



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

ACTIVE, SAFE & HAVING FUN

2026 Parent's Summer Camp Handbook
YMCA of Bristol



General Childcare Information

We're excited that you've chosen the YMCA of Bristol's Summer Day Camp! Our program is designed with your child in mind, providing a caring and encouraging environment where every child can grow and shine.

This Parent Manual includes important information to help ensure a successful camp experience. Please read it carefully and contact your Camp Director with any questions or concerns.

Thank you to you and your family for choosing the Y. We appreciate your partnership and look forward to a great summer!

STAFF

The YMCA prides itself on hiring high-quality staff who embody our mission and serve as positive role models for children. Our counselors, many of whom are high school and college students, are selected through a comprehensive application and interview process and often have prior experience in YMCA programs.

All staff members complete training that emphasizes safety, child development, and creating a fun, engaging camp experience.

APPLICATION & REQUIRED PAPERWORK

All parents must complete a Summer Day Camp application for each child and return it at the time of registration.

The Y's Summer Camp programs serve children ages 5–12. Children ages 13–15 may apply for our Leaders Program.

The YMCA of Bristol strives to accommodate children with physical challenges or special needs on a case-by-case basis, with the goal of serving all children who attend. If your child requires 1-on-1 assistance, it is your responsibility to provide it, as the YMCA does not have the capacity to offer this support.

The Y does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, or national/ethnic origin in its personnel or admissions policies. We also aim to foster a culturally diverse population among our staff, participants, and programs.

SUMMER CAMP DAYS & HOURS OF OPERATION

Child care is available Monday through Friday, except:

Memorial Day (5/25/26)

Additional days may be added at the discretion of the Childcare Director.

Camp hours: 9:00am – 5:00pm

Drop-off: 7:00am – 9:00am

Pick-up: 5:00pm – 6:00pm

Campers must be signed in and out every day to ensure safety. A staff member will greet you at your vehicle, check ID, and assist with signing your child in or out.

Drop off and pick up will take place in the alleyway which is between the building and gravel parking lot.

Parents cannot drop off late or pick up early between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm due to scheduled camp activities.

All camp programs close promptly at 6:00 pm.

COMMUNICATION

For immediate assistance or in case of emergency, please call the Y directly at 423-968-3133. In an emergency, we will contact parents or guardians using the phone numbers listed on your child's application, in order of priority. If we cannot reach you, we will call the designated emergency contacts.

We also communicate with families through:

Website: www.bristolymca.net

Email updates for the Camp Director

Facebook & Instagram: YMCA of Bristol

YMCA of Bristol 360 App

Remind Me App

YMCA staff will provide periodic updates about your child's participation. We aim to keep families informed through newsletters, posted signs, emails, and staff communication during drop-off and pick-up. If you have any questions, please contact the Camp Director: Britnee@bristolymca.net

What to bring

Campers must bring daily :

- Backpack, swim suit, towel, extra change of clothing, and a refillable water bottle is a must due to hot temperatures. Ice water is available at coolers around camp.
- Lunch may be brought if preferred.
- Sunscreen is provided, but if you prefer specific types may be sent in the original labeled container.
- Please ensure all belongings are labeled with your child's first and last name so lost items can be returned. Every year we have so much lost and found and this helps with returning it to the camper.

Policies and Procedures

FOOD POLICY

The YMCA provides breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Families may choose to pack food from home for picky eaters or children with food allergies; however, please note that we cannot refrigerate or heat meals. All packed food must be labeled with the child's name. Gum and candy are not permitted and should not be packed in lunch boxes.

FOOD ALLERGIES/OUTSIDE FOOD

The health and safety of our campers is our top priority. It is essential that the Summer Camp staff be informed of any food allergies at the time of enrollment.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Cell phones are not permitted at camp and may be held by staff for safety reasons. Toys, personal listening devices, portable game devices, trading cards, stuffed animals, and money should remain home. The YMCA and staff are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

DRESS/ SHOE POLICY

Children should wear comfortable, appropriate clothing for indoor and outdoor activities. While we use washable paints and crayons, clothing may still get stained. The YMCA is not responsible for rips, stains, or normal wear and tear. Parents are expected to provide proper seasonal clothing, including a bathing suit and towel for swimming. Please send your child to camp already in their swimsuit. In some cases your child will participate first thing in water activities and this allows more time for our campers to enjoy these activities.

DAILY SWIMWEAR POLICY

Participants must arrive each day wearing their bathing suit under their clothes. We have daily water activities, and changing on site takes away from activity time.

