

Buehler YMCA Day Camp Parent Handbook 2018



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Our Mission

The mission of the YMCA is to put our principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

Character Development

Character Development is challenging people to accept and demonstrate the four core values- Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. It is the foundation for the development of the important character traits that will remain with a child for his or her entire life. The YMCA camp mission statement puts it best: The YMCA provides trained leadership and the resources of the natural surroundings to help each camper achieve his/her fullest potential in terms of mental development, physical well being, social growth, and spiritual awareness. Challenging people to accept and demonstrate positive values is more effective than treating problems because it deals with the roots and not just the results. *If everyone exhibited caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility, what would this community look like?*

YMCA Day Camp is important to a child's development because...

Campers grow personally. They are given the chance to experience new things and interact with other children on a daily basis.

Campers learn new things. Whether it's playing a new game, practicing an existing skill or developing their social skills, campers leave our camp having learned something they can remember for a lifetime.

Campers learn to appreciate diversity in each other. We live in a multicultural community and our camp reflects this. Campers learn each person is unique. They have fun and respect each other regardless of race, religion, gender, or social status.

Campers learn lifetime values. From the simplest of values and attitudes, like sharing, sportsmanship, and giving respect to others, comes our basis for making more complex value decisions as they mature.

Campers have fun! Without fun, the above reasons for children to attend our camp become harder to accomplish. Games, stories, hikes, field trips, swimming, sports, and crafts are all done with the campers as the primary focus.

Buehler YMCA Day Camp is ACA accredited!

American Camping Association (ACA): ACA is an organization with members in all 50 states that accredits all types of organized camps. Camps are accredited based on administration, policies and camp operation- particularly those related to program practices and quality, along with health and safety of campers and staff. The standards establish guidelines for required policies, procedures, and practices. We are committed to providing the highest standards established for the camping industry.

BRING TO CAMP

- GYM SHOES (no sandals or flip flops)
- Backpack for carrying all gear
- Non-refrigerated/Non-Microwaveable sack lunch
- At least 2 Snacks
- Water Bottle – Plastic (No glass bottles allowed)
- Swimsuit, towel, bag for wet items
- **Sunscreen and bug repellent**
- Comfortable clothing and shoes
- Values, morals, good listening skills and smile

REFILLABLE WATER BOTTLE*(mandatory)

- A refillable water bottle is ESSENTIAL to a fun and healthy day camp experience. The YMCA provides a cooler for water but DOES NOT provide a water bottle or cups—it is the responsibility of the family to provide children with water bottles.
- Please be aware that your child will not be permitted into camp without a lunch, closed toe shoes, and a water bottle. They will be checked daily at the sign in table. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure these items are with their camper on a daily basis. No exceptions to this rule will be made.

DON'T BRING TO CAMP

- Money (unless specified)
- Trading cards of any kind
- Jewelry
- Technological items (tablet, phone, gaming system)
- Any toys/ sports equipment etc.
- Inappropriate behavior, language, clothing, etc.

Any uninvited items brought to camp will be confiscated for the day and returned ONLY to the child's parent. We are strict on this policy to ensure the protection of your property.

Required Paperwork

The following paperwork is required to be completed and turned into the camp director prior to starting camp.

- A fully completed Participant Emergency Information Packet
- Medication form (if medication such as epi pen, etc is needed at camp)

Your child will not be allowed to attend camp until all paperwork is complete.

The ABC's of Camp

Absentees: If your child will not be attending camp please leave a message for the Director at the front desk 847-359-2400. Refunds will not be given for missed camp days unless a doctor's note is provided.

Allergies: It is your responsibility to let us know on the medical form if your child has any allergies along with your child's possible reaction should he/she come in contact with the allergen. **Due to the high number of allergies Buehler YMCA is a peanut free camp. Peanut products are not permitted including peanut butter sandwiches.**

American Camping Association (ACA): ACA is an organization with members in all 50 states that accredits all types of organized camps. Camps are accredited based on administration, policies, and camp operation; particularly those related to program quality and the health and safety of campers and staff. The standards establish guidelines for required policies, procedures, and practices. Our camp is fully accredited with a score of 100% on our most recent audit. We are committed to providing the highest standards established for the camping industry.

