



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CAMP YOMECHAS PARENT HANDBOOK SUMMER 2026



OLD COLONY YMCA—MIDDLEBORO BRANCH
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WWW.OLDCOLONYYMCA.ORG

WELCOME, FROM THE CAMP DIRECTOR!

ENSURE A BRIGHTER FUTURE

It is our goal at Camp Yomechas to provide the building blocks necessary for child development. We purposely hire summer camp counselors who we believe will be positive role models and provide your child with the tools necessary to develop friendships and confidence; to feel empowered; to set boundaries; and to ensure your children are in a safe community where their best interests are our #1 priority. It is our objective to provide a creative learning environment through our youth programs and activities to engage, motivate, and induce self-esteem and to light your child's individual and unique spark.

We are dedicated to producing a great camp with exceptional role models so you and your child can rest assured that you picked the right place for your summer experience. Those are the experiences and memories that last a lifetime... We are sure you will agree that Camp Yomechas is the perfect destination for your child and family!

This year we are excited for you and your camper to join our family where we celebrate tradition, fun and memory making. We are thrilled that you have chosen us for your camp experience! The summer camp staff and I are excited to meet your camper! See you all very soon!

Sincerely,
Morgan Pritchard, Camp Director

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WELCOME!

Welcome to Old Colony YMCA Camp Yomechas where we are for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. We are delighted to offer a summer of fun, friendships, exploration and discovery for children and teens. This handbook is designed to present our policies, procedures, overview of camp, arrival/departure information, important reminders, and communication options.

Camp Yomechas is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and local Board of Health. Parents may request copies of our background check policies, health care policies, and discipline policies as well as procedure for filing grievances.

CAMP CONTACT INFORMATION

FOR EMERGENCIES, CAMP QUESTIONS AND BASIC INFORMATION

Camp Office | 508.947.9331

For reporting absences, changes to transportation or early dismissal, please utilize the Pick up patrol app!

Camp Director

Morgan Pritchard MEPrichard@oldcolonymca.org | 508-947-1390 X2114
(September-May) or 508-947-9331 (June-August)

Camp Billing Coordinator

Bridgette DeBoe BDeBoe@oldcolonymca.org | 508-947-1390 X2111

Executive Director

Julie Kennedy JKennedy@oldcolonymca.org | 508-947-1390 X2118

Camp Nurse

508-947-9331 | Available by phone June 16th—August 21st Only

*Please note: During the camp day, camp leadership staff are not always available to take your call; however, there is always a member of the Camp Yomechas staff available to answer or refer your call to the appropriate staff person. All calls will be answered in a timely manner.

TUITION / REFUND POLICY

- \$60 registration fee per week per child. This fee is non-refundable.
- Payments must be paid in full no later than June 1, 2026 or upon registration thereafter. Payments must be paid in full prior to your child attending camp.
- Tuition refund may be awarded for medical reasons (doctors note required) or relocation of family with proper documentation with director approval. A formal request for refund must be made in writing.

CAMP OVERVIEW

STAFF RATIOS

Staff Ratios —Camper to Staff ratio is 1:10 for campers ages 7 and up. Campers age 4.5-6 will be in ratios of 1:5. Campers will remain in their groups for the entire day.

SWIM TIME

While at Camp Yomechas, your child will be participating in water fun and safety. This will be the time for the children to cool down throughout their camp days and learn more about being safe in the water! If you would like formal swim lessons please check our offerings for after-camp swim lessons!

CAMP LUNCH

Utilize our breakfast and lunch program or pack your camper with a lunch! Breakfast and Lunch is available on site. Please be sure you have indicated on the camp forms whether or not you would like to have your child receive camp lunch. All provided lunches are held to Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards. We cannot refrigerate or heat up your child's lunch, please pack your lunch in a cooler. All lunches will be stored in the shade. **WE ARE NOT A PEANUT-FREE CAMP!** If your child has a peanut allergy, please write it on your medical forms. All counselors will be notified and will make sure your child will not be near other children consuming peanut products.

