



# RYE YMCA CAMPS

## PARENT HANDBOOK 2026

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### IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO

**RYE YMCA: 914-967-6363**

**Osborn Camp Office: 914-450-1435**

*\*This phone is operational only June 29 -August 21, Monday – Fridays from 7:30am-6:00pm  
Discovery, STEAM, Sports and Adventure Camps only\**

CAMP	SUMMER PHONE	SCHOOL YEAR PHONE	DIRECTOR	EMAIL
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CIT/LIT		914-697-6363 x404	Nathan Holocher	<a href="mailto:nathan@ryeymca.org">nathan@ryeymca.org</a>
Gymnastics	914-967-6363 x300	914-967-6363 x300	Melissa Lewis	<a href="mailto:Melissa@ryeymca.org">Melissa@ryeymca.org</a>
	914-967-6363 x 112	914-967-6363 x112	Terry Gray	<a href="mailto:terry@ryeymca.org">terry@ryeymca.org</a>
Kinder Y Site	914-967-6363 x122	914-967-6363 x122	Heather Camacho	<a href="mailto:Hcamacho@ryeymca.org">Hcamacho@ryeymca.org</a>
Kinder Mamaroneck	914-967-6363 x207	914-967-6363 x207	Robin Eddings	<a href="mailto:robin@ryeymca.org">robin@ryeymca.org</a>
Sports	914-450-1435	914-967-6363 x300	Melissa Lewis	<a href="mailto:melissa@ryeymca.org">melissa@ryeymca.org</a>
Camp Office Coordinator	914-450-1435	914-967-6363 x103	Layla Barreto	<a href="mailto:layla@ryeymca.org">layla@ryeymca.org</a>

If you need additional assistance outside of these contacts, please contact:

[Camp@ryeymca.org](mailto:Camp@ryeymca.org) or 914.967.6363

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Welcome to the Rye YMCA and our exceptional camping programs! This handbook covers the details of camp we have found helpful to parents over the years, to help make your camper's experience a safe and happy experience.

## PREPARING YOUR CAMPER (and you) FOR THE FIRST DAY

The first day of camp can be an exciting and emotional day for both children and parents. The difference between a positive or negative experience can be addressed by preparation at home, months before the big day.

### A Few Months Before the Big Day

Parents should involve their child in the entire planning process. From the beginning, choosing what type of camp to attend will help campers feel more involved. As a family you can share brochures, camp tours, website videos and all the other typical promotions. Getting to see all the fun he or she can have helps build the anticipation and excitement. We provide a whole assortment of information for Rye Y Camps, have a number of options and locations and meet all different family needs.

Once you have chosen your camp, one way to allay your child's fears would be to find a friend to share the experience. Opportunities for carpooling and sharing information also can make it a lot easier for Mom, Dad, or Caregiver. Take the opportunity to meet the camp directors. Reach out to any of the Camp Leadership Team and we would be more than happy to share what the Rye Y Camp experience will be. Just ask for the correct contact at our Member Services Desk.

### A Few Weeks Before the Big Day

Make time to sit down with your camper and review questions they have about the camp. Share with him or her, what a normal day at camp may look like, what activities they will do, how many kids will be in their group, etc. Giving them a chance to learn more, ask questions, and know the information beforehand will make day one much less overwhelming.

Getting ready together will help your camper feel more confident and excited for camp. Take your camper with you when you go shopping for your camp gear. The basics include a small back pack, a lunch bag, continuous spray sunscreen, a hat, a reusable water bottle, closed-toed shoes and lunch items for the first week. Let the children pick their favorite backpack and a few items for lunch so they have something to look forward to during the day. We provide a complete list later in this guide. Help your camper become familiar with what items are theirs...what does their water bottle look like...what design is on their towel...what color are their goggles, etc. Many younger campers do not recognize their own items, so as much pre-camp work as you can do with them; the better we all will be at not contributing to the lost and found pile.

For younger campers, it's especially helpful if you begin at home teaching them how to get "changed for swimming" by themselves. While our camp counselors provide supervision and guidance in this effort, campers who can work more independently in this area will be happier campers. We have found it helpful to encourage parents to practice a few times at home. Key points include, but are not limited to:

- Q: What do I do with my t-shirt when I take it off? A: I put right in my backpack that is next to me in the locker room.
- Q: How can I tell if I put my shorts back on the right way? A: The tag is behind me and I can put my hands in my pockets.
- Q: How do I put my swim suit on? A: We will let you (parents) work on this one with them 😊

- Q: how can I be a really responsible, big camper? A: By making sure I have all of my things in my backpack before I leave the locker room.

You also need to designate some “official camp clothing” at this time. This should be the clothing that you don’t mind getting muddy, covered in craft supplies or losing; all of which are possible at camp. Mark your child’s first initial and full last name on every item you are sending to camp, including their socks. Most younger campers don’t recognize their own items so you need to give the counselors a little help.

#### The Night Before the Big Day

So, you aren’t in a rush start packing the night before, make his or her lunch, pack the bag, fill the water bottle and set out tomorrow’s clothes. Rushing in the morning on your way to work will only add to any anxiety that your child and you are going to feel. You get the chance to make sure he or she is sorted to the right group and has met all the counselors.

