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FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

MCGAW YMCA

SUMMER DAY CAMP HANDBOOK

FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

PROGRAMS:

SUMMER DAY CAMP
META MEETS CAMP

REVISED 3/12/2024

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Welcome

Get ready for an epic summer adventure with the YMCA, the nation's leader of camping and outdoor programming for more than a century! The McGaw YMCA serves approximately 200 kids in our Evanston day camp programs each summer, and we can't wait to welcome your camper to another fun-filled adventure!

Our Day Camp programs aim to create a safe, creative, active environment where campers can enjoy outdoor adventures, explore new horizons, and develop physically, mentally, and socially. Our focus is on instilling and nurturing the YMCA's four core values of **Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility** while creating a fun-filled environment that promotes a sense of belonging, growth, and healthy relationships. By keeping our mission and vision at the forefront, we align with the YMCA pillars of youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

MCGAW YMCA MISSION, VISION & VALUES

MISSION: The McGaw YMCA cultivates the whole person, strengthens community, and provides equitable access to transformational experiences that uplift the mind, body, and spirit.

VISION: The McGaw Y will be a place of belonging for all people at every stage of life.

OUR COMMITMENT

At the Y, we are committed to strengthening community by helping young people find the power in themselves, improving the health and well-being of people of all ages, and inspiring action in and across our diverse and vibrant community.

Every day, and in everything we do, we remain committed to our work of becoming an anti-racist, multicultural organization that helps to advance justice and builds a culture of belonging for everyone.

When you join the Y, you'll discover new ways to connect with your potential, purpose, and community. No matter where you are on your journey, the Y is where you can be, belong and become.

OUR VALUES: CARING, HONESTY, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY

Our core values unite us as a YMCA Movement. They are the shared beliefs and essential principles that guide our behavior, interactions with each other and decision-making. As individuals and a collective organization, we promise to engage and operate in ways that exemplify these values.

OUR STAFF – PROFESSIONAL ROLE MODELS

At the YMCA we believe all children deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. As children grow mentally, emotionally, and physically, they need support along the way. All Day Camp staff members are under the supervision of a YMCA professional, carefully selected from colleges, leadership organizations, and local youth-serving groups.

Our commitment to safety is reflected in our counselor-to-camper ratio, and we require counselors to undergo extensive pre-camp training. This includes 40 hours of training covering CPR, First Aid, AED, and Child Abuse Prevention, along with specific instruction in social emotional learning, behavior management, restorative justice, abuse prevention, weather safety, medical care, and activity safety & facilitation. All YMCA staff members undergo thorough background checks before being hired. We take pride in setting high expectations for our summer camp staff each year and continually assess their performance throughout the summer.

Day Camp registration and program management is handled by staff located at the McGaw YMCA Children’s Center. For most inquiries, reach out to the Children’s Center front desk by phone at 847-475-8580 or email us at daycamp@mcgawymca.org.

Day Camp Program Staff Directory	
Andrea Hillsamer (she/her) Director, School Age Programs andreah@mcgawymca.org	Max Yas (he/him) Director, Children’s Center Operations maxy@mcgawymca.org
Jala Johnson (she/her) Manager, School Age Programs jalaj@mcgawymca.org	Sam (Marin) Allen (she/her/ella) Manager, Admissions & Data samanthaallen@mcgawymca.org <i>iHablo español!</i>
Onam Lansana (he/him) Manager, MetaMedia onaml@mcgawymca.org	Eileen Canafax (she/her) Manager, Admissions & Membership eileenc@mcgawymca.org
Jada Hoare (she/her) Coordinator, Day Camp jadah@mcgawymca.org	Alex Richardson (she/her) Family Support Advocate alexr@mcgawymca.org

CONTACTING CAMP

If you need to contact the Day Camp team, please utilize the following options:

Phone: Call the Children's Center at **847-475-8580**, and your call will be promptly transferred to the Day Camp team.

Email: For non-urgent concerns, you may also reach out via email at daycamp@mcgawymca.org.

We’re here to ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience for your child at our Day Camp, and we encourage open communication. Feel free to reach out to us through either channel and we'll be happy to assist you.

NOTE: Staff will not respond to messages before 8:00am, after 5:30pm, or on weekends.

1.0 General Information

We have established the following guidelines for participation in McGaw YMCA Day Camp programs, including Summer Day Camp and Meta Meets Camp.

CAMP OPERATING DAYS/TIMES

Program Dates: June 10- August 9, 2024 (9 weeks)

Days/Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 5:30pm

Summer Day Camp Age: entering Grades 1-5

Meta Meets Camp Age: entering Grades 6-8

Camp is structured into weekly sessions. Parents/guardians may sign youth up for all or some of the 9 weeks. In Summer Day Camp, each session introduces a new theme while maintaining the overall structure and we operate at a ratio of 2:20 counselor to campers.

CAMP LOCATIONS

Summer Day Camp: To accommodate our large number of campers, Summer Day Camp takes place off-site, not at the Children’s Center. We collaborate with the local school district each year to secure a location, with final details usually revealed by May. Keep an eye out for location updates. Past locations have included Dewey Elementary and King Arts School.