Please provide a variety of snacks and a refillable water bottle for your child. It is a very busy, active day, and lunch alone will typically not suffice.

CHILD SAFETY—WORKING TOGETHER

Everyone shares a responsibility to help keep children safe, ensure their rights are protected and that their needs are met. The safety and wellbeing of the children and youth in our care is our primary concern. Old Colony YMCA has zero tolerance for inappropriate behavior involving children, and we take multiple steps to prevent child sexual abuse within our organization.

STAY IN THE LOOP

- Be sure to stay in the loop by checking your emails and Facebook for our weekly camp updates. This year we'll be relying on ClassDojo to communicate with our families. Stay tuned for more information from our Camp Yomechas team on connecting to ClassDojo.
- We utilize a Pick Up Patrol service, to help organize early dismissal, changes to transportation and so much more. Please keep an eye out for enrollment information as this is the only method of making changes to your child's transportation. Enrollment information will be emailed to you at the start of the summer.

OFF-HOURS CONTACT BETWEEN STAFF AND CAMPERS

The YMCA prohibits staff members from babysitting for, caring for, providing instruction to, or engaging in a social relationship outside of approved YMCA activities with children (other than family) who participate in YMCA programs or class activities. This policy is designed for the protection of all involved - children, staff members, parents, and the YMCA. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to talk to with the camp director.

CAMP OPTIONS FOR 2026

TRADITIONAL DAY CAMP

- Highlighted in the sample schedule below
- Full week option only
- Adjusted to ensure that your camper has the safest, most fun summer possible.
- 9:00am to 4:00pm daily
- Rolling drop-off and pick-up for parent drop off campers

4-WEEK CIT OPTION (14-15 YEAR OLDS)

CITs (Counselors In Training) will have the opportunity to work with our Role Models as mentors, while engaging with our campers in a hands on learning environment! CITs will gain additional experience through team building, asset development, service learning projects and mock interviews. They will also be exposed to various trainings from some of our best YMCA leadership staff including Listen First and Bully Prevention to name a few! In seeing the benefits of developing our future leaders, the CIT program is now **FREE** for members!

A TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP YOMECHAS (SAMPLE SCHEDULE)

8:00-9:00am	Extended AM Care (Optional, Additional Cost)
8:45 -9:00am	Parent Drop Off and Bus Arrival
9:15-9:45am	Opening Ceremonies
9:45-10:15am	Archery
10:30-11:15am	Volleyball
11:15-12:00pm	Pool
12:00-12:30pm	Lunch
12:30-1:15pm	Gaga Pit
1:15-2:00pm	Natures Classroom
2:00-2:45pm	Ropes Course
2:45-3:30pm	Kickball
3:30-3:45pm	Clean-Up/Gather Belongings/Closing Ceremonies
3:45-4:00pm	Parent Pick Up and Bus Dismissal
4:00-5:00pm	Extended PM Care (Optional, Additional Cost)

CAMP FUN

- **Waterfront swimming and boating** to splash around with your friends
- An **arts & crafts** cabin to invoke creativity
- An **archery range** to enhance your skills and accuracy
- A **sports program** to release your energy
- A **nature's classroom** to explore the unknown
- **Camp spirit** that includes a variety of theme days—visit our website for theme calendar!

SO MANY OPTIONS
ARE AVAILABLE! HELP
YOUR CHILD

LEARN
DEVELOP
ACHIEVE



STAY CONNECTED WITH CLASS DOJO

CLASS DOJO is where we will be sharing photos and updates of campers throughout the day!
Use the QR code for your campers age group to join!

JOIN OUR CAMP– STEP BY STEP GUIDE

STEP 1: Scan the code

STEP 2: Create an account or log in to an existing account

STEP 3: Find your child's class and request to join (If you child is participating in more than one camp this summer, submit to join both classes)

STEP 4: Set notifications to active to receive up to date notices from your group leader!