CLOSED-TOE SHOES MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES

Open-toed shoes, including Chacos, flip-flops, and Crocs, are not permitted due to safety concerns. Sneakers are recommended. **Children who do not wear appropriate footwear may be unable to participate in certain activities.**

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

The YMCA will make every effort to provide care during inclement weather; however, the safety of children and staff is our top priority. The Y may close or adjust operations due to hazardous weather conditions. Families will be notified of closings or policy changes using the communication procedures 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.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

The YMCA takes every precaution to ensure camper safety during transportation. Campers must follow all safety rules while riding, including remaining seated and keeping arms, hands, and heads inside the vehicle. Roughhousing is not permitted. Children are loaded and unloaded only at safe locations and released only to authorized adults.

Campers participate in daily off-site travel and field trips. After returning from off-site activities, children will not be released until all campers have safely entered the playground or designated sign-out area. All YMCA drivers hold a valid CDL passenger endorsement and meet required health standards. YMCA buses are regularly inspected and maintained to ensure safe transportation.

WEATHER POLICY

The YMCA's top priority is camper and staff safety. Severe weather may delay pickup and slow traffic as staff ensure all children are safe. Outdoor activities may be modified, postponed, or moved indoors. Families will be notified of changes using established communication methods. Children should come prepared for the weather, including sunscreen, hats, water bottles, and appropriate clothing.

NO BABYSITTING POLICY

Y child care staff are prohibited from babysitting participants of Y programs, including transportation to or from camp.

OUTSIDE PLAY

We believe children need and want to be outdoors. Running, jumping, and other physical activities help children develop strength and skills. Campers will play outside whenever weather permits.

WATERFRONT AND POOL SAFETY

Waterfront (Camp Friendship):

Campers participating in waterfront activities must wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket. Removing the life jacket or refusing to wear it during activities may result in disciplinary action.

Swimming (YMCA Pool):

Campers swim several days per week.

A swim assessment occurs on the first day of swimming each session.

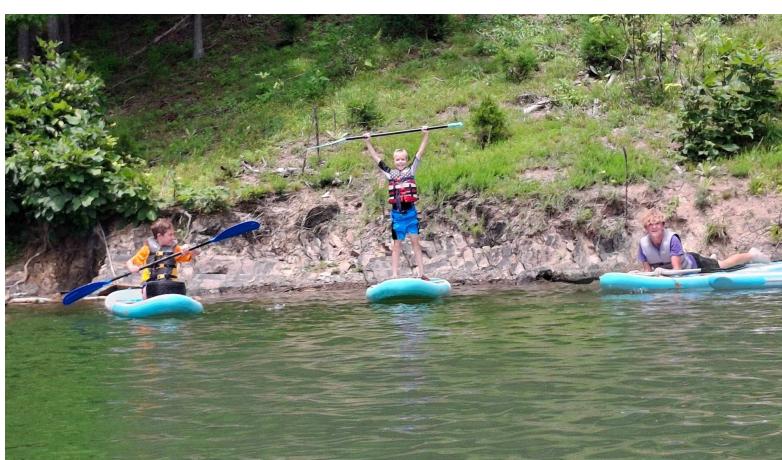
Color-coded swim bands indicate swimming ability:

Green: strong swimmers,

Yellow: Requires assistance but a life jacket is not required, Campers are only allowed to use the lower half of the pool.

Red: requires life jacket but encouraged to practice and try again. All campers despite their level will stay in the therapy pool.

Campers who do not pass the swim test, or opt out, will wear a US Coast Guard-approved life jackets.



Parent Responsibilities

PAYMENT POLICY

Camp payments are drafted each Monday prior to the week of attendance. A \$25 deposit per week is required at registration to hold your child's spot. Deposits will be applied to the weekly price.

Parents are responsible for full payment for all registered weeks unless a two-week notice is provided or the camper is unable to attend due to illness or injury.

LATE, RETURNED OR PAST DUE PAYMENTS

Late or returned payments may result in additional fees and suspension of camp attendance until the account is paid in full.

TERMINATION & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Written notice is required if you choose to withdraw your child from the program and must be submitted to the Child Care Director.

Financial assistance is available thanks to the YMCA's Annual Giving Campaign. Families experiencing financial hardship should contact Member Services. Applications are available through Member Services or online at bristolymca.net. Assistance may cover up to 40% of program costs on a case-by-case basis.

ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE & PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Parent Visits: Parents wishing to tour or visit camp should schedule with the Camp Director. All visitors must check in at the front office and be escorted by camp staff at all times.

