



*Est. 1996*

# PARENT HANDBOOK

# WATERBURY YMCA

**For Youth Development; For Healthy Living; For Social Responsibility**

## CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

All programs at YMCA Camp Oakasha are designed to promote positive values. The YMCA focuses on four primary character values each of which is assigned a color that helps the staff in the character education process. YMCA staff are hired based on their commitment to accept and demonstrate these positive values in their own lives. The four values are:

### **Caring (Red)**

*Help others*

*Be sensitive of others feelings*

### **Honesty (Blue)**

*Tell the truth*

*Make sure my actions match my values*

### **Respect (Yellow)**

*Value the worth of every person and myself*

*Treat others as I would have them treat me*

### **Responsibility (Green)**

*Do what ought to be done*

*Be accountable for my behavior*

## THE DAY CAMP PROGRAM

Our day camp program is divided into two categories: Traditional Day Camp and Specialty Camps. Both categories have options for children of varying ages and both categories incorporate some of the classic camp activities that make YMCA camping so special.

### TRADITIONAL DAY CAMP

Traditional Day Camp offers campers the most well rounded camping experience. Campers enrolled in Traditional Camps will be exposed to all of the activities that YMCA Camp Oakasha has to offer as well as special highlights offered for each of the different age groups. As campers graduate to the next age group, more activities, choices and special events become available. These camps are recommended for first time campers and children interested in all areas of camp. Traditional camp programs are:

• Podunks • Mohegans • Nehantics • Cherokees

### SPECIALTY CAMPS

Specialty camps are designed for campers with a specific interest. The camper spends the majority of the day focusing on the desired area of interest with the afternoon periods left for more traditional camp activities. These camps are recommended for children who have a specific interest or who wish to develop special skills in one area.

### DAILY SCHEDULE (example)

| <u>TIME</u> | <u>TRADITIONAL CAMPS</u> | <u>SPECIALTY CAMPS</u>   |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 7 AM        | Before Camp Program      | Before Camp Program      |
| 9 AM        | Flag Raising Ceremony    | Flag Raising Ceremony    |
| 9:15 AM     | Morning Activities       | Specialty Instruction    |
| 12:30 PM    | Lunch                    | Lunch                    |
| 1:00 PM     | L.O.G.S.                 | L.O.G.S.                 |
| 1:30 PM     | Afternoon Activities     | Afternoon Activities     |
| 2:45 PM     | End of Day Announcements | End of Day Announcements |
| 3 PM        | Buses Depart             | Buses Depart             |
| 3-5:30 PM   | After Camp Program       | After Camp Program       |

\*Activity periods are on a rotating schedule and may include:

- Swimming • Archery • Ropes • Group Games • Hiking • Arts & Crafts
- Nature • Boating • Tower • Camp Crafts

## **WHAT TO BRING**

Campers should bring a backpack to and from camp each day. In the backpack should be a lunch including a drink (we will refrigerate), a towel and a water bottle. Campers will also need a one piece bathing suit. All campers need to wear sneakers or closed-toed shoes at all times. Sandals and open-toed shoes are prohibited for safety reasons. Fair skinned campers are encouraged to wear a hat on sunny days. All items should be marked with the camper's name.

## **WHAT TO KEEP AT HOME**

We believe that certain items are best left at home to maximize your camper's outdoor experience. Campers may not bring MP3 players, cell phones, iPods, walkmans, computer games, trading cards, insect repellent containing DEET, matches or knives. Any camper who brings weapons to camp will be suspended immediately. YMCA Camp Oakasha is a drug/alcohol and smoke free facility. Any camper found with tobacco, drugs or alcohol will be immediately suspended from camp. We are also interested in keeping a clean, healthy image at our camp. Clothing with messages referring to tobacco, drugs, alcohol or sex are not permitted.

## **FAMILY NIGHTS**

Family nights are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each session, weather permitting. Special programs are planned for parents and campers. Certain specialty camps may hold separate family activities, notices will be sent home in advance of these events.