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2026 THEME CALENDAR

CAMP YOMECHAS | Old Colony YMCA | 508-947-9331

Dates	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 2 June 22— June 26	Week Two Theme: Explore the World (CUP)				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Twin Day- Grab a friend and dress alike. You'll be seeing double!	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Show your Sports Pride- Camp Cup Kick Off!	Wear your Camp shirt to collect signatures!
Week 3 June 29— July 3	Week Three Theme: Party in the USA				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Pajama Day	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Red, White & Blue Celebration	CAMP CLOSED!
Week 4 July 6— July 10	Week Four Theme: Splash into Summer				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Mismatch Day	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Pirates & Mermaids Adventure- Get ready to set sail to Treasure Island!	Wear your Camp shirt to collect signatures!
Week 5 July 13— July 17	Week Five Theme: Time Travelers				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Back to the Future- Come dressed as your future Career or Dream Job	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Decade Dance Party- Travel through time with music and costumes *Camp Family Night*	Wear your Camp shirt to collect signatures!
Week 6 July 20— July 24	Week Six Theme: Colorful Camp				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Holiday Mash Up- Represent your favorite holiday as we trick or treat around Camp!	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Camp Color Wars- Spirited challenges, relays and contests to earn points for your Village!	Wear your Camp shirt to collect signatures!
Week 7 July 27— July 31	Week Seven Theme: Once Upon a Hero				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Superheros vs. Sidekicks- Avengers Assemble!	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Disney Day *Camp Family Night*	Wear your Camp shirt to collect signatures!
Week 8 August 3— August 7	Week Eight Theme: Lights, Camera, Action!				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Inside Out Day- The movie or your outfit --You decide!	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Yomechas Got Talent- Showcase your Talent and dress to impress on the Y Red Carpet	Wear your Camp shirt to collect signatures!
Week 9 August 10— August 14	Week Nine Theme: Carnival Chaos				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Wacky Hair Day	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Camp Carnival *Camp Family Night*	Wear your Camp shirt to collect signatures!
Week 10 August 17— August 21	Week Ten Theme: Wild, Wet and Wacky				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Mad Hatter Day- Wear your wackiest hat	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Let's Back Luau- Say Aloha to summer with the ultimate Splash Bash	Wear your Camp shirt to collect signatures!
Week 11 August 24— August 28	Week Eleven Theme: Sun, Fun, & Summer's Done				
	Welcome to Camp Yomechas!	Backwards Day	Sweet Treat Stop! - Bring \$ for a sweet treat!	Summer Special- Extra week, Extra fun! Come ready for the ultimate Pool Party!	Wear your Camp shirt to collect signatures!

PREPARING FOR CAMP



CLOTHING

Plan on dressing your camper in comfortable clothes. Be sure the camper is familiar with personal items and can identify them in the event of a loss. **Label everything** including swim suits, towels, lunch boxes, etc. Campers are encouraged to wear closed-toe shoes that will provide some support and tread (sneakers work best). All clothing should be appropriate for outdoor play. We recommend sending them in clothes that are **OK** to get dirty, as our fun activities sometimes end with a lot of mess! All campers should bring a swimsuit and towel every day.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks are good for transporting items to and from camp. Please label the backpack with your camper's name! Campers have a designated area to leave their backpack during the day. Backpacks with wheels are often more of a hindrance than a convenience, as they are hard to wheel over the grass, wood chips, and terrain.

LUNCH & SNACKS

Utilize our lunch program or pack your camper with a lunch! Lunches will be left at their group's meeting area. All campers should bring a refillable water bottle as we have water stations available to our campers at all times. Again, there is no refrigeration available but freezing a water bottle makes a great ice pack and a refreshing afternoon drink!

