SEVERE WEATHER PICK UP

Severe weather may affect the pickup process. In cases of driving rain and/or lightning, staff will keep children sheltered until conditions improve. This may slow down the pickup process, requiring drivers to wait. The safety of YMCA children and staff is our first priority.

Parents may come inside or into the building at their own risk to pick up their child during severe weather conditions.

PARENT VISITS

Parents who wish to visit camp or take a tour should schedule a visit with the Camp Coordinator. All visitors and guests must check-in at the front office and be escorted by a camp staff member at all times.

NOTIFICATION OF ATTENDANCE

For the safety of all children, notification of absence prior to the program start, will ensure the smoothest transition for all participants.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

If you know you are going to be late, call us. We understand that things come up and traffic can be challenging even in the best of times. We understand that a late pick-up may occur on a rare occasion. However, many of our programs operate in a shared space, and we are unable to continue providing care after we close. Our programs close at 6:00 pm, 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 6:01 pm (by our clock, then it is time for our program to close and you will be charged a fee. The fee is \$15 per 15-minute interval.

If we have not heard from you by 6:00 pm and we cannot reach you by phone, your emergency numbers will be called and one of those contacts will be asked to come pick up your child. If neither you nor your emergency contact can be reached, we will keep your child for one hour. After that time, the police will be contacted to see if there has been an accident and/or to drive by your home to see if there is a problem. If no problems are found at the home, and the parents/guardians still cannot be located, then Child Protective Services will be notified.

EXCESSIVE LATE PICK-UP POLICY

The Y has found that it is necessary to have an excessive late pick-up policy, which could result in the removal of your child from our program. This policy is as follows: if you are late more than three times in any program cycle, you may be asked to remove your child.



MEDICATION POLICY

Generally, children are prohibited from having medication with them, unless the medication is dispensed on their person (such as an insulin pump).

If your child requires medication during care, we must have a signed authorization through a Medication Administration Form.

Over-the-counter Medication Authorizations are good for one program season, then the Medication Authorization Form must be completed again. Medication Administration Forms can be obtained from a staff member.

Prescribed and/or long-term medications for such things as asthma, ADHD, allergies etc, must have the Medication Administration Form completed by a doctor.

All medication must be in the original bottle labeled with the child's name and will be stored with a certified staff member in a locked container.

Please understand that it may not always be possible to administer medications as requested, and we cannot be responsible for missed doses. We are not required by law to administer medication and only do so as a service to the parent. Only those Y Summer Camp staff members who are certified "Medication Administrators" may dispense medications.

Y child care staff will administer sunscreen, and/or insect repellent as needed. Please alert child care staff of any adverse reactions. If you wish to provide your own skin product, it must be in the original container and must be labeled with your child's name.

SICK CHILD POLICY

The health and safety of your child is a matter of major importance to all of us. In order to protect the children in the program who are well, we have very stringent rules about sick children. If your child becomes ill in our program, we will call you, and make arrangements for you to pick up your child. Re-admission will be allowed with a doctor's note or when a child has been without symptoms for at least 24 hours. This means if we send your child home on Tuesday, they may not return until Thursday.

Please keep your child home if your child has:

- Had a fever in the previous 24 hour period
- A cold that is less than two days old
- Heavy nasal discharge
- Constant cough
- Recurring vomiting or diarrhea (two or more times)
- Temperature of at least 100 degrees
- Symptoms of communicable diseases (sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, abdominal pain plus fever)

CHILD INJURY POLICY

Our staff members are trained in First Aid and CPR and will treat your child if they sustain a minor injury while in our care. We will notify you at pick-up if your child had a minor injury during the day. If your child has an injury that requires more than our First Aid skills allow, or your child has been bumped on the head, we will make an immediate attempt to contact you. If we are unable to reach you or the person you have designated in case of such emergencies, we will call the child's physician.

If necessary, an ambulance will be called. The program will maintain a parent's signed consent form agreeing to this provision. Please make every effort to keep the Y up-to-date on phone numbers, emergency numbers and other pertinent information.

NO BABYSITTING POLICY

Y child care staff members are prohibited from babysitting participants of Y child care programs, which includes transportation to and from camp.

OUTSIDE PLAY

It is our belief that children need and want to be outside. Running, jumping and other such movement can be best accomplished outside. Outside play is essential for children to gain strength and develop to their fullest potential. We will be outside when weather will permit.

WATERFRONT AND POOL SAFETY

WATERFRONT (Camp Friendship)

At Camp Friendship, Campers will have the opportunity to participate in several waterfront activities. All waterfront activities, whether in the water or on the bank will require wearing a Coast Guard-approved life jacket during the period of the activity. Failure to wear, or taking off the life jacket while still participating in the activity may result in disciplinary action.

SWIMMING (at the Y)

Your child will swim a couple of days per week at the YMCA pool. To ensure all campers are safe, a swim assessment will take place on the first day of swimming each session or on his/her first day attending the program. Color-coded swim bands will be used to enable lifeguards to differentiate swimmers of different abilities. If a lifeguard does not feel like a child is a strong enough swimmer to receive a yellow or green swim band, then the lifeguard will give the camper a red band, and encourage the child to keep practicing and try again at a later date.