Meta Meets Camp: Meta Meets Camp has three different locations: McGaw YMCA main building, the McGaw YMCA space in the Family Focus building, and a local school, with final details usually revealed by May.

Each camp program will communicate the designated drop-off and pick-up location. No camper will ever be left alone, and no single staff member will be alone with a camper. Entry into program buildings is restricted to authorized personnel only. Parents and visitors are not allowed into the program buildings unless scheduled for a pre-arranged visit.

Playgrounds

Our summer programming may utilize various non-YMCA-owned facilities, such as school campuses. While our staff is trained to monitor and conduct daily safety inspections of grounds and equipment, it's essential to note that the McGaw YMCA doesn't maintain the playgrounds at these sites, and these playgrounds may not always meet state licensing requirements. However, we work closely with school and building administrators to ensure that these spaces align with both YMCA standards and any specific requirements set by the owning organizations or schools. Each program will communicate the designated drop-off and pick-up location.

2.0 Parent/Guardian Role

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

Parents and guardians play a crucial role in supporting McGaw YMCA camp programs, including registering their child(ren) for camp and providing all necessary information. If there is more than one parent/guardian listed on the registration form, the parent/guardian who signed the form will be designated as the "Registering Parent/Guardian" responsible for managing the camper's enrollment information and submitting all payments. The Registering Parent/Guardian is the only person allowed to amend the Authorized Pick-Up List or the camper's file.

A completed and signed Summer Day Camp Enrollment packet is required for each camper in any of our day camp programs. The enrollment packet will be emailed to the Registering Parent/Guardian and **must be turned into our registration team by April 30 for your child(ren) to attend camp**. The enrollment packet includes required state licensing forms and camp information. A paper version of the packet is available upon request at the front desk of the Children's Center.

Deposits and full payments are due by the dates listed on the registration form and online on our Summer Day Camp policies webpage (www.mcgawymca.org/camps/summer/policies).

Campers will not be allowed to attend camp with a balance due.

COMMUNICATION AND PREPARATION

Parents/guardians are encouraged to share any feedback, health concerns, or special needs their children may have. Likewise, camp staff may communicate with parents regarding their child's progress or any issues that may arise. We use various communication channels, including weekly newsletters, social media, signs or flyers at sign-in/out tables, phone calls, in-person meetings, and email. Parents/guardians should stay informed regularly about camp schedules, weekly themes, activities, and any specific requirements to ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience for all campers.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Consistent attendance and punctuality are important for the smooth functioning of the camp. Authorized individuals should drop off and pick up their campers on time, respecting the camp's schedule. Additionally, parents/guardians are expected to adhere to all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, including pick-up, payment, late pick-up, and cancellation policies.

PARTICIPATION IN CAMP ACTIVITIES

Some camper groups/classrooms offer opportunities for parents and guardians to get involved, such as volunteering their talents, hobbies, or professional expertise. If you're interested, please reach out to the School Age Programs Director to explore possibilities.

3.0 Program Structure

CAMPER GROUPS

Camper groups, also referred to as classrooms, are a tradition in our Y summer programs. You may hear your child say names like Owls, Penguins, or Hummingbirds to refer to their camper group/classroom while at camp. Our staff work hard to organize camper groups to enhance the overall camp experience. Initially, we group campers by grade level. We may consider camper birthdays when a classroom reaches capacity. Some groups may have mixed ages to accommodate all campers.

If you have a specific camper pairing request, please communicate it on the form during camp registration. Each camper may only request one specific friend, and that friend must reciprocate the request and be in the same grade. While we strive to fulfill friend requests based on availability, we cannot guarantee accommodation. We understand the importance of familiar faces, and throughout the camp day, we provide numerous opportunities for children to interact with campers from other groups, fostering new friendships and enriching the camp experience.

CAMP ACTIVITIES

We offer a variety of activities in our Summer Day Camp and Meta Meets Camp programs – from camp-wide adventures to personal favorites and unit-specific activities! Each camp brings a unique set of activity choices to ensure your child's camp experience is memorable. Our camp programs are specially designed to match the age of each camper, creating a progressively structured challenge that keeps the excitement high. Counselors will be by their side throughout the entire camp day, making sure every moment is filled with laughter and adventure.

For youth in our Summer Day Camp program (entering grades 1-5), we also provide:

Weekly Themes

To add a layer of excitement to the Summer Day Camp experience, we've designed unique themes for our campers to participate in each week. On the Friday prior to a camper's first day of camp, the Registering Parent/Guardian will receive an email newsletter containing details about planned activities for each week, including a reminder about themes, swim times, field trips, and special events. If an additional parent/guardian would like to receive this weekly e-newsletter, the Registering Parent/Guardian should send a request to add them to daycamp@mcgawymca.org.

Wacky Wednesday

Wacky Wednesday is the day to let campers dress in the silliest way possible, matching the week's theme. Whether it's pajama day, hat day, or mismatch day – raid your closet and let your imagination run wild! No need to buy anything new, just bring your creativity and get ready for a day of wacky, wonderful fun.

BREAKS & BATHROOMS

Camper groups take frequent breaks for rest, hydration, bathroom use, and to refill water bottles throughout the day. No camper will ever be left alone, and no single staff member will be alone with a camper. For bathroom trips, campers will go at times designated for the entire camp, or in groups of three campers with the same gender identification. Our team conducts regular safety and cleanliness inspections for all bathrooms. To maintain a secure environment, campers will enter restrooms based on the number of available stalls (e.g., 3 stalls, 3 campers).