SUNSCREEN/BUGSPRAY/HAND SANITIZER

We ask that you apply sunscreen to your child before you drop them off at camp each morning, and that you provide them with sunscreen to be kept in their backpacks. Sunscreen should also be labeled with your camper's name. Counselors will have campers reapply sunscreen multiple times throughout the day. We ask that you provide your child with bug spray/hand sanitizer to be kept in their backpacks. Items should be labeled with your camper's name. Counselors will have campers reapply multiple times throughout the day and depending on the activities they are participating at camp.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Camp is a natural setting to retreat from the amenities of electronic technology and to discover self-potential, group dynamics, friendships and nature. Cell phones, iPad/tablets, kindles, Nintendo DS/DSI, MP3 players, iPod, Pokémon or other trading cards, toys, etc. do not fit into the camp setting. Please do not send any valuable or meaningful items to camp with your child, leave these items at home. There is zero tolerance policy to any vapes, tobacco or any substance abuse on camp property. Any child with this in their possession will be removed from camp property and no refunds will be provided.

LOST & FOUND NOTICE

All lost & found items can be claimed at pick up and drop off. We strongly recommend labeling all camper items. Reminder: Campers need to leave their personal belongings and electronics at home. They are **NOT PERMITTED** at camp. **The Y and our staff will not be responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items, toys or electronics.**

RAINY DAYS and EXTREME HEAT

Rain Days: Depending on the weather we will always try to continue with rain safe activities for as long as possible. Please plan and pack your camper with appropriate rain day attire. When inclement weather hits, our campers will be asked to move indoors, and stay in one specific area of the building if necessary.

In the case of extreme heat, we utilize all shaded areas, implement extra swim/water activities and we utilize lodges indoors to move some activities inside with A/C. We do request that you prepare your camper with clothes/gear for all weather. Camp leadership staff will make decisions during inclement weather to ensure safety for all campers.

PICKUP PATROL

PickUp Patrol is an online platform that manages dismissal time more efficiently and safely. Families conveniently submit plan changes for their children through the web app. Camp Yomechas can easily track absences, early dismissals and end-of-day plans. The system helps speed up dismissal time and adds a layer of security for your children. You will receive an email the Friday prior to your child attending Camp to register for PickUp Patrol.

BUS TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

Please arrive at the bus stop at least 10 minutes prior to your buses' scheduled arrival or departure time. It is important to have all parents and campers at the bus stop to ensure an efficient bus route. Please note that a child may not be left alone while waiting for the bus. A parent or guardian must be with the child to ensure proper safety. If your child is a "walker" and will be arriving and departing the stop alone, please be aware that you take full responsibility for their safety. The Old Colony YMCA is not responsible for any child until they are safely on the bus or signed out at the end of the day. Campers will have assigned seating on all busses.

The opportunity to ride on the camp bus is a privilege that can be revoked if behavior issues occur on the bus. Any child removed from the bus due to behavior will not receive a refund for transportation services. We expect campers to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner which includes:

- No yelling, swearing, hitting etc. while on the bus
- Campers must be seated at all times
- No destruction of the bus or personal property
- No food or beverage consumption while on the bus
- No technology on the bus

***Please note bus monitors and drivers may implement rules subject to their discretion such as silent bus rides, assigned seats etc. All rules put in place are to improve the safety and ease of transportation for both the passengers and the drivers.**

Please make sure you discuss proper bus behavior with your camper prior to the start of camp to ensure a safe and successful camp season. Unruly behavior, destruction of bus or personal property, or endangering the safety of the bus riders may result in exclusion of that person from using the bus.



ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Attendance is taken at the beginning of every day. If a child shows up late, we will add them to the attendance to make sure they are accounted for.

ATTENTION PARENTS

ALL persons **INCLUDING PARENTS** picking up campers must have a **PICTURE ID and be listed as authorized on your registration form.** This is necessary to maintain the highest of standards.

CAMP ARRIVAL INFO

Extended AM Care 8:00–9:00am AND Parent Drop Off 8:45 – 9:15am

Please follow the route as designated by your camp team. A camp staff will escort your child to his or her group. All drop off will be rolling.