#### THE BIG DAY

Don’t be surprised if your normally talkative child is unusually quiet and shy the first day of camp – or even crying - that’s completely normal. Introduce your child to their counselors and make sure that they connect with each other. Our staff will then introduce him or her to the other campers in the group, which is a critical step. At the Rye Y, we like to refer to this as W.E.S.T.I. – Warm smile, Eye contact, Stoop, Shake and Smile, Talk to them and Introduce them to others. It’s a key component of our staff training.

Do not promise to pick up your child early or if he or she is unhappy. Additionally, they should not think that they can call you during camp. Even if your child is apprehensive when saying goodbye to you, 99.9% of the time, an unhappy camper turns into a happy camper within 30 minutes of parent/guardian departure. Please trust us when we tell you “we will call you if he/she doesn’t stop crying” – because WE WILL 😊

Most importantly, plan, read through the materials and pick a camp together. Summer camp is one of the most incredible experiences a child can have. They are in a nurturing environment that allows them to challenge themselves, make new friends and do activities they may never have done before. Preparing for it can only make it that much better.

## THE ULTIMATE PACKING LIST

**Camp Backpack** – Let your camper pick their own so they feel they have their own special bag. Also, try to choose one that is a little different from your average bag. This will help your camper find their bag in the pile of all his/her friends. We recommend that you choose something on the smaller side, just big enough to hold what they need, but not too cumbersome.

**Clothing** – We suggest clothing that is comfortable and allows your camper to run, jump, slide and play all day with as few mishaps as possible. This means uncomplicated, easy play-clothing like long enough shorts, full shirts, socks, close-toed shoes (sneakers, etc.) and a hat for the sun. We find that most of our bumps and scrapes come from no socks and the wrong footwear at camp – which is why we require closed-toe shoes at camp (no sandals, etc).

**Lunch** – Besides making it a healthy meal, we suggest you provide enough so that your camper feels full and energetic throughout the day. Fruits, vegetables (we know, yuck!), a balanced sandwich, and a drink that's free of too much sugar or high-fructose corn syrup are all parts of a healthy meal. To help our counselors, we request that you use zipping plastic bags rather than coolers or boxes.

**Water Bottle** – Sending your camper with a full water bottle is key to being safe and having fun in the sun. We take frequent water breaks and it's a big help to have their water right there instead of running inside to a water fountain.

**Labeling** – Please label everything that comes to camp! As we said earlier most campers don't recognize their own shirt or shoes once they're off. Using just initials only leave a lot of guess work as to who "JL" may be; Johnny Lawton or Juliet Lewis? We suggest using your camper's first initial and full last name.

**Camp Snack** – We take a snack break during the day, so please pack a healthy snack each day. Please ensure the snack is kept separate from the lunch as camper lunches go into storage during the day.

**Swim Suit & Towel** – Simple swimsuits are usually the best choice. We recommend single-piece bathing suits for the girls and comfortable, but properly sized shorts for the boys. The Y will provide your camper with an assigned swim cap. Be sure to send an ample-sized towel with your child's name clearly marked. Towels are one of the most frequently lost items at camp. Goggles are not required, but many campers find their swim experience more enjoyable with goggles.

**Sunscreen** – The trick is to send your camper with their first layer of sunscreen already on! If you send a bottle it also is a reminder to reapply later in the day. Our staff takes breaks after swimming and other times to reapply. We have found that continuous spray sunscreen makes this process a whole lot easier!

**Bug Repellent** – Unless your child is a bug magnet we've found that you usually don't need bug repellent at camp. We prefer aerosol free at camp. The ultimate choice is *Bug Off's Insect Repelling Wrist Band*.

## ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Maintaining a connection with your child's experience will enhance the entire family's benefit from camp. Checking in with your child through a daily de-briefing allows him or her to brag a little about new skills they've learned, share the names of new friends, and tell you about their day. This time also allows you to learn more about camp and what it means to be engaged with friends and energetic staff all day. Do not be

surprised if your camper gives little to no information regarding their camp day. Camp is such an intense experience that often times specifically younger campers cannot relay all that great information. Camp is a unique place in part due to our high staff to camper ratio. This allows your child to get more attention, support and nurturing throughout their day. It's our hope that we can partner with you, the parent, in providing the best summer experience possible; new friends, skill progress, a safe and bully-free environment and a nearly constant smile. PLEASE.... if you are not getting the information you need, LET US KNOW ASAP.

Through years of guiding children and young adults we have found that the most successful summer for a camper is when the parents are activity engaged and connected with both the counselors and camper. We have prepared a list of questions that may spark conversation and help immerse you into your child's camp experience.

AFTER THE FIRST DAY

As mentioned earlier, your camper will probably be shy and quieter than he or she usually is on their first day. Camp is a lot to take in for any child and the first day will provide challenges for campers new to the experience. We go through camp orientation which involves camp rules, name games, splitting into groups, camp tours, first day on a bus, swim checks and a lot more. Your camper may feel that this is what each day will look like but we ask you to share that this is only the first day and that day two is a big day of activities at camp.