During field trips, our staff will inspect restroom stalls before allowing campers to enter. Also, staff members will stay at the restroom doorway to monitor camper safety. We are committed to providing a safe and enjoyable experience for all campers.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are scheduled once a week, and campers must wear the current year's McGaw YMCA camp t-shirt to attend. Campers will also be provided with a safety bracelet that will have the YMCA name, address, and telephone number. More information, including a full schedule of trips, will be shared later this spring.

The **Camper Behavior Code of Conduct** listed in this handbook applies while riding the YMCA van or bus.

- Eating and drinking are not permitted on the bus.
- Riders must remain seated and wear seat belts.
- The rider's hands, arms, etc. may not extend outside the bus at any time.
- Riders must not tamper with the bus emergency door.
- Riders must obey the driver.
- The driver oversees the bus and has the right to administer disciplinary actions including assigned seats to maintain order and promote safety.
- Riders may not throw objects on the bus, shout, or display any other behavior that may distract the driver and compromise the safety of those on the bus.

MONEY ON FIELD TRIPS

Do not send your camper with money at any time. Are all field trip costs covered by the camper's program fees. The McGaw YMCA is not responsible for any lost or stolen funds.

PICK-UP/DROP-OFF AT FIELD TRIP SITES

For offsite field trips, parents/guardians/authorized adults are not allowed to pick up or drop off campers at the field trip location. In your child needs to arrive late or leave early on a field trip day, it is necessary to keep them at home or arrange alternative childcare solutions as they will be unable to participate in the field trip. Your understanding and cooperation ensure the smooth execution of our field trip procedures.

MEALS AND SNACKS

We partner with the City of Evanston to provide healthy breakfast and lunch each day. Meals are prepared at Evanston Township High School (ETHS) then delivered to the camp site. The ETHS kitchen is peanut and tree nut safe - no products are served that contain these as listed ingredients. A daily menu of breakfast and lunch options will be provided before camp starts. Campers will enjoy their meals either in their designated classroom or the cafeteria, depending on their age group.

Snacks for campers are provided by the McGaw YMCA Children's Center and typically consist of two components, such as chips and salsa, cheese and crackers, or apple and soy nut butter.

FOOD FROM HOME

Your child can bring breakfast, lunch, and/or snacks from home instead of eating the provided meals. Home-packed food should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Meals should be nutritious and balanced with a healthy drink; please refrain from sending sugary/carbonated drinks and processed/junk food.
- Food must not require refrigeration or heating, as our camp facilities lack these amenities. Please avoid including milk or mayonnaise-based products.
- Packed in a brown paper bag (recommended option).
- Food must be peanut and tree nut safe – campers may not bring food items that contain these as listed ingredients.

SWIMMING

Swimming is scheduled regularly during Y summer day camp programs. Swim time will take place in our indoor pool and will emphasize water safety, allowing campers to practice skills both in and around water.

On swim days, campers must bring a swimsuit, towel, and optional goggles, along with an extra set of clothing. It is recommended for campers to wear their swimsuits to camp under their clothes. During their initial visit to the YMCA indoor pool, campers will take a swim test and be grouped with others of similar skill levels. Campers will be accompanied in the water by a certified YMCA swim instructor and their camp counselors, while a certified lifeguard closely monitors the pool. All camp counselors complete staff training that includes pool-related Risk Management, on-deck pool safety training, and American Red Cross CPR/First Aid training.

On rare occasions, the pool may unexpectedly close during the day, potentially affecting your camper's scheduled swim time. If this occurs, it may not be feasible for the Y staff to offer an alternative swim time due to other programming requirements for the pool.

Parents are welcome to observe swim time from the observation deck at the pool. For the safety of all campers, we ask that you do not come onto the deck.

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP

Each day, campers should bring the following items, clearly labeled with the camper's first and last name:

- **Backpack** - We recommend campers bring a small cinch-style backpack to hold their items. Each camper will be assigned a locker or basket for their backpack and any projects created at camp.
- **Play clothes** - Please dress your child in clothing that can get messy, with consideration for the weather forecast and outdoor camp activities.
- **Closed-toe athletic shoes or Crocs** - For safety reasons, open-toe shoes, flip flops, and sandals are not allowed.
- **Reusable water bottle** - Campers should bring a reusable water bottle labeled with the camper's first and last name. There will be breaks to refill water bottles throughout the day. Cups will be provided to those who do not bring their own.
- **Spray sunscreen** (staff can only assist with applying spray) - The American Academy of Dermatology recommends that all kids — regardless of their skin tone — wear sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. It is good practice for parents to apply sunscreen *prior* to arriving at camp and send a bottle of spray sunscreen for use throughout the day. Our staff can assist with applying spray sunscreen only. If your child cannot use sunscreen due to medical reasons, please provide us with a doctor's note.
- **Spray bug screen** (optional - staff do not directly apply to campers)
- **Cap/visor** (optional)
- **Healthy meals and snacks** (optional - if the camper is not eating the meals provided)
- **Change of clothing** (optional) - A full change of clothing is recommended, as campers might get messy or wet.
- **ON SWIM DAYS: Swimsuit, towel, change of clothes, and optional goggles** - On swim days, campers are required to bring a swimsuit, towel, and optional goggles, along with an extra set of clothing to store in their locker or basket.
- **ON FIELD TRIP DAYS: McGaw YMCA Camp t-shirt** - At the start of camp, campers will receive a McGaw YMCA camp t-shirt. The cost of one (1) shirt is included in the registration fee. Campers are required to wear their YMCA camp t-shirt on field trip days for safety reasons. Campers who do not wear their YMCA camp shirt on field trip days must purchase a replacement shirt for \$10 to participate.

