



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA Camp Shepard 2021 Family Handbook



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Program Overview

YMCA of Greater Westfield Mission Statement

To provide the community with quality programs and services that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

Program Philosophy

The purpose of YMCA Youth programs is to meet the development needs of children, provide recreational opportunities, and provide families with quality care. Our programs focus on facilitating the child's natural sense of curiosity, promoting a sense of self efficacy, creating an environment conducive to positive peer interaction, which encourages initiative and support the growth of each child as an individual, all under the guidance and care of a nurturing staff community. We strive to provide a setting built with acceptance, respect, and encouragement. We believe in building positive self-esteem and strong character development in children by focusing on our values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

Camper Development

YMCA Camp Shepard focuses on camper progression, individual growth, team building, and leadership growth within our programming efforts. Each experience at camp is designed with intentionality to assist each camper with reaching short, medium, and long term goals. Within our camper and group based activities, campers are given a sense of belonging, achievement, all while making new friends and everlasting memories.

Staff

Our staff team is our greatest resource and the most important ingredient in the success of our program. Our staff consists of public educators, youth coaches, student-athletes, high school juniors and seniors, and college students. Prior to hiring, each staff member completes a personal interview, CORI/SORI checks, and reference checks. Our staff ratio minimums are 1:5 for ages 6 and under and 1:10 for 7 and up (this does not include Volunteers or CIT's). The staff as a whole completes a five day staff training. Staff member holds certifications in CPR/AED and First Aid. Our Archery, High Ropes, and Lifeguards, also hold certifications for their specific skill area.

Babysitting Policy

The YMCA of Greater Westfield's Code of Conduct prohibits staff members from outside contact with children met through any YMCA programs.

Swimming

Campers will be given the opportunity to participate in instructional and recreational swim. We have an in-ground pool which is staffed with 2 lifeguards and other staff members are assigned strategic positions to ensure camper safety. At no point will the lifeguard to swimmer ratio be more than 1:25. YMCA Camp Shepard ensures the safety of each individual child by following a test, mark, protect procedure. All campers are given a swim test by a Certified Lifeguard on their first day and are allowed to retest as many times as they like as they progress due to swimming instruction. Each swimmer is marked to easily identify their level and placed with necessary restrictions including: area of the pool and life jackets. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your campers' safety please do not hesitate to contact the Camp Director or CEO.

Scheduling/Camp Events

Your camper will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities while at camp. A typical day includes 6 45-minute periods (3 before lunch and 3 after lunch). We aim to provide a well-rounded experience and ensuring each group with equal time in each "skill area". Skill areas include but are not limited to: Archery, Creative Arts, Canoeing/Kayaking, High/Low Ropes Challenge and Rock Climbing, Mountain Biking (10+), Nature Classes, and Sports. Each group is intentionally scheduled free periods where they may use this time to prepare their camp sites, go on hikes, and challenge other groups to friendly competitions. Campers will also enjoy participating in theme days scheduled in the middle of the week. Schedules outlining their activities and these special events/days will be provided on the first day of each session.

What to bring:

- Backpack
- Two Masks
- Lunch
- Swimsuit
- Towel
- Water Bottle
- Sun Screen
- Bug Spray
- Rain Coat
- Close Toed Shoes

*be prepared to get dirty

What to leave at home:

- Toys
- Games
- Cell Phones
- Any electronics
- Money/Valuable items

*Campers will only need items on the "what to bring" list.

If you have any questions/concerns please contact the Camp Director.

Transportation

Extended AM/PM Care

In order to better accommodate families with schedules that span past the general session camp hours (9 AM – 4 PM) we provide extended care. AM and PM Extended Day are \$50 each per camper per session, or \$100 for both per camper per session. Camper Registration Forms need to indicate participation in extended day if they plan to attend these hours. Morning hours run from 7-8:30AM and afternoon hours run from 4:30-6PM. Parent drop-off runs from 8:30-9:00AM, and parent pick-up runs from 4:00-4:30PM, both for no additional cost. Games, songs, and crafts will be provided during this time. Families will be responsible for paying a \$1/minute late fee after 6 PM unless it is an emergency situation communicated to and approved by the Camp Director.