- What was the most exciting activity you did today? What made you the most nervous?
- Did you learn the other camper's names?
- What were the other campers like? How about your counselors?
- What activity are you most excited about for tomorrow?
- Was your lunch and water bottle enough for you today?
- What color cap are you assigned in swim lessons? Are you excited to start swim lessons tomorrow?

"TELL ME ABOUT..."

Campers learn and do so much during the day by the end they're usually exhausted. When asked "how was your day" or "what did you do" you will likely get a simple "fun, nice or just fine" as a response. We will provide you with our summer calendar, weekly activity rotations and hints on what we are doing at camp that will arm you with the more in-depth, open-ended questions like the following:

- Tell me about the weirdest fish you saw at the aquarium today.
- Tell me about making "Camp Glop." Can you show me how? (We will give you the recipe!)
- Tell me about the other camper's in your group. Is everyone nice to each other?

Staying engaged with questions like these help us maintain our partnership in your child's success. Campers may not always tell us they are uncomfortable or another camper isn't being nice so we rely on our teamwork together for this information. Please share any and all concerns that come up through these conversations. As a team we can make your child's summer camp experience just that much better!

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## ■ OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of Rye Y Camps is to provide all campers a sustained, creative, fun, enriching and educational experience in an outdoor environment. Our efforts work towards the development of the whole person, with a focus on the Y threefold philosophy of spirit, mind and body, and development of the Ys core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.

## ■ AMERICAN CAMP ASSOCIATION

As we strive for camping excellence, we are proud to be accredited by the American Camp Association.

## ■ CAMP OBJECTIVES & GOALS

- Rye Y Camp is proud to boast strong goals, determined outcomes and camp objectives that strive to make camp a memorable and lasting impression for every camper and staff member.
- To encourage creative expressions and character development through programs which appeal to the camper's imagination. Campers will actively participate in arts, special events, swim lessons, sports and more that are aimed at developing camper's creative potential. Opportunities to participate in problem-solving activities will be provided whenever possible.
- To assist campers in improvement of existing skills and acquire new ones. Campers will be given the opportunity to improve skill levels through participation in the YMCA progressive swim programs, field games, team building and many other activities. New skills will be introduced and developed in all programs when appropriate prerequisites have been mastered.
- To foster awareness of fair play and sportsmanship through games and activities that promotes participation and team work. Through active participation in sports skills, field games and other informal activities, campers will recognize the importance of group cooperation. Sportsmanship guidelines will be enforced, thereby supporting their development.
- To encourage the YMCA's mission of healthy lifestyles through Healthy Communities Initiatives. Through daily exercise and activities that require varied levels of movement, campers will learn to incorporate fitness in their own daily lives. Camp will model healthy eating habits and enable campers to bring these habits with them into their homes. We strive for not just a healthy body, but an entire healthy camper.
- To build upon our campers' exciting "assets". Camp will identify areas that we can further foster each of our camper's own development assets, enabling them to grow into happier and healthier children and young adults as they progress in their own lives.

## ■ CAMP HOURS

- Adventure, Discovery, STEAM, and Sports Camps – located at Osborn Elementary School (10 Osborn Rd, Rye, NY)
  - Monday – Friday from 8:45am to 3:45pm.
- Gymnastics Camp – located at the Rye YMCA (21 Locust Ave. Rye, NY)
  - Full Day: Monday – Friday from 9:00am-4:00pm.
  - Half Day: Monday – Friday from 9:00am-1:00pm
- Kinder Camp – located at the Rye YMCA (21 Locust Ave. Rye, NY)
  - Just 3's and Half Day: Monday – Friday from 8:30am-12:00pm
  - Full Day: Monday – Friday from 8:30am-4:00pm
- Kinder Camp @ St. John's – located St. John's Lutheran Church (122 Fenimore Rd., Mamaroneck, NY)

- Half Day: Monday – Friday from 8:30am-12:00pm
- Full Day: Monday – Friday from 8:30am-4:00pm

## ■ EXTENDED CARE

*Some of our camps have options for extended hours for families that need additional care for their campers.*

### AM Extended Care

- Osborn camps (Discovery, STEAM, Sports): starts at 7:30am (breakfast not provided)
- Gymnastics camp: starts 8:00am (breakfast not provided)
- Kinder Camp: not available

### PM Extended Care

- Osborn camps (Discovery, STEAM, Sports): ends at 6:00pm
- Gymnastics & Kinder Camp Y site: Rye YMCA ends at 6:00pm (light snack provided)

## ■ INFORMATION AND Q & A

### PARENT ORIENTATIONS

Specifically designed for parents/guardians of perspective and registered camp families. Come meet the camp directors, ask questions and gather a ton of information. Save the date February 25 5:30- 6:30pm.