WHAT TO LEAVE AT HOME

We want to ensure that your child has the best experience at camp, free from distractions and with a focus on interactive and engaging activities. Please note that campers should not bring the following items to camp:

- Cell phone
- iPads / Tablets
- Game systems and other electronic devices
- Toys/stuffed animals/fidgets/cards
- Money
- Jewelry

In our commitment to a screen-free experience, campers should not bring any cell phones or electronic devices. To support this, staff will remind campers and families of this expectation weekly. Any devices brought to camp will be collected and securely stored until the end of the camp day. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in creating a fun and immersive environment for all campers.

LOST AND FOUND

All necessary personal items that come to camp must be clearly labeled with the camper's first and last name using a permanent marker or laundry label. Camp staff will place lost items in a designated lost-and-found area. If you notice a missing item, please promptly inform the camp staff. Unclaimed items at the end of the camp session will be donated to a local charity. Please note that the McGaw YMCA is not responsible for lost, misplaced, damaged, or stolen items. Your cooperation in labeling and promptly reporting any missing items is greatly appreciated.

EMERGENCIES & SEVERE WEATHER

During camp, situations may come up that threaten the health, safety, or well-being of campers or staff. These situations could be medically related (e.g., injury, infection, illness), natural (e.g., severe weather), or human-made (e.g., fire, power outage). All camp staff maintain radio communication with camp leadership, ensuring immediate notification in the event of severe weather, emergencies, or any other disruptions to the camp day. If we need to close camp or cancel a field trip for any reason, we will notify parents using the notification procedure below.

In the event of severe storms, tornadoes, damaging winds, or other emergency weather events, staff are prepared with procedures to keep campers safe. Staff will not operate vehicles during severe weather conditions.

On heat advisory days, we will implement additional measures to ensure the safety of children by keeping them in shaded areas and ensuring they stay well hydrated. Whenever possible, we will utilize indoor spaces. Activities will be modified to give campers plenty of rest time during periods of extreme heat. We adhere to the *DCFS Weather Guidelines for Children* to guide our decisions regarding outdoor activities. Counselors are trained to manage emergency situations.

In the event of a power outage or water outage, we are prepared with program plans and alternate activities if an outage interrupts regular programming for only a short time. If the outage lasts more than one (1) hour, we will need to close camp and will contact parents using the procedure below.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

It is crucial to keep your camper's emergency contact information up to date so we can promptly reach you in case of severe weather or emergency. YMCA leadership will send a notification to all parents/guardians on the camp email list as soon as reasonably possible via email and/or Class Dojo to explain the situation and provide next steps.

If we need to close camp for any reason, we will email and call the Registering Parent to pick up their camper as soon as possible. If we are unable to connect with the Registering Parent, we will contact authorized individuals on the campers Emergency Contact list.

Please wait for notification before calling the YMCA, as our first concern during a weather situation or emergency is the safety of our campers and staff. If you try to call camp and receive a recording, please leave a message and a staff person will get back to you as soon as it is possible.

4.0 Arrival and Departure Procedures

Campers are required to be signed in between 8:00am and 9:00am and signed out between 4:30pm and 5:30pm each day, unless prior notice is given. Attendance will be taken daily during the first 15 minutes of the regular camp day. Here are the procedures for drop-off and pick-up:

DROP-OFF (Between 8:00-9:00AM):

- Campers must be dropped off and physically signed in by their parent/guardian or any other authorized individual (age 18 and older) at the designated drop off location between 8:00-9:00am. The entrance door closes and locks from the outside at 9:00am. Campers may not be left at the program site unless they have been properly signed in with YMCA staff.
- Late Arrivals - Planned: For planned arrival after 9:00am, an authorized individual should contact the Children's Center at 847-475-8580 to provide advance notice and arrange for late arrival.
- Late Arrivals - Unplanned: If you arrive after 9:00am and do not provide advance notice, an authorized individual should contact the Children's Center at 847-475-8580. Be prepared to wait, as we cannot ensure immediate availability at the entrance after 9:00am.
- Late Arrivals Due to Summer School: If your child is enrolled in summer school through District 65, the Registering Parent/Guardian must inform us at the time of registration so that we can anticipate your camper's late arrival to camp. You must contact the D65 transportation department to tell them that your child is to be dropped off at your child's YMCA Day Camp program location. Please make sure your child knows where to get off the bus for camp. We do not provide discounted rates for children attending half-day camp due to summer school.