Bus

Please arrive at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to your buses scheduled departure. A staff member will meet you at a designated area to check your camper in. Buses will arrive at camp at 9am and all campers will be escorted to their groups to be checked in. *All bus times are approximate and stop locations are subject to change.

Late Drop Offs

It is crucial to make every effort to follow your drop off time. Campers start their day promptly at 9:30am so please try to make every effort to get your child here prior to that start time so they do not miss activities.

CAMP DEPARTURE INFO

EARLY DISMISSAL

- No child may leave the camp grounds for early dismissal without his/her parent or guardian signing him/her out in front of the camp with a leadership staff present.
- All early dismissals MUST GO INTO PICK UP PATROL APP
- ****DUE TO DISMISSAL PROCEDURES: NO CAMPER WILL BE DISMISSED BETWEEN 3:30–3:45PM****

Traditional Camp Pick Up—3:45–4:00pm AND Extended PM Care 4:00–5:00pm

Parent pick up will resemble parent drop off as it will be a rolling pick up procedure. Parents will enter the Camp Yomechas road with an ID ready. Parents will proceed to same location as drop off to sign out camper. Once ID is confirmed, camper will be escorted to the car by a YMCA camp staff. Reminder that the camp exit road onto Route 28 is right turn only to help with ease of traffic.

Bus Pick up:

An authorized person must be present at the bus stop with an ID. If you are not present for the camper, he/she will be brought back to camp for dismissal. *All bus times are approximate and stop locations are subject to change.

Late Pick Ups

Late pick ups will not be permitted at camp. All campers must be picked up by 4:00 pm (or 5:00 pm if registered for Extended PM care). First time late pick ups will receive a 10 minute grace window. After the first incident, any consecutive late pick ups will be subject to a late fee of \$20 per 15 minutes. Inability to consistently pick up camper on time will result in termination of care.

WALKERS

A note must be given to allow your child to walk or bike to and from camp or a bus stop with approval from the Camp Director. Child must be 12 years of age or older.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS



PHYSICALS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

Up to date physical and immunization reports must be on file **BEFORE** the child attends their first day of camp. Children will be unable to attend camp if these reports are not on file.

HEALTH FORMS: All required health forms must be completed in the registration packet. In accordance with state regulations, no child will be permitted to be at camp without all required documentation completed.

PHOTO NOTICE

The following photo release is contained in the camp application you have filled out for your camper(s). "It is understood and agreed that Old Colony Y reserves the right to take and utilize pictures, likenesses, videos, and testimonials of participants for promotional purposes including, but not limited to, reports, publications, brochures, emails, our website and other instances of online presence in perpetuity." If for any reason you do not want your child photographed, please be sure that you have written **"DO NOT PHOTO"** on the application.

MEDICAL CONCERNS

Care plan for Mildly Ill Campers

When a camper feels ill, the responsible counselor will remove the child from activities to determine whether the child is over-heated or over-tired. If after a period of time, the child still feels ill, the responsible counselor will take him/her to the nurse's station. After discussion and examination the camp nurse will determine if the child should be separated and lie down for a while, or if the parent should be called to pick up the child. The child who is not sent home will remain in the nurse's station until recovered to a point where he/she can rejoin regular camp activities.