## ■ CAMPER OPEN HOUSE – Osborn site camps only (Discovery, STEAM, Sports)

**June 27, 2026- 1:30pm-2:30pm** Weather Permitting

Due to the fact that we do not have access to the Osborn School until the week before camp begins, we are unable to offer camp tours prior to the summer. However, you are encouraged to join us for our Open House (the Saturday before the first day of camp). The entire family is welcome to tour the camp and meet the camp staff. For a tour and to meet the Kinder Camp or Gymnastics Director, please contact them directly (see contact info on front cover).

## ■ CAMPER ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

For your convenience, please observe the designated traffic patterns and the instructions of camp staff.

Please stay in your car as we have strict policies regarding the screening of all staff, campers and families. If you have a question or concern, please email the director to set up a time to talk.

### Osborn-SITE CAMPS (Adventure, Discovery, STEAM, Sports)

- DROP OFF – 8:45am to 9:15am
- PICKUP – 3:45pm to 4:15pm

2 ENTRANCES → There are two drop-off/pick-up locations on site:

- ✓ Boston Post Road entrance
  - Trailblazers
  - Pathfinders
  - Extended Care AM & PM
  - Adventure Camp
  - Sports Camp
- ✓ Osborn Road entrance
  - Explorers



- Pioneers
- Scouts
- STEAM

*Families that have campers in both areas should use this one – default to the younger camper’s area.*

#### Kinder Camp Y-Site

- DROP OFF – 8:30am to 8:45am
  - Do not allow your camper (or yourself) to get out of your vehicle. Camp staff will come to your vehicle to assist in this. This is a safety policy.
- PICKUP (Half Day) – 11:45am-12:00pm
- PICKUP (Full Day) – 3:45pm-4:00pm

Rye YMCA “Circle” – please pull into the Rye Y parking lot and follow the signs and flow of traffic to drop-off or pick-up your camper in the circle area at the front of the Rye YMCA.

#### Kinder Camp @ St. John’s

- DROP OFF – 8:30am to 8:45am
  - Do not allow your camper (or yourself) to get out of your vehicle. Camp staff will come to your vehicle to assist in this. This is a safety policy.
- PICKUP (Half Day) – 11:45am-12:00pm
- PICKUP (Full Day) – 3:45pm-4:00pm

St. John’s circle in Parking Lot – please pull into the parking lot and follow the signs and flow of traffic to drop-off or pick-up your camper in the circle area at the front of the Red Doors.

#### Gymnastics Camp

- DROP OFF – 8:45am to 9:15am
  - Do not allow your camper (or yourself) to get out of your vehicle. Camp staff will come to your vehicle to assist in this. This is a safety policy.
- PICKUP (Half Day) – 12:45pm-1:00pm
- PICKUP (Full Day) – 3:45pm-4:00pm

Rye YMCA “Circle” – please pull into the Rye Y parking lot and follow the signs and flow of traffic to drop-off or pick-up your camper in the circle area at the front of the Rye YMCA.

#### **Late Arrivals**

If you are dropping your camper off after the drop-off time, you **MUST** pull into the designated area and stay in your car as a staff member will assist you shortly. This is a safety and security policy. After checking in a staff member will bring your camper to his or her group to start their day.

#### **Late Pick-up**

Please do your best to inform the camp if you will be later than expected. Please bring your Parent Pick-up Card or photo ID with you. If this becomes a reoccurring situation, you could be charged a fee and if it continues, your camper could be dismissed from camp with no refund.

### Early Pick-up

If you need to pick up your camper early, please inform your child's Group Leader, Group Director or Camp Director in writing as early as possible indicating the pickup time. Please pull into the designated area and wait in your car. A staff member will bring your child to you. **NOTE: at Osborn we are unable to accommodate early pick-ups after 3:00pm.**

## ■ PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGN-OUT

**Only the indicated "Parents" on the registration form and those listed under "Emergency Contacts and Pickup Authorizations" will be allowed to pick-up your camper. Absolutely no exceptions.** We maintain a strict policy and will not release a child unless the Camp Directors speak with the authorizing parents directly. Notes will not suffice unless they are handed directly from authorized parents to camp staff.

### Parent Pickup Cards

- Before the start of camp, you will receive two "Parent Pickup Cards" which will have your camper's name on them.
- Please place these in the window of your car when picking up your child. The card is the indication to our staff that this is the authorized person to pick up your camper.
- You may only share these with people you have previously authorized on the list.
- If someone arrives without a card they will need to present a positive photo ID. Your camper will not be released if the name does not appear on our authorized list.
- These cards should be kept in safe and secure space when not in use.

Anyone picking up a camper must have positive photo identification with them and may be asked to present it at time of camper sign out and pickup.

Please notify the Camp Office in writing if the camper is to be picked up early.

## ■ CAMP COMMUNICATIONS

### Weekly Camp Updates

Each week the Camp Director will send an update for the camp program that reviews the weekly schedule, reminders, upcoming events and special guests. You are more than welcome to respond to the emails and to clarify any concerns you may have. Please be sure we have your email correct on the registration form as that is our only link.

Camp Website – [www.ryeycamp.org](http://www.ryeycamp.org) The camp website holds all our forms, calendars, handbooks, and other important information to prepare for camp each year.