Authorization-pick up form: For the safety of the campers you will need to fill out and turn in an authorized pick up form. This states who is and is not allowed to pick your child up from camp. Your child will not be released to anyone not on the list without your written consent. **Everyone on the authorized pick up list must be over 18 years old. Additionally, you will be asked for an ID upon picking up your child. This is not meant as an inconvenience; rather as a means of ensuring the safety of all children.** Please bring your ID every day, because it will be checked!

Babysitting: YMCA camp staff is not permitted to babysit for families involved in our YMCA programs while they are employees of the YMCA.

Bathing Suits: Males must wear swim shorts or trunks with a lining. Speedo suits for males are not allowed. Females must wear a one piece bathing suit or a two piece suit that does not show the midriff (i.e., tankini suit that covers the midriff is allowed). If inappropriate swim wear is worn at camp the camper will either not swim, be asked to change, or a parent may be called to pick up the camper from camp/bring change of clothes.

Behavior Policies: Please refer to the character pledge that is in the emergency packet. If this pledge is broken or if there is a conflict/interaction that involves strong feelings or serious negative behaviors the following steps will be taken.

Step 1: YMCA staff will talk with campers in order to acknowledge feelings, gather information and create a plan to repair any harm that has been caused. This will be documented in the behavior log.

Step 2: If negative behavior persists or the plan to repair harm is not followed, parents will be asked to come to the program as a partner to discuss the issues and work toward a solution together with their child and YMCA staff. A written plan will be created and signed by parent, youth and staff.

Step 3: YMCA staff will monitor behavior closely and provide regular feedback to the camper and his/her parents.

Step 4: If the problem persists or camper does not follow the plan created and agreed upon, the parent may be contacted immediately to pick up their child from camp. The following morning, parents, staff and child will meet to discuss any additional supports that the child might need to be successful in the program.

Step 5: If the prior interventions are not successful AND youth behavior is impacting the physical or emotional safety of themselves, Y staff or other campers an alternative placement will be discussed and the child may be dismissed from the program for the remainder of session.

***We reserve the right to dismiss your child from the program immediately in extreme circumstances where physical, emotional or other harm is occurring or may occur to themselves, other children, staff or members.**

Bullying: Bullying is when one or more people exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick, or put down another person with the intent to hurt them. 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 emails, text messaging, instant messaging, weblogs, personal Web sites 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 the Buehler YMCA, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against all types of bullying. Each camper is expected to treat all other campers with respect, and to help each other achieve the best possible experience. If a camper has difficulty meeting this expectation, parents may be called upon to assist. We work together as a team to ensure that campers gain self-confidence, make new friends, and go home with great camp memories. Unfortunately, people 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. We can't manage an incident if we don't know about it. 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 at Buehler YMCA.

Camp T-shirt: Each camper will receive one t-shirt during their first week of camp. This shirt is to be worn on field trips days.

Camper Dress: Please write campers' names on articles that are brought/worn to camp. Socks and Gym shoes are required. **NO sandals or flip-flops allowed.** Children will be engaging in activities such as running and hiking throughout the day, and are likely to come into contact with dirt, mud, sand, glue, grass, etc. Dress accordingly. Clothing of campers should not be inappropriate in any way. Inappropriate dress includes but is not limited to the following: short shorts, clothing promoting alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, or are gang related, t-shirts that are sexually aggressive or explicit, clothing that does not appropriately cover the body (midriffs are not allowed to show). Disciplinary action may be taken, including, but not limited to: camper changing or parent being called to pick up camper.

Cellular Phones: Cellular phones may not be brought to camp by campers. Parents may only use cell phones in main areas (i.e. not in locker rooms) See posted cell phone policy throughout the YMCA. If you need to contact your camper you may call the Customer Service desk at 847-359-2400.

Character Development: Camp at the Buehler YMCA has a focus on Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility as the four core values of the YMCA. We will work to develop these qualities with your camper throughout the summer. Please address and encourage these values at home. Also see the Character Contract information included in the parent pack.

Chronic Health Condition: Must be documented by a licensed health physician on the health history form provided for you by the camp. You will also need to meet with the Camp Director and Unit Leader to review necessary information. Any medication necessary for this health condition must be given to the camp director or site director in its original container with physician's instructions for dosage on the label. The parent must fill out a separate form that gives permission to a staff member, who is 21 years or older, to give the medication to their child. This must be accompanied by a doctor's note with dosage and instructions.