PICK-UP (Between 4:30-5:30PM):

- Campers must be picked up and physically signed out by their parent/guardian or any other authorized individual at the designated pickup location between 4:30-5:30pm. To ensure the child's safe release, the individual must be listed on the Authorized Pick-Up List (see page 14), present a valid photo ID to our staff, and provide their initials on the sign-out sheet.
- Early Pick-Up – Planned: If an authorized individual needs to pick up a camper earlier than 4:30pm, the Registering Parent/Guardian must contact the Children's Center at 847-475-8580 to provide advance notice and arrange for early pick-up.
- Early Pick-Up – Unplanned: If an authorized individual needs to pick up a camper earlier than 4:30pm and does not provide advance notice, the Registering Parent/Guardian should call the Children's Center at 847-475-8580. Without notice, the authorized adult should be prepared to wait, as staff might be engaged in an activity away from the designated pick-up location.
- Late Pick-Up – Unplanned: If an authorized individual is running late for any reason, they should call the Children's Center at 847-475-8580 and provide an estimated time of arrival. The camper will remain with YMCA staff and the Late Pick-Up Policy will go into effect.

AUTHORIZED INDIVIDUALS

We will only release campers to parents, guardians, and other authorized individuals (18 and older) listed on the camper's Authorized Pick-Up List who show a valid photo ID. If an individual not listed on the Authorized Pick-Up List arrives to pick up a camper, or if the individual cannot provide a photo ID, the child will not be released to that individual. This policy applies to any individuals, including biological parents, who are not explicitly listed on the camper's Authorized Pick-Up List. Y staff will contact the Registering Parent/Guardian who must clarify the situation as outlined above. This person can authorize the adult to pick up over the phone, however, it is ideal if the primary responsible party complies by providing a signed notice. If the Registering Parent/Guardian is not available to authorize the adult to pick up, the camper will remain with YMCA staff and the Late Pick-Up Policy will go into effect.

CHANGES TO THE AUTHORIZED PICK-UP LIST

Requests to change the Authorized Pick-Up List must be submitted in writing to the Y by the Registering Parent/Guardian (as defined on page Section 2.0 of this handbook). Only the Registering Parent/Guardian is allowed to amend the Authorized Pick-Up List. If an individual is specifically not allowed to pick up your child, please list them under the "Not Authorized" section in the Enrollment Packet. Submit any relevant court orders to the Children's Center Registration Team during enrollment.

CUSTODY AGREEMENTS & COURT ORDERS

If there is a court-ordered custody agreement (or any updates to prior orders), a copy should be provided to the School Age Program Director to be placed in the camper's file. This is especially important if there is an action or an order against a biological parent that denies them the right to see or pick up the child. Any situations disclosed to the School Age Program Director will remain confidential and be discussed only with those parties in a need-to-know situation.

If a parent or other individual is **not** legally allowed to pick up a child, we must have a copy of the court order or separation document signed by a judge that expressly states the individual does not have custodial rights. Without this documentation, staff are obligated to release a child to either parent listed on the camper's Authorize Pick-Up List. One parent stating on the registration form that another parent may not pick up the child is not sufficient documentation to allow us to refuse.

IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

YMCA staff cannot release campers to individuals who display signs of being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or who otherwise appear to be unable to provide safe transportation for the camper. If a YMCA staff member suspects that a parent, guardian, or another adult authorized to pick up a child is in an incapacitated condition and poses a risk to the camper upon arrival, the YMCA staff will keep the child at the program facility until an alternative pick-up can be arranged with another adult on the Authorized Pick-Up List. The YMCA reserves the right to involve appropriate authorities if necessary to protect the child and the YMCA.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

Children must be picked up by 5:30pm each day. **A late fee of \$1.00 per minute per child will be charged for late pick-ups.** Chronic instances of late pick-up may result in additional fees and/or dismissal from the program.

If an authorized adult is running late to pick up for any reason, they should call the Children's Center at 847-475-8580 and provide an estimated time of arrival. If the Registering Parent/Guardian or other authorized adult do not pick up a camper by 5:30pm and no phone call about late arrival has been received, the following will happen:

- Staff will call all parents/guardians and adults on the camper's Authorized Pick-Up List.
- If no contact can be made at those numbers, staff will continually call until someone is reached. The camper will never be left alone at the program site.
- If unable to reach anyone on the list, staff will notify the School Age Program Director and call the Chief Operating Officer to determine the appropriate next steps, which may include calling the police and/or social services.

REPORTING AN ABSENCE

Call (847) 475-8580 if your child will be absent. You may also email us at daycamp@mcgawymca.org.

If your child does not attend camp on a particular day, there will be no refund or credit for that day. If you have paid in full for a week of camp and your camper does not attend on Monday and you fail to notify the YMCA of the absence, your camper's spot for that week may be canceled.

REQUESTS FOR REFUNDS

We are unable to refund or prorate fees for any reason. Deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable. Days missed due to inclement weather, holidays, choice of parent/guardian, disruptive behavior, or COVID closures and quarantines required by IDPH may not be made up, credited, or refunded.

We do not refund or prorate fees for cancellations/changes in activities and trips. We will do our best to reschedule a comparable alternative activity to the originally scheduled activity that was cancelled or changed.