Pick Up/Drop off Procedures

The YMCA of Greater Westfield will only release campers to adults listed on the registration under "Authorized Pick Up". Additions to a camper authorized pick up list can only be made in person, by a Parent/Guardian, with a valid state photo identification. All authorized adults must present valid photo state identification or they will not be allowed to pick up a camper. If there is a restraining/custody/court order regarding your child, please provide us with a copy. If you are dropping your camper off or plan to pick them up between 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM you must do so at YMCA Camp Shepard's Administrative Office (Brown House) located at 360 Northwest Road which is located approximately 30 yards uphill from the main gate.

*If there are any potential concerns regarding the security of your camper please contact the Camp Director at least one week prior to your campers first day.

Enrollment

Registration

In order to register a child for YMCA Camp Shepard, a Parent/Guardian must fully complete the registration form, sign the waivers, and provide the health form with an immunization record completed within the last 2 years from your campers last day within our program. Registrations need to be processed at the YMCA of Greater Westfield on 67 Court Street in Westfield, MA. After a registration is processed, payments may be made

over the phone. Without health form/immunization record your camper can not be present in our program per the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Payment

A \$50 non-refundable deposit must be paid on EACH session that a camper is registered for. This deposit will hold the camper's place and will be applied to the full camp tuition. Remaining balances must be paid by the Thursday prior to the beginning of the registered session. Fees will not be refunded for absences.

Attendance

If your child is absent for a day during the week or session they are registered for, please call the camp office prior to the day starting to confirm absence for the day. If your child is registered for a week/session and will not be attending, please call the camp office prior to the week starting.

Financial Aid

The YMCA of Greater Westfield believes that no child should be excluded from a program because they are unable to afford the fees. Financial assistance is available for those who qualify within our income-family size scale. Financial aid applications can be found at the YMCA's reception desk. To apply, complete the application and provide this year's income tax, three pay stubs, or letter outlining government provided benefits. Please allow up to 10 business days for processing. Other organizations such as the New England Farm Workers provide subsidies and vouchers for youth to attend YMCA Camp Shepard.

Health/Emergency Policies

Medications

In order for any camper to receive ANY type of medication while at camp the parent must complete the "Authorization to Administer Medication" form which is available at the reception desk of the YMCA, YMCA of Greater Westfield Website, and YMCA Camp Shepard offices. The medication must remain in its original packaging. The Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director, and Office Manager are the only staff permitted to administer medication.

Inhalers, Epi-Pens, Insulin and Other Emergency Medications

Pertinent information regarding any special medical considerations and allergies must be clearly noted on the Health Form. All inhalers and other emergency medications will be

readily available to program staff members who work directly with the camper. These medications must also be accompanied with a completed "Authorization to Administer Medication" form and a copy must be present in the camp office as well.

ill Campers

In consideration of the health and well-being of all program participants and staff members, YMCA programs cannot allow ill children to attend. An ill child is defined as someone who is experiencing symptoms ranging from minor cold to communicable disease. If a child cannot participate in the regularly scheduled programs, he/she should remain at home. Note that our employees will also abide by the same policies as the campers. A camper who becomes ill during the day will be cared for in the camp office until an authorized adult is able to pick them up as promptly as possible. They will be isolated at the YMCA Camp Shepard office in the meantime. In the event of exposure to communicable disease, families will be notified via automated text message, phone call, email, or note home.

Soiled Clothing

It is a requirement of enrollment that campers be toilet trained but sometimes in the height of excitement bathroom accidents do occur. In the event that your camper experiences an accident while at camp we will contact the Parent/Guardian, double bag their soiled clothing, attach the time/date of the accident to the bag, and send the clothing home with them at the end of the day. We exercise regular bathroom/water breaks in between activities and no child will ever be denied/delayed access to bathroom facilities or water.

Minor Injuries

Minor accidents such as cuts, bruises, etc. will be treated by a certified staff member per the health care written orders of our camp health care consultant. If warranted, the Parent/Guardian will be contacted. Parents will always be contacted for injuries involving the head, stings, or bleeding.