Counselors: We have a great staff! Our counselors are carefully selected and trained up to 40 hours before the beginning of summer. They are subject to a background and reference check. They are trained in CPR/First Aid, child abuse prevention, emergency procedures, water safety, swim lesson assistant procedures, behavior management, camp activities and other related areas. 90% or more of our counselors are 18 years of age or older. Teen Camp Counselors and Unit Leaders are generally 21 years of age or older. If at any time you have a question or concern about our staff please address it with the director.

Dangerous Weapons: Campers who bring to camp any item designed to cause bodily harm or any item not designed to cause bodily harm, but that is deemed potentially harmful will first have it confiscated and then the parents/guardians will be contacted. Bringing such items to camp may result in campers being sent home early or suspended. All types of knives and dangerous items MUST be kept off camp property. Once an item is confiscated by the Camp Director, it will not be returned to the camper. Items will only be returned, upon request, to the parent or guardian.

Drop Off and Pick Up: The drop off and pickup area is in the fenced in lot by the tent for all full day camps ages 6+. Pre-Camp Care is from 7:00a.m. to 9:00a.m. It is included in your camp fee and may be used at anytime. Drop off will be a drive through service where you can pull your vehicle up and staff will bring the sign in sheet to you.

Your child must be at camp by 9:00a.m. in order for the groups to take attendance properly and begin the day's activities. Tardiness will not be tolerated, and will result in your child not being able to attend camp that day!

On field trip days, if your child/ren are not at the YMCA by 9am they will not be allowed to attend that day's field trip and you will have to find alternate care for them, EVEN IF THE CAMP HAS NOT DEPARTED YET. NO Refund will be given if your child is late and is not able to attend camp!

Post-Care is from 4:00p.m. until 6:00p.m. You may pick up your camper anytime **after 4:00p.m.** Pickup is also by the tent, and you will need to **PARK and WALK UP** to sign your child out. If you need to pick your child up before 4:00 pm please bring a note or call the Director. On field trip days picking your

child up early will not be possible. If you have not picked up your camper by 6:00pm you will be charged at a rate of \$1.00 per minute you are late.

YOU MUST PARK YOUR CAR IN AN APPROPRIATE SPOT AND ESCORT YOUR CAMPER FROM THE SIGN OUT TABLE. YOU MUST SIGN OUT YOUR CAMPER ON THE APPROPRIATE SHEET. Please be sure you have your ID ready at the time of pickup or your child will not be released to you.

E-Mail: Please provide your e-mail address on the registration form for possible communication with the camp director. You can email the camp director at sablock@ymcachicago.org.

Field Trips: A field trip schedule will be provided to you at parent orientation. **REMEMBER TO HAVE YOUR CAMPER WEAR THEIR CAMP T-SHIRT!** You will receive a field trip list prior to the start of camp. All field trips are included in the weekly cost of camp. Please do not send money with your camper to any field trips unless notified by the Camp Director. Teen Camp may go on extra field trips throughout the summer if weekly volunteer hours and appropriate behavior are met. Please be on time on field trip days. **On field trip days, if your child/ren are not at the YMCA by 9am they will not be able to attend that day's field trip and you will have to find alternate child care for them, EVEN IF THE CAMP HAS NOT DEPARTED YET. Your money will not be refunded if you are late! On field trips days please arrive no later than 9:00am.**

Fighting: The YMCA does not tolerate campers who harm other campers, or campers who harm counselors. This includes but is not limited to: degrading, demeaning, threatening other campers or staff OR physically harming another child or staff person. Any camper or group of campers found to be harassing, making fun of, or intimidating another camper will be subject to disciplinary actions, including being sent home or suspended from camp.

Financial Assistance: The Buehler YMCA will not deny service to anyone because of their inability to pay. Please be aware that we offer Action for Children assistance which must be applied to first in order to apply for YMCA financial assistance. All financial aid must be in place prior to the start of camp in order for your child to attend. AFC applications and financial assistance applications can be picked up at the front desk.