REQUESTS FOR WITHDRAWAL/ADDITIONS

To request a withdrawal or addition of a week of camp, fill out the Summer Day Camp Transfer/Request form as official confirmation/notice. Full payment will be required for any camp weeks added. To download the form, visit our Summer Day Camp webpage (www.mcgawymca.org/camps/summer). A paper version of the form is available upon request at the front desk of the Children's Center.

5.0 Health and Wellness

ILLNESS

Children should not attend camp if they are not feeling well. If your child cannot go outside or participate in the program due to illness, your child needs to remain at home.

No child may attend or remain at camp if they have ringworm, conjunctivitis (pink eye), head lice, the flu, COVID-19, RSV, or any other communicable illness or if they display signs of possible severe illness, including: fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea, chills/repeated shaking, muscle pain, headache, loss of taste or smell, lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, rash, difficulty breathing, wheezing or other unusual symptoms.

Any child running a temperature over 100.4 degrees, vomiting, or having diarrhea, will be required to go home. If a child becomes ill during camp with any of the conditions or symptoms listed above and is unable to participate in activities, the Camp Site Director will contact the Registering Parent/Guardian to discuss the appropriate next steps and criteria for return.

INJURIES AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If a child is injured at camp our staff will provide First Aid at the camp location consistent with their training. The following established procedures will be followed:

- First Aid will be provided, and the injury will be recorded in an incident report.
- The child will periodically be observed after First Aid has been applied.
- Staff will provide a copy of the incident report at sign-out to the authorized individual picking up the camper.

For those injuries and illnesses requiring professional medical attention, the following established procedures will be followed as authorized in the Enrollment Packet and signed waivers:

- 911 will be called immediately.
- Immediate First Aid will be administered by camp staff consistent with their training until emergency professionals arrive.
- The Registering Parent/Guardian will be notified of our course of action immediately after we have stabilized the child or environment and/or called 911. If that parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact listed in the enrollment packet will be notified.
- The Camp Site Director will accompany the camper to the hospital and remain until the Registering Parent/Guardian or emergency contact arrives.
- The incident will be documented in writing on the YMCA accident report form.

Please notify the Registration Team when there is a new work, cell, or home phone number or if you have a new address. If your child is sick or injured, we must be able to notify you immediately.

MEDICATION

The YMCA requires that all medication (prescription and non-prescription) that will be brought to programming must be listed on the child's Developmental History form.

Medications will be securely stored and dispensed by staff. Refrigeration will be provided for medication, if necessary. Medication must be given directly to leadership staff at drop-off along with the Developmental History form. **Do not give any medication to your child's counselor, pack it in a lunch bag, or store it in your child's locker or backpack.**

1. **Prescription medication** must be in original labeled containers that identifies the child's name, the prescribing physician, the name of the medication, the dosage, and the frequency of administration. Medication cannot be expired.
2. **Non-prescription (over-the-counter) medication** such as Tylenol and allergy medication must be in the original container and not expired. Staff will follow the instructions provided on the bottle, unless a doctor's note is included indicating different instructions.
3. **Emergency medication** such as an inhaler and EPI pen medication must identify the child's name, the prescribing physician, the name of the medication, the dosage, and the frequency of administration. Medication cannot be expired. Additionally, you must complete a Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan at the time of registration. **Emergency medication will be kept with your child's camper group, in a red emergency backpack at all times.** All camp staff are trained in First Aid/CPR and AED including the administration of emergency medication such as EPI pen and inhaler. If your camper requires emergency medication other than these listed, we may ask you to train us in the administration of the medication.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

At the McGaw YMCA, we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and enriching environment for all campers. We recognize that some campers may have special emotional or physical needs, which may be outlined in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) as part of their educational support. We are dedicated to working collaboratively with parents and guardians to ensure the best possible camp experience for every child.

IEP NOTIFICATION AND REVIEW

Campers with an IEP should be identified, and their needs communicated to Family Support Advocate at least two weeks prior to their scheduled arrival at camp. Parents or guardians are required to email the IEP document and any other relevant information during this period.

The School Age Program Director will review the submitted IEP and any supplementary information provided. We understand the importance of timely communication and aim to provide a response within 48 hours upon receiving the documentation.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Upon review of the camper's IEP, our team will assess how we can best meet the needs of the camper while maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all campers. McGaw YMCA is committed to making every reasonable accommodation possible to serve children of all abilities. Accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Modification of camp activities or curriculum.
- Provision of additional support from camp staff.
- Ensuring appropriate facilities and equipment are available.

We strongly encourage open and ongoing communication between camp staff and parents or guardians of campers with special needs. This dialogue is essential to ensuring the camper's well-being and a successful camp experience.

We believe that every child, regardless of their unique abilities, should have the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from the camp experience. By working together, we can create an environment where all campers can thrive and make lasting memories.

For any questions or concerns, please contact the School Age Program Director or Family Support Advocate.

8.0 Code of Conduct and Restorative Practices

CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

The McGaw YMCA expects all participants to demonstrate the four YMCA character values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.

Restorative Philosophy

Restorative Practices represents a philosophy that recognizes the importance of prioritizing the relationships and connections between and among all people within a community and provides a framework for creating positive school climate and culture.