Children who do not pass a swim test (receive a red swim band), or who do not wish to take a swim test will wear United States Coast Guard-approved life jackets while swimming, and will stay in the Therapy Pool.

CHILD'S RESPONSIBILITIES

YMCA DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

- Conversation between staff and youth to discuss behavior and reset expectations.
- Staff will first use positive reinforcement and redirection to redirect a youth's behavior. If this is ineffective, staff may use a timeout as an opportunity for the youth to take a break from the behavior before rejoining the group.
- If positive discipline and redirection are ineffective in changing the youth's behavior, the Camp Coordinator may suspend the youth. The length of suspension will be determined based on each individual situation. Factors such as type/severity of behavior, behavior history, age of youth, etc. will be considered when determining the length of the suspension.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline is seen as an opportunity to guide children in their relationships and actions. By working with the child and not against, the best interests of the child are put first. The goal of discipline is to have the child control their behavior by making conscious decisions concerning their actions and to give the child reasonable ownership of the consequence. Children that show a strong and sincere desire to improve will be worked with as long as they are not considered dangerous to themselves or others. Corporal punishment such as, but not limited to, spanking, forcing a child to assume an uncomfortable position, restraining to restrict movement through binding or tying, enclosing in a confined space, using exercise as a means of punishment, or withholding food, water or nap is forbidden under the Y philosophy and policies. Toileting accidents will not be disciplined. There will be no abusive language that would include, but not be limited to, threats or belittling remarks about any child or family. Documentation of the child's behavior will be recorded in the child's file. Depending on the offense, at the discretion of the Child Care Coordinator, you may be notified via phone or at the end of the day.

If negative behavior continues, the child will meet with the Coordinator. Parents/guardians may be called to help resolve the situation.

If it is necessary to dismiss a child from the program for disruptive or harmful behavior or failure to abide by the Participant Agreement, there will not be any refund of fees.



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

We define conflict as a disagreement or argument in which both sides express their views and there is an equal power balance. We believe conflict with resolution is a natural and important part of Youth Development. Conflict can be constructive if managed in the right way. We will identify and resolve conflicts in a healthy and proactive fashion. The conflict resolution skills we learn and practice will make a positive impact on our Y programs and in every child's future.

Any unwanted behavior that involves a power imbalance is an indicator of bullying. Here at the Y, our goal is to stop bullying, and we encourage our participants, parents, and staff to be Upstanders. An Upstander is one who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. If there is disclosure, discovery, or suspicion of bullying we will handle each instance case by case and with care. At the Y we are building a caring, respectful, honest, and responsible community for all; the safety of our program participants is our main concern.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

The growth and development of all people has been the Y's principle concern for over 150 years. Through programs of health and wellness, aquatics, sports, camping, family programs and child care, the Y is responding to the needs of children and families.

Many changes have occurred in the lives of children and families today. Some of these changes are positive. However, the alarming increase in child abuse is of particular concern to the Y. Throughout its history, the Y has been a strong advocate for children's rights. It is therefore most appropriate that mistreatment or neglect of children and the resulting severe effects would be of primary concern to the Y.

The Y advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention and the development of self-discipline. At no time will the following disciplinary techniques be tolerated: physical punishment, yelling, striking, biting, kicking, squeezing, shaming, withholding food or rest room privileges, confining children in small locked rooms, or verbal or emotional abuse.

Affectionate touch, and the warm feelings it brings, is an important factor in helping a child grow into a loving and peaceful adult. However, Y staff and volunteers need to be sensitive to each person's need for personal space (i.e., not everyone wants to be hugged). The Y encourages appropriate touch; however, at the same time it prohibits inappropriate touch or other means of sexually exploiting children.

Based upon its concern for children, parents and Y staff, the following standards related to reporting procedures, staffing, standards, code of conduct and resources for parents and children, have been developed.

****Note:** The Y, like many other public institutions, is mandated by law to report suspected child abuse to Child Protective Services within 24 hours of reported incident.

“Child abuse is mistreatment or neglect of a child by parent(s) or others resulting in injury or harm. Child abuse may be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual. Its effects may result in severe emotional and physical handicaps, anti-social behavior, even death.”

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

1. At the first report or suspicion of child abuse, the staff or volunteer to whom it has been reported will immediately inform his or her supervisor.
2. The Y will make a report within 24 hours to Child Protective Services and will request that the situation be investigated. In the event the reported incident or suspicion involves an employed staff person or volunteer, the CEO will suspend the person from all responsibilities (if appropriate, without pay) until the investigation is complete.
3. All staff members and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in the handling of information in this area and are therefore instructed to only discuss matters pertaining to abuse or suspected abuse with their supervisor and the CEO.
4. Y staff and volunteers may not make contact with children or parents involved in a child abuse incident without permission from the CEO.
5. Whether the incident or alleged offense takes place on or off Y premises, it will be considered job-related (due to the youth-involved nature of the Y).
6. All incidents or alleged offenses will be documented on the day of occurrence.