Forest Preserve: On occasion and if weather permits camp will venture to the forest preserve. Campers will spend the day with structured activities that take place in nature to give them a more traditional camp experience. It is very important to send all of the required items to camp with your child on these days. If children are not prepared they will not be allowed to attend. **You will not be able to pick your child up early on these days. Campers will return to the YMCA at 4 pm. You will be notified on Monday of the week if we will be going to the forest preserve.**

Gambling: No games of chance may be played during camp, on YMCA or forest preserve property. Campers who violate this policy will subject to disciplinary action.

Gangs: Camper will refrain from any gang related activity while at camp. No camper shall: 1) Wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any evidence of membership or affiliation in a gang. 2) Commit any act or omission, or use any speech, either verbal or non-verbal (gestures, handshakes, draw pictures, etc.) showing membership in or affiliation with a gang. Any camper who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action and parent/guardian will be contacted

Groups and Ratios: Children are grouped in units based on age. Explorers are age 5 years old. Voyagers are ages 6-8 years old. Navigators are ages 9-11 years old. Teen Campers are ages 12-15 years old.

Each Unit has a unit leader responsible for the direct supervision of the counselors and general coordination of that unit. Unit Leaders are generally 21 years of age or older. The ratios are set by standards of the ACA and are as follows:

- 3 to 5 year old groups have a 1:6 ratio
- 6 to 8 year old groups have a 1:8 ratio
- 9 to 15 year old groups have a 1:10 ratio.

If you are interested in having your child's friend, relative, etc. in the same group please mention it to the Unit Leader. **WE CANNOT GUARANTEE** their placement in the same group; however, we will do our best to honor your request.

Illness/Injury: Parents will be notified if their child has not been feeling well for a period of time. Moderate injuries will be communicated to parents once proper first aid procedures have been followed. If the illness or injury occurs late in the day and is moderate you may be notified at the end of the day. In case of severe injury parent will be contacted immediately.

Lost and Found: We will have a lost and found area; however, please label your child's clothing and articles. Towels, sweatshirts, jackets, swim goggles, and **water bottles** are some of the most common lost items. **The YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Lost and found will be cleaned out every week, unclaimed items will be sent to goodwill.**

Lunch: Lunch/beverage is not provided for campers so please send a sack lunch and 2 snacks with your child every day. The campers will have snack time daily. There is no refrigeration or microwaves available, so we suggest packing an ice pack etc. with your child's lunch if you deem it necessary. We will have water coolers that are refilled throughout the day. Due to severe allergies we are a peanut free camp.

There is also an option to order lunch through the Green Leaf Café. Order forms will be available May 1. You can inquire at the front desk or at Green Leaf Café for more information.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU SEND YOUR CHILD TO CAMP WITH A REFILLABLE WATER BOTTLE. They will be engaging in high levels of activity throughout the day.

****YOU MUST SEND YOUR CHILD TO CAMP WITH A LUNCH AND BEVERAGE/REFILLABLE WATER BOTTLE EVERY DAY. IF YOU DO NOT PROVIDE A LUNCH FOR YOUR CHILD YOU WILL BE CALLED AND ASKED TO BRING ONE.**

Medication/ Medical Form: If your child needs to take medication for any reason you will need to fill out a brief description on the medication form telling us when and how to administer the medication. All prescription drugs must be in the original bottle with the child's name, name of drug, correct dosage, and instructions from the doctor on how/when to administer. Medication of any kind **MUST** be held by the staff. We store all medication in a locked box or in a unit leader's first aid kit when necessary. All medication is administered by staff 21 years of age or older. **Inhalers:** If your child requires an inhaler

and you wish for them to self-administer **ONLY** inhaler medication, **you still must fill out the medication form and note that the child is permitted to self-administer.**

Newsletters and Communication: Newsletters will be available every Friday. Please read them to keep informed about camp issues and information. From time to time we may send out a flyer or letter with additional information. The check in/check out staff person will have the most recent communications that were sent home so you may check with them if you feel you have missed a flyer or newsletter. **We obtain the right to add or change rules and regulations throughout the camp session. You will be notified of all changes before they take effect.** These changes will also be included in the newsletters.