Campers who fail to exhibit character value traits are counseled by YMCA staff using restorative practices. Y staff respect children and do not participate in any forms of physical or corporal punishment, including spanking, hitting, using exercise as a punishment, withholding food/water, etc.

Participating campers and parents are required to read and sign the Y code of conduct. Should discipline problems arise that require parent involvement, the Y will follow the steps below:

Behavior Consequences and Restorative Practices Policy

In McGaw YMCA -camp programs, we are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment where all campers can grow, learn, and have a positive camp experience. Central to our approach in managing camper behavior is the utilization of restorative practices. We

believe in teaching campers valuable life skills, fostering personal growth, and encouraging them to take responsibility for their actions.

Restorative practices are rooted in the belief that when conflicts and behavioral issues arise, they present an opportunity for learning and growth rather than just punitive consequences. We seek to address behavior in a way that:

1. **Repairs Harm:** Restorative practices aim to address the harm caused by the behavior, whether it affects individuals or the camp community.
2. **Promotes Accountability:** Campers are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, make amends, and learn from their mistakes.
3. **Builds Positive Relationships:** We value positive connections within our camp community and believe that addressing issues restoratively can strengthen these relationships.

Behavior Expectations

Campers are expected to adhere to a code of conduct that promotes a respectful, safe, and enjoyable camp environment. This includes:

- Treating others with kindness, respect, and empathy.
- Respecting camp rules and staff instructions.
- Taking responsibility for one's actions and their impact on others.
- Promoting inclusivity and a sense of belonging for all campers.

Consequences and Restorative Practices

In cases where a camper's behavior deviates from the expected standards, the following restorative practices will be implemented:

1. **Counseling and Reflection:** The camper will have a conversation with a camp counselor to reflect on their behavior, the impact it had, and ways to make amends.
2. **Restitution:** Campers may be asked to take actions that help repair the harm they caused. This could include apologies, community service, or other acts of kindness.
3. **Conflict Resolution:** For interpersonal conflicts, campers involved will be encouraged to engage in a conflict resolution process mediated by camp staff.
4. **Community Circle:** Campers may participate in a community circle where they can discuss their behavior and its impact on the group. This allows campers to hear and express feelings, understand each other, and find resolutions.
5. **Parent Involvement:** In cases of more severe or persistent behavioral issues, parents or guardians may be informed and involved in the restorative process.

Repetition and Serious Offenses

For repeated or more serious offenses, particularly those that violate our "non-negotiables", a progressive discipline approach will be used, which may include:

- A behavior contract outlining expected conduct and consequences.
- Temporary suspension or removal from camp.
- Involvement of outside support services or professionals.

We believe that restorative practices encourage personal growth and positive change. Our goal is to help campers understand the impact of their actions, learn from their experiences, and make choices that contribute to a positive camp community.

For questions or concerns regarding the Behavior Consequences and Restorative Practices Policy, please contact the School Age Programs Director.

List of Non-Negotiables

1. Inflicting physical harm on another individual.
2. Making verbal threats that may cause physical or mental harm to another individual. This includes threats made through text or other social media sites.
3. Making verbal threats that may destroy property. This includes threats made through text or other social media sites.
4. Possession of a weapon, controlled substance, or alcohol.
5. Bringing drug paraphernalia to camp.
6. Use of foul language with the intent to hurt another person.
7. Inappropriate touching of another individual.
8. Campers not staying within the boundaries of the camp (running away from staff).
9. Endangering the health and safety of other campers or staff.

These non-negotiable rules are essential for maintaining a safe and respectful environment at your camp. The YMCA Camp team reserves the right to suspend or expel a child immediately for any violation of the Non-Negotiables guidelines without refund.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

At the McGaw YMCA, we are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all campers, staff, and parents. Our Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct outlines expectations for parents and guardians, promoting positive interactions and collaborative solutions when conflicts or issues arise. Restorative practices are at the core of our approach to handling behavioral concerns.

Expectations and Responsibilities

1. **Communication:** Parents/Guardians are expected to maintain regular communication with the YMCA Leadership. Open and constructive dialogue is encouraged to ensure the best experience for campers. See "Parent Roles & Responsibilities" section of this handbook for more information.
2. **Custody Situations:** In the event of custody situations, parents/guardians must provide detailed information to the School Age Programs Director, ensuring the safety and well-being of the child. See "Custody Agreements & Court Orders" section of this handbook for more information.
3. **Behavior and Health:** Individuals whose behavior or health status poses an immediate threat or danger to campers' health and safety should not be present when campers are signed in. This includes the following guidelines:
 - Do not confront campers or YMCA staff in a threatening manner.
 - Do not confront other parents/guardians in an aggressive manner.
 - Using profanity in the presence of a child is prohibited and against the law.
 - Any threats toward a YMCA staff member, child, or another parent/guardian will result in contacting 911.
4. **Alcohol and Controlled Substances:** The consumption and/or possession of alcohol or controlled substances in any form are strictly prohibited on YMCA premises. Children will not be released to parents, guardians, or any other authorized individuals if YMCA staff believe they are under the influence of such substances. See "Impaired Individuals" section of this handbook for more information.
5. **Smoking and Tobacco Products:** Parents/Guardians must not smoke, use tobacco, or marijuana (cannabis) products at the YMCA/Program Site, indoors or on the premises, on the playground, or in transportation vehicles during field trips.