### Camper Care Cards/ Kinder Grams/ Skill Cards

Each Friday you will get a note from your camper's Group Leader that will share how your camper's week has been. This might be a quick list of the activities your camper has done and/or how they are doing in swim lessons or other activities. Our goal is to keep you connected to the camp experience. If you desire more details regarding your camper, feel free to contact the camp office to set up a meeting with your camper's Group Leader.

## ■ ABSENCES

If your camper is sick or unable to attend the program, please contact the camp office before 9:00 am. Days missed are not refundable. By enrolling, you are reserving the time, space, staffing and provisions for your camper whether your camper attends or not. Please specify your child's illness when you call or send an email.

## ■ PARENT VISITS

Camp gives kids the opportunity to explore new skills, meet new kids and just have fun in a welcoming environment. Through our many combined years of camping, we find that campers do best when they are allowed to conquer these challenges on their own; however, we certainly understand when parents want to check in on their camper's well-being. Parent visits are not allowed during the normal camp day. You can schedule a time after hours if needed.

## ■ ALL-CAMP PHOTO DAY

A professional photographer visits the Rye Y Summer Day Camp once during the summer. This date is TBD. You will automatically receive an order form for the photo packages.

## ■ CAMPER HEALTH & SAFETY

*A signature on the registration form and a completed registration acknowledges permission to treat which includes basics First Aid by a certified staff member, emergency medical services (EMS), doctor and hospital / ER care.*

### First Aid

All Camp first aid is performed by a staff member who is certified to provide appropriate care. Campers who receive first aid will have their injuries recorded in the First Aid Log Book by the Office Manager or appropriate staff person. Our Office Manager will call parents to inform them of minor injuries at his/her discretion. Any camper who requires further medical attention will be transported to the Greenwich Hospital. Parents will be immediately notified in the event of emergency medical care.

### Sunscreen/Insect Repellent

The Rye YMCA does not provide sunscreen and bug repellent for your child. Please send your own supply with your camper in their backpack. Since some campers are still young, our staff can help them apply the sunscreen – but only the spray-on kind. We will teach your child how to apply the products you send along. We suggest that you apply any sunscreen or bug repellent in the morning before camp begins, and then remind your child to re-apply the same after using the swimming pool. Camp Staff will also remind the children, and we will allow time for this important camp safety element.

### Storage and Administration of Medication/drugs

**ANY prescribed medication and over-the-counter drug MUST be accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form – complete with a physician's signature.** Prescribed and over-the-counter (OVT) medication for campers must be kept in **original containers** bearing the pharmacy label or OVT box. All medications prescribed for campers will be kept in locked storage and will be taken by the camper, witnessed and documented by the appropriate MAT-Certified staff (Medication Administration Training). Medication

prescribed for campers and brought from home shall only be administered if it is from the original container, and there is written permission from the parent/guardian which includes the name of the camper, day(s) and time(s) to be administered, dose to be administered, name of medication, and signature of parent/guardian. Campers will not be allowed to carry their own medication. Inhalers and epi-pens may stay with your camper upon request. The parent and the Camp Office Manager or designee must complete the Medication Consent Form and Medication Checklist. All forms will be kept on file.

#### Medical/ 72-Hour Fever-Free Policy

The Y has a mandatory contagious disease policy. A sick child will be required to remain out of the program until a doctor's note states that the child is no longer contagious. This note must be sent or brought to the Camp Director to be kept on file. Parents will be contacted if, in the Camp Director's judgment, the camper should be sent home. Please do not send your child to camp if he/she is sick and/or running a fever. **The camper must be fever-free for at least 72 hours before returning to camp without the use of fever reducing medication and with no other symptoms.**

#### Health History & Immunization Records

State law requires that we have on file a complete immunization record and medical health history for your child. We must have these before your child enters camp. **No child will be allowed to attend camp without a properly completed and signed health history and immunization record.**

### ■ WHAT TO WEAR

Parents should keep in mind that campers are in an outdoor environment all day long. Everyday clothing required at camp: bathing suit, towel, sneakers, shorts, T-shirt. **Only closed-toe shoes (no sandals) will be allowed at camp.** On rainy/cool days, please have your child dress appropriately. If your camper is extremely susceptible to sun burns, please have them wear a hat to protect their face.

### ■ WHAT TO BRING

We recommend you send a labeled backpack with: Bathing suit\*, towel, lunch, full water bottle, sunscreen, snack and an extra shirt just in case. Each item MUST be marked with your child's name, which will aid in keeping track of them. If your camper is susceptible to bathroom accidents, please provide a change of clothes sealed in a zip lock bag and kept in the camper's backpack all summer.

\*NOTE: Half Day Gymnastics campers do not swim, therefore they do not need a bathing suit.

*Kinder Campers: please pack your camper an entire extra set of clothing (including: underwear, socks, shorts, shirts) in a labeled Ziplock baggie. This baggie can go at the bottom of the backpack for emergencies.*

#### Lunch, Water Bottle & Snack

Please send your child to camp with a hearty and HEALTHY lunch and beverage each day. We prefer that you use a clear disposable bag or similar as lunches must fit into their group bins. Large lunch boxes and coolers will not fit and will have to stay in your child's bag. Please clearly mark your child's lunch and group. Please do not send candy or soda.