Plan For Administering Medication

1. When a camper needs either prescription or non-prescription medication administered during camp time, the parent will fill out and sign the authorization to administer medication to a camper form. This form will be given to the Camp Director or responsible counselor, along with the medication in its original container bearing the pharmacy label (showing prescription number, date filled and prescriber's name, name of medication, directions for use and patient's name). In the case of non-prescribed medication, the parent will write out and sign detailed instructions for dosages.
2. The camper's counselor will take the instructions and medications to the camp nurse, who will lock the medication in the storage cabinet (or put in refrigerator, as is appropriate) and log in the information on the child's daily log for medication administration.
3. The camp nurse will review all requests for administration of medications, compare them with the health record, and using the Health Care Consultant Acknowledgement of On-Site Medications Form, given signed written orders for the health supervisor.
4. When it is time for administration of the medication, the child's counselor will take him/her to the nurse's station to receive the medication from the camp nurse, who will log in each day's administration on an individual Daily Log of Medication Administration Form.
5. When no longer needed or at the end of camp, medications will be returned to the parents via the counselor or will be destroyed (parents will indicate in their written instructions which they prefer).

We do recognize that inhalers and epi-pens may need to travel around camp with the camper. If this is the case, our nurse will work with parents on determining the best plan for storage/travel of the medication. Please feel free to contact our nurse with your concerns.

Plan of Emergency Care

In the event that a camper requires immediate emergency care a camp counselor, camp nurse, or camp director will begin EAP by dialing 911.

- For emergencies: Dial 911; Fire 508-830-4213; Police 508-830-4218
- Campers will be brought to the nearest available hospital. Most emergency will be transported to: Signature Healthcare Brockton Hospital 508-941-7000.

MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

Part of healthy youth development includes learning how to get along with others, managing conflicts, and working together as a team. Camp provides the ideal setting for these skills to develop. All types of youth come to Y camp. Some are excited to be there and adapt readily to the activities and excitement of the day. But other youth may be nervous or even anxious about the camp experience. When youth are struggling in the camp setting we want to do all that we can to help the youth have a positive experience.

Our philosophy of behavior management is that children do not want to act out or lose control. In fact, challenging behaviors sometimes occur when a youth needs extra attention, or does not feel safe, or needs help managing overwhelming feelings of anger. Our goal is to work with your child to provide them with the support that is needed to help the child make a more positive adjustment to camp.

For this reason we have implemented the “Camper Support Protocol.” The advantage to the Camp Support Protocol is that it provides a process to proactively identify campers who need extra support. By immediately responding to youth who need extra support the behaviors can be more rapidly addressed and it is less likely that the behaviors will escalate.

CAMPER SUPPORT PROTOCOL

Purpose | To proactively provide support to campers who have behavioral or emotional challenges in the camp setting.

Goal | To provide the youth with supports needed to participate in healthy engaging activities at camp.

NOTE: Emergency and safety concerns are handled immediately. This includes: runaways, fights, assaults, fire setting, serious threat of violence or suicide.

- 1. Identifying Behaviors of Concern** | On Monday of each camp week counselors observe camper behaviors throughout the day to identify “**behaviors of concern**”. These behaviors will be identified as “Yellow Flag” behaviors that indicate the need for the camp staff to slow down, look at the situation, and figure out a better way; or “Red Flag” behaviors that indicate a more serious situation to be addressed.
- 2. Documenting and Notification of Concerns** | At end of day (especially Mondays) counselors will fill out the camper concern form and deliver to director at camp office before leaving for the day.
- 3. Administrative Review** | Camp Administrator reviews all forms before leaving camp to ensure there is no need for immediate follow-up.
- 4. Camp Support Planning and Coordination Meeting** | Every Tuesday morning at 7:30 the Camp Support teams will meet. The team is chaired by the Camp Administrator (Director or designee) along with nurse, Camper Support Worker, clinician, and counselor if requested. Camper Support Plans are completed. Following meeting the Clinician assists with any “Red Flag” situations; Camper Support Worker begins implementation of plans.
- 5. Camper Supports** | Camper Supports may include providing more attention, adding additional staffing/ CIT added to the camp group, or a morning or afternoon (or both) check- in by our Camp Support Specialist. We may also have a clinical social worker or administrative staff observe the camper’s behavior to help us determine how we might help the camper and counselors to better manage the behavior or to talk with the camper about the behavioral challenges. Another part of the plan may be to contact you. As the parent you have the most experience in dealing with your child’s feelings and behaviors and you may have ideas for us to use in the camp setting.
- 6. Daily Support Meetings and Follow Up** | Each day the Director or designee and Camper Support Worker will sit down in the morning to review all Red Flag Support Plans and progress, and any Yellow Flag Plans where the behavior is escalating. These meetings direct the course of the Camper Support Worker’s Day in terms of the situations that need follow-up or a different strategy.