Serious Injury

In the event of a serious injury/illness at camp, 911 will be called and then the campers Parent/Guardian will be contacted. If the situation requires transportation to the hospital, one staff member will accompany the camper with their medical information.

Evacuation

In the event of serious weather, natural disaster, or fire YMCA Camp Shepard will be evacuated by bus to the YMCA of Greater Westfield.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Policy

It is the parent/guardians' responsibility to apply sunscreen and insect repellent to their child before releasing their child to the care of Camp Shepard. Please send in sunscreen and insect repellent (labeled with your child's name) in your camper's bag each day. If your child has sensitivity/allergies to certain sunscreens or insect repellents, please be sure to note this on the health and wellness form. When necessary, a counselor will assist each child that may be unable to personally apply his/her own sunscreen and insect repellent. When a child needs such assistance, the counselor will apply only on the exposed parts of the child's skin. Children will be requested to apply along their suit lines. Also, the counselor will only apply sunscreen and insect repellent while another counselor is present.

Ticks

Campers should do a DAILY tick check in a well-lit location. Locker Rooms are a good place to do a visual check of your body. Counselors and other staff are available to assist campers with checking for ticks upon their request. If campers should locate a tick on their body, they should not remove it themselves but instead ask for help from their counselor, healthcare supervisor, Assistant Director or Camp Director. If a tick is found and has to be removed, there will be a call home to notify the parent/guardian.

Lice

Children should be checked regularly at home and treated when head lice are found. Parents should learn to recognize head lice and teach their children not to share hats and scarves or personal hair care items, such as brushes, combs and hair ties. We require that children be free of nits before returning to camp.

Behavior

Rules We Live By

The following are general guidelines of our expectations and rules that we require campers to follow to ensure the safety of themselves and others as well as to ensure they have the best summer possible.

- Follow the CORE Values of the YMCA at all times:
 - **Caring**- Treat others the way you would like to be treated
 - **Honesty**- Be truthful to yourself and others at all times
 - **Respect**- Respect campers, staff, volunteers and Nature
 - **Responsibility**- Be responsible for yourself, your actions, and your items
- Follow Directions
- Keep your hands/feet to yourself
- Use appropriate language
- Stay with your group
- Leave rocks and sticks on the ground
- Do not use electronics

Behavior Management

Our camp advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention and the development of self-discipline. We remind campers that camp rules are established for safety, to keep campers organized, and to ensure a common standard of behavior. This is done in a positive manner so that campers feel the staff cares about them, and will work with them to develop a solution for behavior problems.

If a behavior becomes chronic or persistent, disciplinary actions may need to be taken which include supervised time-outs (never longer in minutes than camper is years old) or loss of privileges. Continued behavior problems will be immediately communicated to Parent/Guardian's and problems after that will result in a meeting with the Camp Director and family.

Discipline will never include physical contact, public humiliation, or anything that does not promote the healthy development of a child.

We teach children to resolve conflicts by peaceful and non-violent means. We expect that campers, staff, families, and visitors treat each other with respect and understanding.

Serious incidents or continued unacceptable behavior may warrant suspension/expulsion with no refund. As stated in the Parent Agreements:

- The YMCA reserves the right to dismiss a camper whose behavior is detrimental to other campers, themselves, staff and/or camp.

Unacceptable behaviors that may warrant dismissal from our program include but are not limited to: profanity, mental or bodily harm, continued disruption of activities, violation of law, engaging in sexual activity, possession of weapons, racism, and harassment.

For the Families

- At any time, parents have the right to review background checks, healthcare, and discipline policies. To do so, please contact the Camp Director.
- If at any time parents or families want to file a grievance, please take the following steps:
 - Please contact the Camp Director, Sam Martin, at the Camp Shepard Office number: 413-568-8952
 - If the Camp Director is unavailable please contact the CEO of the YMCA, Andrea Allard: 413-568-8631 ext.301
 - If neither is available, please visit the front desk of the YMCA or call 413-568-8631 and you will be assisted.