We also ask that you send a full water bottle each day so we can keep your child hydrated. Our campers have a scheduled snack time each day. It is up to the parents to provide this snack. Please pack the snack separately from the lunch as the lunches are stored away in refrigeration and are not brought out until lunch time.

## ■ WHAT TO LEAVE AT HOME

As we work to maintain a positive outdoor experience for our campers, it is important that certain items remain at home. This will also ensure that these items are not lost or stolen while at camp. The Rye YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Any prohibited items will be confiscated from the camper and returned to the parent/guardian at the appropriate time.

Please leave the following items (and the like) at home:

- Toys
- Pokémon cards (or other similar items)
- Stuffed animals
- iPods, MP3 players, etc
- Cell phones
- Nintendo DS, (or other similar video games)
- Sports Equipment (with the exception of campers in Sports Camp)
- Pets and animals

Rye Y Camp also prohibits any weapons or representation of weapons, matches, lighters, drugs, alcohol, and other and illegal substances. We intend to maintain a clean and appropriate environment for our campers and staff. Please do not allow your campers to wear clothing with any references to alcohol, drugs, or any other explicit nature as they are not permitted.

## ■ CAMP ACTIVITIES

Activities vary between our camps. Please see below.

### DISCOVERY CAMP

The camp schedule is created in advance and is subject to change based on weather. Each camp group sticks to a daily schedule, which is repeated throughout the summer. Typical camp activities include: arts & crafts, gym games, field games, group games, music, STEM, skits, sports, and swimming (\*for more information on our swim program, please refer to the following section after Camp Activities).

Discovery Camp incorporates weekly themes and many camp activities are programmed around that theme. Each week has its own “dress-up day”, which is also based on the weekly theme.

Special Guests will provide added enrichment for all campers. In the event of rain, camp remains in operation. We revise our daily schedule to allow activities to be performed inside the Osborn School Building.

### Bead Program

The Bead Program is an achievement-recognition piece used at Discovery, STEAM, and Sports Camp. Campers (and staff) have the opportunity to earn different beads, which can be placed on their necklace to be worn throughout the camp day. Each camper will receive ONE necklace (which also serves as a name tag) for their entire tenure at Camp. The necklace can be added-on to summer after summer. There are many ways campers/staff can achieve a bead. Below are just a few:

Swim level

Number of years at camp

Support of the annual campaign

Successful participation in a camp event  
Eating a fruit/vegetable everyday (aka “HEPA” ...see next section for details)

Bear Claws are one of the more elusive achievement beads that both campers and staff can be awarded. There are four Bear Claws that represent each of the YMCA’s Four Core Values (Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Honesty). If a camper goes ABOVE and BEYOND in one of those values, he/she MAY be nominated to earn a Bear Claw. There is also a Camper of the Week Bear Claw – awarded to a camper most deserving in each village. If your camper does not earn a Bear Claw, that does NOT mean they were not a great camper. The intent of the Bear Claw award is to recognize behaviors based on camper baselines. Please see Edwin Santos, Camp Director for any questions on this program.

### HEPA

HEPA stands for Healthy Eating & Physical Activity and is a nation-wide YMCA initiative which focuses on supporting our youth in creating solid, healthy eating habits AND an understanding of what it means to be physically active. Physical activity is a natural part of camp, but the healthy eating portion is where YOU (the parent/guardian) comes in. We ask that you send your camper with healthy food options for lunch and snack. Limiting sugars and fats is the best way you can contribute to our pledge to HEPA. We ask specifically that you do not send the following items in your camper’s lunch: soda and candy.

### **STEAM CAMP**

The camp schedule is created in advance and is subject to change based on weather. STEAM Camp incorporates its own weekly themes (separate from Discovery and Kinder Camp) and many camp activities are programmed around that theme. STEAM operates from the principles of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. STEAM Camp is not a “school camp” but rather has a camp-focus on “learning through doing”. Campers do not have homework. Curriculum changes with the weekly themes. Campers spend the majority of their day indoors with points of the day devoted to physical activity outdoors and/or on the playground.

### **SPORTS CAMP**

The camp schedule is created in advance and is subject to change based on weather. Each camp group sticks to a daily schedule, which is repeated throughout the summer. Sports campers spend 90% of their day outdoors working on aspects of both individual and team play. Drills and activities are structured to promote character and skill development.

### **KINDER CAMP**

The camp schedule is created in advance and is subject to change based on weather. Each camp group sticks to a daily schedule, which is repeated throughout the summer. Typical camp activities include: crafts, field games, group games, music, nature, science, and swimming (\*for more information on our swim program, please refer to the following section after Camp Activities).

Kinder Camp incorporates weekly themes and many camp activities are programmed around that theme. Each week has its own “dress-up day”, which is also based on the weekly theme. Special Guests will provide added enrichment for all campers. Kinder Campers spend *some* time outdoors each day – either on the playgrounds or on the field. In the event of rain, camp remains in operation. We revise our daily schedule to allow activities to be performed inside the Rye YMCA.