Obscenity: Obscene, profane or vulgar language that is written, oral, or expressed by symbols will not be tolerated. Being respectful of campers and staff is expected. A violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Payments/Refunds/Transfers: Your completed registration form along with a \$30 deposit is required at the time of sign up for each week of camp you wish your child to participate in. Checks should be made payable to the Buehler YMCA. Payments must be made at the front desk. Camp staff is not permitted to handle cash or assist you with payments.

Your balance of the fee per week is due by **WEDNESDAY the week prior to the session beginning. If you pay Thursday morning or later you will be assessed a \$25 late fee.** There will be no exceptions, so please do not ask. If payments are not made the Friday before the week of camp attendance your camper will not be allowed to attend camp! **DEPOSIT AND CAMP FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.** If you are interested in transferring a week you will need to let the director know 3 weeks in advance in writing! You will need to pay an additional \$30. The deposit is non-transferable. These policies will be enforced and no exceptions will be made. **If you do not attend a week of camp and fail to follow cancellation policy then you will be responsible for full payment of that week, and will not be permitted back into camp until payment is received.**

Ratios: The Buehler YMCA maintains the following ratios at all time to better serve you and keep your campers safe. Ages 3-5 years require a 1:6 ratio. Ages 6-8 years require a 1:8 ratio, and ages 9 and up maintain a 1:10 ratio.

Sign In/Sign Out: **ALL campers MUST be signed in and out DAILY by a parent/ adult guardian or authorized person.** All authorized persons will be asked to show a photo ID at any time. If the person wishing to pick up a camper is not on the authorized pick up list we will not release your child to them without written and verbal consent from you the parent.

Sun Screen: Please put sunscreen on your child before sending them to camp. We also suggest that you send sunscreen to camp with your child. It is especially important on WATER PARK FIELD TRIP DAYS. Your child will have frequent opportunities to apply sunscreen throughout the day. The Buehler Day Camp discourages our staff from applying sunscreen on campers unless the sunscreen permission slip has been signed and returned. Please make sure to apply sunscreen every morning.

Suspension: If your child has broken rules or policies they are subject to suspension from camp. **Refunds will not be given for a child suspended from camp.** The amount of time suspended will be at the discretion of the Director.

Swimming: Each age group has a scheduled swim time. The schedule will be handed out on parent orientation. If our field trip is to a water park your child will need to bring appropriate swim gear. The first day of swimming of each week the campers will be tested by a swim instructor to determine swim ability. If your child does not pass the deep end test, they will not be permitted into the deep end of the pool. The determination of each child's level will be made by the aquatics staff. Each camper may have the opportunity to be retested each week.

Schedules: Camp counselors write daily lesson plans prior to the sessions. Activities may vary from day to day, including, but not limited to: sports, character development, arts and crafts, games, skits, songs, teambuilding, swimming and more. A sample schedule will be provided to you.

Search and Seizure: The Buehler YMCA Day Camp staff reserve the right to search a staff or camper's property, either by themselves or with the aid of law enforcement officials, if the camp deems the search is necessary to maintain the integrity of the camp's environment and/or the protection of the other staff or campers. The person in question will be invited to be present for the search when feasible. Any items found in violation of the law or camp rules will be confiscated and may be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Vandalism: Campers involved in vandalism or malicious mischief either against camp property or against camper or staff member will be disciplined accordingly. Payment to repair any damage accrued as a result of the vandalism is the responsibility of the camper's parent/guardian. Violation of this policy may result in the camper being suspended from camp.

Vending Machines: Campers are NOT allowed to use the vending machines during the camp hours, with the exception of Teen Camp. Teens may have the **privilege** to use the vending machines at the discretion of the counselors, Site Director and Director. Teen Camp may not use the vending machine to purchase lunch. They must be sent to camp with a healthy sack lunch.

Weather: In the event of severe weather such as extreme heat or rain, campers will be moved inside the YMCA to a safe area where their camp activities will continue. Field trips may also be adjusted or changed based on the day's weather as well.

Please remember we are a peanut free camp!

**** The YMCA obtains the right to modify and/or add policies and procedures to this manual throughout the camp session. Parents will be notified of any changes prior to them taking effect.****

Please detach and turn in this sheet with
the rest of the paperwork.



I have read and understand the policies written in the Day Camp handbook and understand that there are no exceptions and that all rules and policies must be followed in order for my child to attend Day Camp at Buehler YMCA.

Child name (please print): _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____