## **DAY TRIPS**

Older campers and some specialty camps go on day trips. Day trips are optional but greatly encouraged. Depending on the program, some examples of our trips are: museums, an amusement park, baseball game or laser tag. Parents will receive a permission slip listing the trip destination and items needed (if any). Field trips fees are now included in the camp fee! Your child will not be able to participate if the permission slip has not been signed and returned.

## **STAFF RATIOS**

YMCA Camp Oakasha has a counselor to camper ratio that ranges from 1:6 to 1:10. We maintain a 1:6 ratio for our youngest campers and maintain a 1:10 ratio for our older campers. Counselors are generally 18 years of age or older and have prior camp related experience.

## **YMCA CAMP OAKASHA STAFF**

YMCA Camp Oakasha is the most important part of every Oakasha camping experience. We are dedicated to recruiting and developing an outstanding group of directors and counselors who are committed to providing each camper with the best possible day camp experience. We believe that the success of our program lies in the quality of our staff. Staff people are selected on their experience, ability to lead camp related activities and their personal commitment to role modeling positive values. We strive to retain seasonal staff people from summer to summer. Your child may already know many of our staff from camp last year. This seasoned staff brings a great deal of knowledge and experience to the YMCA Camp Oakasha summer program. In mid-June, our staff participates in an in-depth training program that covers areas such as program goals, emergency procedures, group work skills and child development. Each staff person receives training and is certified in American Red Cross First Aid and CPR. In addition to sharing a commitment to safety, our staff has one thing in common, they love working with children.

## **OUR FACILITY**

YMCA Camp Oakasha is located in Southbury CT (Southbury Training School). This day camp serves 150 campers each day throughout the summer. YMCA Camp Oakasha has bus transportation from Middlebury, Southbury, Woodbury, and Oxford. YMCA Camp Oakasha's activities include: swimming (pool), archery, arts & crafts, rock climbing, nature exploration, and more.

## **WATERFRONT**

Waterfront is often a parent's greatest concern, and it certainly is ours. Our waterfront's physical design and program structure is focused on safety. Frequent "buddy checks" and constant supervision are just a couple of ways in which we ensure every camper's experience on our waterfront is safe and rewarding.

Our Waterfront Staff all possess the latest American Red Cross certifications in Life guarding, First Aid, and CPR, as well as special Waterfront Training for lakes and ponds.

## **RAINY DAYS/EXTREMELY HOT DAYS**

We do operate on rainy days. Most activities on rainy days take place inside different buildings and under pavilions. However, campers should be prepared with proper rain gear for transitions to and from program areas. Please send campers with a raincoat, extra clothing and footwear. We discourage early pickups on these days unless absolutely necessary. We also operate on extremely hot days. On these days we make sure campers have ample opportunity to get drinks of water and spend time in the shade. Please send campers with a water bottle and an extra beverage for lunch. Sunscreen should be applied before the campers arrive. We also make every effort to provide campers with water based activities to keep them cool.

## **FIRST AID**

All staff at YMCA Camp Oakasha are certified in CPR and First Aid. In addition, we employ the services of a first aid provider who is on site during all normal camp hours. In the event of an emergency or illness, camp staff will notify parents/guardians. No refunds can be given for time missed due to illness. **Please keep sick campers home so that germs and illnesses will not spread to other campers and/or staff.** Unless otherwise notified, any camper that requires further medical attention will be transported to Waterbury Hospital. In addition, a doctor is on call and supervises our medical and emergency procedures.

## **EMERGENCIES**

We devote much time and attention to emergency procedures during our staff training in June. We have specific procedures for lost campers at the waterfront or on land, as well as for fire, severe weather and medical emergencies. We practice these procedures during staff training and throughout the summer so that campers and staff will be prepared in the event of an emergency.