### **GYMNASTICS CAMP**

The camp schedule is created in advance and each camp group sticks to a daily schedule, which is repeated throughout the summer. Gymnastics camp includes specialized activities, which bring inherent risks through

the practice of tumbling, swinging, bars, beam, vault, floor, trampoline, and many others. Typical camp activities include: skill and character development through rotations on individual gymnastics equipment. Gymnastics Full Day campers will participate in “daily specials” like Zumba, Yoga, and crafting (\*for more information on our swim program, please refer to the following section after Camp Activities).

## ■ SWIMMING

Discovery and Sports campers will be bused, round trip, between Osborn and the Y for daily swim. During summer camp, we teach the National YMCA Swim Lesson. The children will receive a 30-minute swim period. Sports and Gymnastics campers have structured recreational swim on a daily basis except for those who need instruction to become an independent swimmer.

Swim scheduled will be available closer to summer.

The campers wear color-coded swim caps to differentiate swimming levels. Each camper will be provided a labeled swim cap at the beginning of the summer. We will keep their cap here at the Y. Please pack a bathing suit and towel each day. Goggles are optional, but helpful.

Swim tests are given on the first day of each week and campers are designated to a group according to their swim ability. Red swimmers are beginner swimmers and swim with a ratio of 1 counselor or swim instructor to three campers. Yellow is a more advanced beginner/intermediate class with a ratio of 1:6. Purple and blues are intermediate and advanced swimmers who also swim with a ratio of 1:6. With the help of camp counselors our aquatics staff provides swim instruction to the campers enthusiastically. We want every camper to have a great experience in the pool, learning new skills and improving their swimming everyday! We accomplish this while maintaining safety as our top priority. In order to ensure a safe experience, we have our campers swim one at a time with their counselors and swim instructors. While children wait for their turn we ask that they sit on the wall in order to maintain safety in the pool area. In addition to swim instructors we have from 2 to 5 lifeguards on deck watching over them. We have seen tremendous progress throughout our summers and are excited to continue this year.

If you are interested in continuing swim lessons here at the Y in the fall you can request that your child be evaluated during their camp swim time. Please contact Vickie at [vickie@ryemca.org](mailto:vickie@ryemca.org).

## ■ TRANSPORTATION POLICY

*Signature on the registration form and a completed registration acknowledges permission to transport along with our transportation policies below.*

Policy for bus trips to and from the Y. Parents should review the following guidelines with their camper prior to the first day of camp.

- Campers should remain a minimum of 5' from the road at all times and should not approach the bus until it comes to a complete stop and campers are instructed to load.
- Campers are to remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- All buses are equipped with seat belts, which are required for all staff and campers before the bus can move.
- Unloading is to be done safely under staff supervision.
- Reaching or leaning out of bus windows or doors is not allowed.
- Opening the Emergency Exit Door, except in an emergency or under the direction of a staff member, will not be tolerated.

- Disturbing other passengers is rude and will not be allowed.
- Disobeying the bus driver or a counselor may result in loss of transportation privileges.
- Throwing objects in or out of the bus is not allowed.
- Proper language and behavior is expected of all campers at all times.

## ■ STAFF

The camp staff at the Rye Y is comprised of college, post-college and exceptional high school students. Camp staff go through an extensive interview, hiring and training process prior to the first day of camp. As an American Camp Association accredited camp, we have a standard to hold our staffing structure to 80% of our staff being age 18+ (only 20% of our staff are ages 16-17).

Each group of campers is assigned counselors and maintains an excellent staff ratio, meeting and exceeding the national standards.

Camper Age	Staff	# of Campers
5 years & younger	1	6
6-8 years	1	8
9-14 years	1	10
15-18 years	1	12

The success of our camp and the positive and fulfilling experience of our campers is largely reliant on our directors and counselors. That's why our full-time, dedicated and professional staff works year-round to recruit, secure and train the best possible staff to lead our camp. Our staff goes through a rigorous hiring process, including background and reference checks. We also run a lengthy staff training and development program, focusing on coping skills to anticipate every possible circumstance from emergencies to homesick campers. Leadership staff receive CPR and First Aid training. Many others are certified as lifeguards and activity specialists. Our staff strive to make every camper feel comfortable and welcome in our daily programs.

## ■ CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

**Our Child Abuse Prevention Policy prohibits our counselors, staff and volunteers from babysitting children they meet at Y programs.** Please respect our policy by not asking our counselors to babysit. The policy was instituted to protect your child, the staff and the Y.

This also includes ANY of our staff and volunteers being alone with a camper outside of camp for any reason. Please inform us of any prior relationships that may exist (babysitting, carpool, etc.). Otherwise we ask that all parents help assist us in our policy and keeping our community safe!

Both summer and full-time staff receive thorough training in child abuse prevention by leading professional trainers and recognized organizations. In total they receive over 4 hours of abuse prevention training.

## ■ ENVIRONMENT

Please inform your child that taking care of the trees and outdoor areas surrounding the camp is essential to the protection of the environment. All garbage should be deposited in the designated bins located throughout



the camp. Respect for the trees and property on the campsite is necessary to maintain a beautiful and protected environment.