ASSET DEVELOPMENT AT CAMP YOMECHAS

Camping experiences hold tremendous opportunities to build Developmental Assets. They take young people away from their everyday environment and, at their best, create an asset-rich experience for the campers, linking them with caring adults and older youth, engaging them in stimulating, challenging activities, developing leadership skills, and cultivating positive peer relationships. Though individual camper experiences varied, a major study of camps by the **American Camping Association** found that, overall, children, parents, and camp staff all reported improvements in positive identity, social skills, physical and thinking skills, and positive values and spirituality.

CAMP YOMECHAS IS DEDICATED TO INTEGRATE ASSET DEVELOPMENT THIS SUMMER BY:

- Creating ways for young people to get to know each other. Including **getting-to-know-you activities** and community-building activities.
- Being clear about **boundaries and expectations**. At camp, we create a list of rules and expectations and enable the campers to offer their ideas.
- Recognizing that some young people may not have much **experience with camping**. They may resist trying certain camping activities because of their inexperience—or their fear of failure.
- Integrating a service project into your camp activities. We ask that the children pick up after themselves, especially after lunch time. We also have the LIT group help in the community.
- Expecting camp counselors to be **role models**. Train them about this critical aspect of their role and how important it is for them to exhibit positive behaviors to campers.
- Engaging young people in leadership roles in our camp, particularly the LIT and CIT program. Veteran campers can be mentors for first-time campers.
- **Emphasizing an experiential educational aspect** to our program. This summer we are implementing a literacy program for **ALL AGES** which will be a daily activity for them.
- Our goal is to inspire teachable moments throughout a camper's day that will keep their minds engaged while having fun. Sending your child to camp will enable them to stay on track through creative positive learning experiences. The Y recognizes that all children experience learning losses when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer. We provide building blocks necessary for a child's development.
- **Empowering young people by giving them choices** during activities. For example, if you have a craft activity, consider having two or three possible outcomes that use the same materials.

FAMILY STRENGTHENING AT THE MIDDLEBORO Y ALL YEAR!

Y FAMILY TIME

Serving families has always been at the heart of the Y. We are a place they can find respite from social, economic and educational challenges, and learn how to overcome them. We desire for every family to build stronger bonds, achieve a greater work/life balance, and become more engaged within the community.

YMCA MEMBERSHIPS

We hope that you will consider joining us as a member of the YMCA. If you are interested in becoming a member and benefiting from our savings on program rates, please contact our Membership Experience team for more information.

Membership Director: Molly Bopp

Email: MBopp@OldColonyYmca.org

Phone: 508-947-1390 ext. 2120

ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

We hope to work in partnership with you to help ensure that your child has a positive camp experience. There are several things you can do to help in this process:

Talk to your child about the camp experience. Ask them to describe the activities. Ask who their friends are and what their counselor is like. While children often respond to the question “What did you do at camp today?” with “Nothing” we assure you that a lot of things happen at camp. Sometimes campers are too tired after the camp day, but they may be talkative on the morning ride or waiting for the bus. If your child is not having fun at camp it may be difficult for the child to tell you or to give you reasons why. Specific questions may be helpful. Some things you might wish to ask include: “Are you worried that something bad will happen at camp? What comes to mind when you say you don’t like camp? Is there anyone at camp you can talk to?”

Reassure your child. Children get anxious just like adults. They may worry about disappointing you. They may wish they could stay at home during the summer. They may have fears about swimming or bugs or not living up to your expectations.