The following information regarding *meningococcal disease* is provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in accordance with M.G.L. c.111, s.219 and 105 CMR 430.157(C). Reviewed September 2020 Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Divisions of Epidemiology and Immunization, 305 South Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Meningococcal Disease and Camp Attendees: Commonly Asked Questions

What is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is caused by infection with bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*. These bacteria can infect the tissue (the “meninges”) that surrounds the brain and spinal cord and cause meningitis, or they may infect the blood or other organs of the body. Symptoms of meningococcal disease may appear suddenly. Fever, severe and constant headache, stiff neck or neck pain, nausea and vomiting, and rash can all be signs of meningococcal disease. Changes in behavior such as confusion, sleepiness, and trouble waking up can also be important symptoms. In the US, about 350-550 people get meningococcal disease each year and 10-15% die despite receiving antibiotic treatment. Of those who survive, about 10-20% may lose limbs, become hard of hearing or deaf, have problems with their nervous system, including long term neurologic problems, or have seizures or strokes. Less common presentations include pneumonia and arthritis.

How is meningococcal disease spread?

These bacteria are passed from person-to-person through saliva (spit). You must be in close contact with an infected person’s saliva in order for the bacteria to spread. Close contact includes activities such as kissing, sharing water bottles, sharing eating/drinking utensils or sharing cigarettes with someone who is infected; or being within 3-6 feet of someone who is infected and is coughing and sneezing.

Who is most at risk for getting meningococcal disease?

People who travel to certain parts of the world where the disease is very common, microbiologists, people with HIV infection and those exposed to meningococcal disease during an outbreak are at risk for meningococcal disease. Children and adults with damaged or removed spleens or persistent complement component deficiency (an inherited immune disorder) are at risk. Adolescents, and people who live in certain settings such as college freshmen living in dormitories and military recruits are at greater risk of disease from some of the serotypes.

Are camp attendees at increased risk for meningococcal disease?

Children attending day or residential camps are **not** considered to be at an increased risk for meningococcal disease because of their participation.

Is there a vaccine against meningococcal disease?

Yes, there are 2 different meningococcal vaccines. Quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine (Menactra and Menveo) protects against 4 serotypes (A, C, W and Y) of meningococcal disease. Meningococcal serogroup B vaccine (Bexsero and Trumenba) protects against serogroup B meningococcal disease, for age 10 and older.

Should my child or adolescent receive meningococcal vaccine?

That depends. Meningococcal conjugate vaccine is routinely recommended at age 11-12 years with a booster at age 16. In addition, these vaccines may be recommended for children with certain high-risk health conditions, such as those described above. Otherwise, meningococcal vaccine is **not** recommended for attendance at camps.

Meningococcal serogroup B vaccine (Bexsero and Trumenba) is recommended for people with certain relatively rare high-risk health conditions (examples: persons with a damaged spleen or whose spleen has been removed, those with persistent complement component deficiency (an inherited disorder), and people who may have been exposed during an outbreak). Adolescents and young adults (16 through 23 years of age) who do not have high risk conditions may be vaccinated with a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine, preferably at 16 through 18 years of age, to provide short term protection for most strains of serogroup B meningococcal disease. Parents of adolescents and children who are at higher risk of infection, because of certain medical conditions or other circumstances, should discuss vaccination with their child’s healthcare provider.

How can I protect my child or adolescent from getting meningococcal disease?

The best protection against meningococcal disease and many other infectious diseases is thorough and frequent handwashing, respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette. Individuals should:

1. wash their hands often, especially after using the toilet and before eating or preparing food (hands should be washed with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand gel or rub may be used if hands are not visibly dirty);
2. cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and discard the tissue in a trash can; or if they don’t have a tissue, cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve.
3. not share food, drinks or eating utensils with other people, especially if they are ill.
4. contact their healthcare provider immediately if they have symptoms of meningococcal disease.

If your child is exposed to someone with meningococcal disease, antibiotics may be recommended to keep your child from getting sick.

You can obtain more information about meningococcal disease or vaccination from your healthcare provider, your local Board of Health (listed in the phone book under government), or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Divisions of Epidemiology and Immunization at (617) 983-6800 or on the MDPH website at www.mass.gov/dph.