## ■ PARENTAL ASSISTANCE

Your child's positive experience at camp is based on the assumption that you are our partners. We, as you do, take our jobs very seriously. We set high goals and strive to reach and maintain these goals throughout the summer. In order to do so, we need your assistance on the home front:

- Please send your child to camp READY for camp each day.
- Please make sure your child has a healthy lunch and is eating it every day.
- Communicate problems and concerns that you may have right away.

The Camp Director, your counselors and staff leadership will be best able to help if you keep them informed. The more we know the better your experience will be! With your cooperation we will be able to meet the needs and safety of all our campers.

## ■ LICENSING AGENCY

The Rye YMCA receives its permit to operate a children's camp, as required by State law, from the New York State Department of Health. The camp is inspected twice yearly. Inspection reports are filed at the Westchester County Department of Health, 145 Huguenot Street, New Rochelle, New York, 10801.

Furthermore, our camps are all accredited by the American Camp Association. This is an additional, optional accreditation that the Rye YMCA has committed to in order to provide the best camp experience for all involved. If you have any questions regarding this accreditation, please contact Kathy Lynam, Vice President.

## ■ CAMPER BEHAVIOR POLICY

Our staff is trained and experienced with handling an assortment of behavior issues. This process is described below and we ask that you speak with your camper and discuss what the following means to them.

Progressive disciplinary steps in remedying negative behavior:

- ✓ The camper will receive a verbal warning.
- ✓ Camper will be removed from their group for an allotted amount of time or special privileges will be revoked.
- ✓ If the concern continues the parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to take part in the disciplinary steps with the Camp Director.
- ✓ Any continuation of negative behavior beyond this point is considered serious and will result in the camper's suspension or expulsion from camp.

The following negative behaviors will not be tolerated. At the discretion of the counselor, he/she may choose to have the camper speak with the Camp Director.

- Disrespecting staff, other campers and camp property
- Any form of verbal or physical bullying
- Inappropriate name calling and foul language
- Not following directions
- Minor hitting, shoving or pushing
- Straying from the group
- Throwing objects (rocks, sticks, etc.)
- Running away from the group or camp

The following serious negative behaviors will be immediately addressed by the Camp Director and at their discretion, may result in the immediate expulsion or suspension from camp without reimbursement. Please understand that our goal is to provide a nurturing and positive experience for each of our campers. Those few campers who choose to create a negative experience for others are not tolerated.

- Aggressive physical contact (hitting, biting and shoving)
- Harassment, verbal threats or endangerment of other campers and staff
- Possession/use of illegal substances including but not limited to drugs, alcohol and tobacco as well as weapons or other hazardous items
- Destruction of camp property or stealing from others
- Leaving the camp property without notice
- Inappropriate contact or behavior with other campers

## ■ BULLY PREVENTION POLICY

Bullying is when one or more people exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick, or put down another person with the intent to hurt another. Bullying happens when a person or group of people want to have power over another and use their power to get their way, at the expense of someone else. Bullying can also happen through cyberspace: through the use of e-mails, text messaging, instant messaging, and other less direct methods. This type of bullying can also lead to persons being hurt during or between the camp seasons and be especially hurtful when persons are targeted with meanness and exclusion.

**At Rye Y Camp, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against all types of bullying.** Our Camp philosophy is based on our mission statement which states that programs are available to ALL in a value-based environment. We work together as a team to ensure that campers gain self-confidence, make new friends, and go home with great memories.

Unfortunately, persons who are bullied may not have the same potential to get the most out of their camp experience. Our leadership addresses all incidents of bullying seriously and trains staff to promote communication with their staff and their campers so both staff and campers will be comfortable alerting us to any problems during their camp experience and between camp seasons. Every person has the right to expect to have the best possible experience at camp, and by working together as a team to identify and manage bullying, we can help ensure that all campers and staff have a great summer.

## ■ TERMINATION POLICY

The Rye YMCA reserves the right to suspend and/or dismiss a camper for the following reasons:

- Overdue fee payment(s)
- Inappropriate behavior
- Chronic tardiness at pick-up time
- Chronic failure to inform Rye YMCA of child's absence
- Behaviors identified in the above disciplinary policy

## ■ REFUND POLICY

There are no refunds past May 15. Exceptions to this include family emergencies or health-related events accompanied by a doctor's note. All exceptions must be communicated to the Camp Director ASAP. Cancellations prior to May 15 are subject to a \$25/week processing fee.

## ■ PAYMENT POLICY

In order to maintain the member rate for camp, the membership must be active from registration through the duration of camp.

If a scheduled camp payment bounces, Daxko automatically applies a returned payment fee. Please reach out to registrar prior to your payment date if a change is needed to avoid a fee.

## ■ TAXES

For tax purposes, please keep all receipts. The YMCA will not be responsible for the written documentation beyond original receipts. Our tax identification number is **13-1740515**.

WE HOPE YOU HAVE A SAFE & HAPPY CAMP SEASON WITH US!