Being a parent is hard. There are many difficult decisions to make. You don’t want to overreact to situations because you know that many concerning behaviors are normal—but you don’t want to fail to get your child help if it is needed. If your child indicates they are having a bad experience or they refuse to talk about camp and you have concerns—please contact us. **Do not diminish your child’s concerns.** Your child may be exposed to behaviors that the child has not seen or experienced before. Our camps are very diverse. We have children with developmental disabilities and from all walks of life. We have children attend camp who may have serious behavioral problems or who have experienced traumatic life events. For the most part this exposure is part of growing up and can be a positive experience as children learn how to deal with all types of people. But it is not good if your child is scared or doesn’t feel safe. Again, we encourage you to contact us and come in to speak with us about the situation that may be troubling your child.

YOUTH VALUES PLEDGE & ANTI– BULLYING PLEDGE

Please review with your child the following values pledge and anti-bullying pledge.

VALUES PLEDGE

I promise to be respectful of other people’s feelings, property and body.

I promise to be responsible for my everyday duties, the things I use and the areas I use.

I promise to be honest when I make mistakes and honest when I have not done what I was responsible for.

I promise to be respectful of the YMCA and the Afterschool program rules.

I promise to be an all around caring person to those who participate in the YMCA Program and the people in the YMCA building.

ANTI– BULLYING PLEDGE

We are all friends at the Y

We will not bully others

We will help others who are being bullied by speaking out and by getting adult help

We will use extra effort to include all others in activities

We will display the core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility

CAMP’S RESPONSE TO BEHAVIOR ISSUES

Our goal is to work together with our staff and with parents to do all we can to help your child and all children have a positive camp experience. That said there are some behaviors that are very serious. Hitting, bullying, hate speech and running away are all behaviors we will want to address with parents immediately. In general, we do all that we can to avoid dismissing a child from camp. However, when we do have serious consecutive issues it is critical that parents work with us to address the behavior. Campers that require three written documentations are not succeeding in our camp environment and care will be terminated.

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”) surrounding 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 headaches, 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 yearly, 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 common is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is becoming much less common. Over the past 20 years, the overall incidence of meningococcal disease in the US has declined ten-fold. Twenty years ago in Massachusetts, there were 80-100 cases of meningococcal disease per year. In contrast, for the past decade, the average is approximately 12 cases per year. Declining rates of meningococcal disease may be due in part to the introduction of meningococcal vaccines (initially recommended routinely in 2005 for adolescents aged 11-12 years, unvaccinated college freshmen living in residence halls) as well as other factors such as the decline in cigarette smoking, which may impact susceptibility to this disease.

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 for the bacteria to spread. Close contact includes activities such as kissing, sharing water bottles, sharing eating/drinking utensils, sharing cigarettes, or being within 3-6 feet of someone who is infected and 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 specific 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 multiple meningococcal vaccines. Quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine (Menveo and MenQuadfi) protects against 4 serotypes (A, C, W, and Y) of meningococcal disease. The meningococcal serogroup B vaccine (Bexsero and Trumenba) protects against serogroup B meningococcal disease for people aged 10 and older. Pentavalent meningococcal vaccine protects against serogroups A, B, C, W, and Y. It may be administered to persons aged ≥10 years when both a quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine and meningococcal B vaccine are indicated at the same visit.

Should my child or adolescent receive the meningococcal vaccine?

Different meningococcal vaccines are recommended for a range of age and risk groups. Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY) is routinely recommended at age 11-12 years with a booster at age 16 and is required for school entry for grades 7 and 11. In addition, these vaccines may be recommended for additional children with certain high-risk health conditions, such as those described above.

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 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: 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). 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. not share food, drinks, or eating utensils with other people, especially if they are ill.

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 <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/school-immunizations>.

For additional information on *Invasive Meningococcal Disease (IMD)*, please visit the CDC’s website:

[Meningococcal Disease Surveillance and Trends | Meningococcal | CDC](#)