## **SUNSCREEN/INSECT REPELLENT**

We recommend that campers wear sunscreen. Campers should apply sunscreen and/or bug repellent before coming to camp each morning. Campers who need to reapply during the day should provide their counselor with an extra bottle of lotion (no sprays), and the staff person will assist the child with the application.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found items accumulate very quickly. Please make every effort to label your child's belongings. Have your camper look for their missing item at our lost and found area on the side of the camp office building. Socks and underwear are immediately discarded; everything else is held for two weeks and then donated.

## **CAMP STORE**

The YMCA Camp Oakasha Store sells high quality camp merchandise and snacks during the day and on family nights. Campers visit the store when their schedule permits, which might not be daily. YMCA Camp Oakasha is not responsible for lost or stolen merchandise or money.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Financial Assistance is available from the Greater Waterbury YMCA to families who qualify. Assistance is provided through the Greater Waterbury United Way, Care 4 Kids, and private contributions. Reduced fees will be granted following an application process. Forms are available at the front desk of the YMCA immediately for returning families and beginning April 1<sup>st</sup> for new applicants.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

YMCA Camp Oakasha 9:00 AM-3:00 PM Monday-Friday  
Extended Care AM 7:00 AM-9:00 AM Monday-Friday  
Extended Care PM 3:00 PM-5:30 PM Monday-Friday

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Campers are not required to hold a current YMCA membership to attend camp. Campers with YMCA memberships will receive discount as outline in camp brochure. Memberships at other local YMCAs are honored.

## **CAMP MEDICAL FORMS**

Medical forms are given out at the time of registration and are available online by visiting our website at [www.waterburyymca.org](http://www.waterburyymca.org). If you did not receive a medical form please contact camp at 203-754-9622 ext 136. A physician must complete the medical form and the parent/ guardian must return it at least two weeks prior to your child attending camp. ***No child will be allowed to attend camp without a completed health form.*** Campers must have had a physical within the last three years. **It is very important that both parent and the physician sign the medical form.**

## **MEDICATION POLICY & FORMS**

If your camper needs to take medication (either over the counter or prescription) during the camp day or during an overnight, our first aid provider can dispense medication if the following requirements are met:

1. The medication is in its original bottle with the child's name printed on the prescription.
2. A physician has filled out and signed the Administration of Medication Form and it is on file in the camp office.
3. The medication has not expired.
4. All medication, including inhalers, must be given to the bus monitor or delivered to camp. Medications cannot remain with a child at camp. Children with a medical release may carry inhalers after speaking with the first aid provider.
5. Any remaining medication must be picked up by the parent on the last day of camp or it will be destroyed. We will not hold medications after the last day of camp!

## **ABSENTEEISM**

If your child will not be attending camp on a specific day, please contact the Camp Office at 860-274-4820. Each day we will call the parents of campers who are absent unless we have received prior notification of the absence.

## **EARLY PICKUP POLICY**

The camp office must be notified in writing if a child will be picked up early or will not be taking the bus home. Please provide extra time when picking up a camper early. ***Campers cannot be picked up between 2:30 and 3 PM because closing ceremonies are being held and pickup of children is very difficult. If the camper will be picked up by someone other than a parent, that person must be listed on the camper's application form and must present a photo ID (license). Children will not be released to anyone not on the list or to persons on the list who do not present a valid ID.***