Notification of Attendance: To ensure a smooth transition and safety for all children, please notify us in advance if your child will be absent.

Late Pick-Up Policy: If you anticipate being late, please call the camp. Programs close at 6:00 pm, and children must be picked up on time. Late fees are \$15 per 15-minute interval after 6:00 pm.

If we cannot reach you by 6:00 pm, staff will contact your emergency contacts. If no contact can be reached, your child will be supervised for up to one hour. After that, the police and Child Protective Services will be contacted to ensure your child's safety.

EXCESSIVE LATE PICK-UP POLICY

To ensure the safety of all children and smooth operation of our programs, repeated late pick-ups are not permitted. If a child is picked up late more than three times in a program cycle, the YMCA may require removal of the child from the program.



MEDICATION POLICY

Children may not carry medication unless it must be dispensed on their person.

Any medication given during camp requires a signed Medication Administration Form.

Over-the-counter medication authorizations are valid for one program season; new forms must be completed each season.

Prescribed or long-term medications (asthma, ADHD, allergies, etc.) require a doctor-completed Medication Administration Form which you can request from your doctor.

All medication must be in the original labeled container and stored in a locked with certified staff.

Medication may not always be administered as requested, and staff cannot be held responsible for missed doses. Only certified Medication Administrators may dispense medication.

Staff will administer sunscreen and insect repellent as needed. If you send your own product, it must be in the original labeled container.

SICK CHILD POLICY

The health and safety of campers is a top priority. Children who become ill at camp will be sent home, and arrangements made for pick-up. Siblings in the same home will also be required to be picked up.

Children may return after being symptom-free for 24 hours or with a doctor's note.

Parents should keep children home if they have: fever (which is considered 100 or above), vomiting, diarrhea, contagious rash, severe cough, or other contagious conditions.

If a child becomes ill at camp, staff will contact parents immediately. Emergency contacts will be called if parents cannot be reached.

This policy protects the health of all children and ensures a safe, healthy

CHILD INJURY POLICY

All staff are trained in First Aid and CPR and will treat minor injuries while your child is in our care.

Parents will be notified at pick-up if a minor injury occurs.

For injuries beyond basic First Aid or any head injury, staff will attempt to contact parents immediately.

If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, staff will call the child's physician.

If necessary, an ambulance will be called.

Parents must have a signed consent form on file agreeing to this procedure.

Please keep the Y updated with current phone numbers, emergency contacts, and pertinent information.

CAMPERS RESPONSIBILITIES

BEHAVIOR POLICY

The YMCA uses a positive, supportive approach to guide children's behavior.

- Staff will talk with the camper to discuss behavior and reset expectations.
- Positive reinforcement and redirection are used first. If needed, a timeout allows the child to take a break before rejoining activities.
- If behavior continues despite these strategies, the Child Care Director may suspend the camper.
- The length of suspension depends on the situation and considers factors such as: type/severity of behavior, prior behavior history, and age of the child.
- Children may be dismissed from camp at any time, regardless of prior write-ups or interventions, if their behavior poses a safety risk to themselves or others.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict is a natural part of youth development and can be constructive when managed appropriately. We encourage healthy communication and proactive problem-solving to help children resolve conflicts respectfully and safely.

Any unwanted behavior involving a power imbalance is considered bullying. At the Y, we are committed to preventing and addressing bullying and encourage all participants, parents, and staff to be Upstanders—those who recognize when something is wrong and take action to help. All concerns related to bullying are taken seriously and addressed with care. The safety and well-being of our program participants is always our top priority.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline at the YMCA is viewed as an opportunity to guide children in their relationships and actions. By working with the child, not against them, the Y prioritizes the child's best interests. The goal of discipline is to help children control their behavior, make conscious decisions, and understand the consequences of their actions. Children who show a sincere desire to improve will be supported, as long as they do not pose a danger to themselves or others.

Prohibited Practices:

- Corporal punishment (e.g., spanking, forcing uncomfortable positions, restraining, enclosing in confined spaces, using exercise as punishment, withholding food/water/naps). Abusive or belittling language, including threats toward the child or their family
- Disciplining for toileting accidents
- Behavior Documentation & Communication:
 - Staff will document incidents in the child's file.
 - Parents may be notified by phone or at pick-up depending on the offense.

Intervention & Dismissal:

If negative behavior continues, the child will meet with the Child Care Director, and parents may be contacted to help resolve the situation. Children may be dismissed at any time for disruptive or harmful behavior or failure to follow the Participant Agreement. No refunds will be given if dismissal occurs.

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.