Restorative Practices and Resolution

The McGaw YMCA is committed to addressing behavioral concerns using restorative practices, promoting understanding and growth in the following ways:

Dialogue: We encourage open communication between parents, guardians, and camp staff to discuss and address concerns in a respectful and solution-oriented manner.

Mediation: When conflicts arise, we may use mediation to facilitate discussions and resolutions between involved parties, including parents, guardians, and staff.

Resolution Plans: Restorative resolution plans may be developed to address specific behavioral issues, aiming to repair harm and promote understanding.

Consequences

In cases of parent or guardian misbehavior, the Day Camp Leadership will evaluate the situation and determine an appropriate response, which may range from a verbal warning to the maximum penalty of the parent's removal from the building or the camper's removal from our program.

YMCA STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Restorative Practices and Positive Guidance Policy

At the McGaw YMCA Day Camp, we are dedicated to fostering a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment for all campers. Our staff is committed to using restorative practices and positive guidance techniques to promote personal growth, positive behavior, and the well-being of every child under our care. The following policy outlines our approach:

Positive Guidance Techniques

- 1. Positive Techniques of Guidance:** Our staff will prioritize positive techniques such as redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement over competition, comparison, and criticism when addressing camper behavior. We believe in reinforcing good behavior to promote positive growth.
- 2. Age-Appropriate Conversations:** Our staff will engage in age-appropriate conversations with campers, setting clear guidelines and creating environments that minimize the need for disciplinary actions. We aim to create an atmosphere where campers understand expectations and can make informed choices.
- 3. Hands-Off Discipline:** Staff will not use their hands for discipline unless it is necessary to protect a camper from immediate harm. Physical discipline is strictly limited to instances of imminent danger.
- 4. Dignity and Respect:** Every child will be treated with dignity and respect. Our staff will create an atmosphere of understanding and empathy.

Behavior Expectations and Communication

- 1. Daily Program Expectations:** Our staff will review program expectations, rules, and procedures with participants daily to ensure clear understanding and adherence.
- 2. Atmosphere of Appropriate Behavior:** Staff will work to establish an atmosphere of appropriate behavior through positive role modeling and proactive behavior management.
- 3. Timely Communication:** Any behavioral and/or social issues involving campers will be communicated to their parents and the Camp Director in a timely and constructive manner. We believe in proactive communication and collaborative problem-solving.

4. Delivery of Program Components: Staff will deliver program components appropriately, consistently demonstrating the YMCA's Core Values and the mission of the McGaw YMCA. These values include respect, responsibility, honesty, and caring.

5. Program Information Updates: Staff will provide program information updates and reminders regularly via weekly newsletters, email, social media, flyers, and other communication channels to keep parents and guardians informed.

6. Privacy and Confidentiality: Our staff will respect the privacy of program participants and adhere to established confidentiality policies to ensure the well-being and security of all campers.

7. Safety and Training: All camp staff must complete 40 hours of training before the first day of Day Camp. This training program includes instruction in behavior management, conflict resolution, planning and facilitating age-appropriate activities, and risk management.

In addition to program policies and procedures, staff training covers child safety and emergency procedures. Each counselor is a DCFS Mandated Reporter and holds certifications in American Red Cross CPR/First Aid and AED. Our staff also learn techniques for effective interaction with children, building self-esteem and confidence, and mastering songs, games, skits, and arts & crafts projects.

We are dedicated to creating a positive and nurturing camp experience for every child, and our staff is committed to implementing restorative practices and positive guidance techniques to achieve this goal.

9.0 Creating a Child Safe Environment

As one of the nation's largest providers of youth and family programs, the YMCA has made the safety of children and everyone we serve a top priority. Providing a safe, secure, and clean environment for members and participants is essential to the Y's cause of strengthening community. The McGaw YMCA works in partnership with parents and guardians of children in Y programs to protect children from abuse. Our youth participate in a wide variety of programs, including child care, camping, sports, aquatics, mentoring and more. The McGaw YMCA's programs follow the principles of youth development, which includes the belief that children need to be physically and emotionally safe to learn and thrive.

To help keep children in our programs safe, we take the following steps in our intensive screening of employees and volunteers:

- Detailed application forms and comprehensive interview process
- Personal and professional references
- Criminal record checks/fingerprinting
- Employees complete an extensive child abuse prevention training program
- Staff and volunteers are mandated to report any suspected child abuse

- Staff are not allowed to babysit children they meet through the YMCA
- Parents/guardians/authorized adults may not leave children at the YMCA or program site unsupervised

Children are often faced with choices affecting their development and safety. It is our job as the Y and as parents and guardians to prepare children and ourselves for what could happen and to protect them from abuse. It is our responsibility as adults to prevent, recognize and react responsibly to child abuse. **Read full Safety guidelines at www.mcgawymca.org/safety.**

Please inform the YMCA Leadership of any significant or traumatic experiences at home that could potentially impact their camper's behavior.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The McGaw YMCA takes allegations of abuse and neglect very seriously. Staff are trained each year in Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention. The YMCA reports all suspected child abuse and neglect. **Reports are made to the Child Abuse hotline: 1-800-25-ABUSE.**