## PARENT'S AGREEMENT

### IMPORTANT — PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

#### I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- A \$50 non-refundable, non-transferable deposit is required for each session and must accompany each application. This deposit will hold the camper's place and will be applied to the full payment of the camp tuition. Remaining balance is due in equal installments the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month up to July 15<sup>th</sup>. Late charge of \$15.00 applies to each late payment. Lack of payment (or late payment) will result in loss of reserved space. We recommend using our **E-Z Pay Option** where payments are automatically drafted, no late fee, no risk of lost space. Please see page 3 in the Camp brochure for payment options.
- All cancellations must be received **IN WRITING** at least 30 days prior to the start of the camp session to receive a full refund minus the non-refundable \$50 non-refundable deposit per session.
- All cancellations must be received **IN WRITING** between 15-29 days prior to the start of the camp session to receive a 50% refund minus the non-refundable \$50 deposit per session.
- **No refunds will be granted less than 15 days prior to the start of the camp session.**
- **INSF Fee of \$35.00 will be charged to all INSF transactions.**
- **I will be responsible for payment of any collection fees incurred by me should my account become delinquent.**
- Bus service is provided for all campers. **Routes for campers are predetermined for ALL towns.** Each bus will have a YMCA bus monitor. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to meet their camper at the appointed stop at both the scheduled drop off/pick up time each day unless permission is granted otherwise. **Podunks and Nehantics Campers MUST sit in the front of the bus and will not be dropped off without a parent or older sibling at the stop.** Without permission, the camper will stay on the bus for the remainder of the route and will return to camp or the YMCA. Parents will be responsible for picking up their camper at either location. Times may not be exact, please give a 10-minute grace period for pick up and drop off.
- I give permission for photographs and other recording devices of my camper to be used in marketing and camp publicity.
- Campers must be healthy, injury-free and well enough to fully participate.
- I give permission for my camper to participate in all camp activities, including ropes and archery.
- I authorize transfer of my camper to the Greater Waterbury YMCA during inclement weather if needed.
- **I authorize YMCA officials to secure medical/emergency treatment and transportation for my camper.**
- The YMCA reserves the right to dismiss a camper whose presence is detrimental to the camp or campers.
- Fees will not be refunded for absence, failure to attend during the term of enrollment, delayed attendance at camp, or dismissal.
- We are required by the State to have health history forms for each camper prior to attending camp. Forms will be given to parents at the time of registration and **MUST** be completed by the family physician and parents before the camper attends camp. Physicals are valid for three years.
- The undersigned voluntarily agrees to hold the YMCA Harmless for injuries or accidents resulting in bodily injury or property damage during my child's participation at YMCA Camp Oakasha. I further waive, release, absolve, and indemnify the Greater Waterbury YMCA, YMCA Camp Oakasha, its directors, volunteers, officers or employees for injuries or accidents occurring while participating in the programs of YMCA Camp Oakasha.
- **Any unauthorized video, picture, twitter, facebook post or any other social networking site posts about YMCA Camp Oakasha, the Greater Waterbury YMCA or their participants is prohibited. Violations of these conditions will result in immediate dismissal without a refund.**
- **Any unauthorized video, picture or social networking site post that is found and contains any material or reference to YMCA Camp Oakasha or the Greater Waterbury YMCA will need to be taken down off the social networking site within 24 hours after notification.**

## **BEHAVIOR POLICY**

At YMCA Camp Oakasha we believe that the best way to deal with behavior issues is to provide a quality camp program. By keeping activities moving and well organized, we believe that many potential problems can be avoided. Disrespect toward staff or property, injuring other children or staff, disruptive behavior, stealing, leaving camp property, and profanity will not be tolerated. If such a problem arises, the following steps will be taken.

1. Verbal discussion with the child.
2. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child will be removed from the group for a specified time frame or privileges will be taken away.
3. When there is a serious concern about a behavior or discipline problem, the staff will share their concerns with the parents and will make an effort to work with the parents to resolve the problem.
4. If the problem persists, or a serious infraction has been made, the camper will be put on suspension or asked to leave the program.

## **YMCA CAMP OAKASHA ALSO OFFERS...**

If you enjoyed your summer day camp experience, you should know that we also offer a variety of other programs for families, school groups, companies and other organizations all year round at YMCA Camp

Mataucha in Watertown, CT. Our versatile staff can customize a program to fit the needs or goals of your group! Some of our programs include:

- ***Team Building Programs***  
*using high and low ropes course elements*
- ***Outdoor Education Programs***
- ***Facility Rentals***
- ***Volunteer Opportunities***

For more information on these or other exciting programs please contact Mike Tedesco, Outdoor Center Director at (860)274-4820.

# **YMCA CAMP OAKASHA**

**Southbury Training School**

**Winter: 860-274-4820**

**Summer: 860-264-2817**

**[www.CampOakasha.org](http://www.CampOakasha.org)**