



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

YMCA Camp Oakasha

Family Handbook

Families,

Thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Oakasha for your child's summer camp experience. We look forward to providing your child with a memorable summer, filled with friendship, adventure, and memories in a positive environment. YMCA Camp Oakasha is dedicated to ensuring your child's safety and understands the great responsibility that comes with caring for each child in our day camp program. You can be certain that YMCA Camp Oakasha is the perfect setting for your child's summer and we are proud of our wonderful reputation of providing a high quality day camp program focused on children for more than 25 years, and many more to come!

YMCA Camp Oakasha is committed to youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. We help children grow and have fun through exploring the outdoors, building self-confidence and independence, learning the YMCA core values, developing life skills and being active. Our stepping stone program promotes new challenges and activities that introduce your campers to the best possible camp experience!

If at any time you have concerns or questions about our programs, staff, or facilities, please feel free to address these issues with the proper staff person or myself. We welcome any and all parent feedback, new ideas, and suggestions to ensure a great camp experience. Please take some time to review the Family Handbook with your camper(s). This will help both you and your child better understand the programs, philosophy and policies of YMCA Camp Oakasha.

Thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Oakasha, we look forward to meeting or exceeding your expectations for a day camp program. For more information on our programs, visit our website at campOakasha.org

Oakashafully Yours,

Adam Dubois

Outdoor Center Director

adubois@waterburyymca.org



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YMCA Camp Oakasha Philosophy:

Camp will provide opportunities for participation in a wide range of positive recreational activities. Through these activities, children will have the opportunity to develop new skills and talents, make new friends, explore new interests and create new experiences in a safe and fun environment.

Goals for the day camp program

For Youth Development

- Instill the YMCA mission and YMCA character values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.
- Provide opportunities to increase self-confidence.
- Provide positive role models who lead by example.
- Create, develop, and foster long-lasting friendships.

For Healthy Living

- Lead activities and programs that promote movement and staying active.
- Develop a connection and enjoyment of being outdoors.
- Provide direction for making positive choices.

For Social Responsibility

- Strengthen social skills by teaching patience, cooperation, teamwork, and coping mechanisms.
- Develop an appreciation and respect for the environment.
- Offer opportunities to develop and improve leadership skills.

Registration

- YMCA Camp Oakasha registration begins the first Saturday of February at 8:00am.
- Families are encouraged to register online at campoakasha.org. For assistance with registration, please call the Camp Office at (860)274-4820. To register in person, visit the Outdoor Center at YMCA Camp Mataucha main office.
- A non-refundable \$100 deposit is required for each child at the time of registration.
- YMCA membership is not required to attend summer camp at YMCA Camp Oakasha.
- Registration for each session will close Wednesday before each session at 12:00pm.
- To make changes to your child's registration, please contact the Camp Mataucha Office directly at (860)274-4820 or by email the Outdoor Center Director at adubois@waterburyymca.org.

Forms and Required Information

It's easy to submit all of the required forms for camp! You can:

- Upload all documents to your campers profile anytime by logging into your account on our registration website.
- Email forms to our Office Manager at Isoeprasetyo@waterburyymca.org
- Mail forms to 136 West Main Street, Waterbury CT 06702 Attn: Camp Oakasha
- Drop off forms in person at the Camp Office (a locked after-hours drop box is located outside of the office door).
- Drop off forms in person at the Front Desk of the Greater Waterbury YMCA.

Health Forms will be transferred from other Greater Waterbury YMCA programs by our admin team. This includes both our School Readiness and Before and After School Care Programs.

All medial forms and documents must be complete, valid, and in the camp office no later than one week before your campers first day of camp.

No child will be allowed at camp without a completed Health Assessment on file that meets all State of CT Office of Early Childhood requirements.

To be considered valid and complete:

- Part 1 of the State of CT Health Examination must be completely filled out and signed by a parent/guardian.
- Must include a date of exam that is within 36 months of your campers first day of camp.
- Medical assessment section must include a statement about the child's general health and the presence of any known medical or emotional illness or disorder which affects the child's ability to participate in camp activities.
- A complete, up to date record of immunizations.

Medications at Camp

If your camper needs to take any medication (prescription or over the counter) during the camp day:

- Medication must be in its original container with the child's name on the prescription.
- Must be picked up and dropped off to the camp nurse by an adult, or handed to the bus monitor on the first day of camp.
- Campers can only self-administer their medication if it specifically states so on their Administration of Medication form.
- An Administration of Medication form must be on file at the camp office with the following requirements:
 - Signed by physician AND parent/guardian
 - Current dates specified when camper will be attending camp

Individual Care Plans

If your camper has health or developmental needs, you will be required to fill out an Individual Care Plan (ICP) for your camper. This form is used to ensure that all staff caring for your child are aware of their specific needs. ICP's are required for:

- Severe allergies
- Asthma
- Seizure disorders
- Chronic illness
- Specific Dietary Needs
- Hearing or Visual Impairments
- ADD/ADHD
- Autism Spectrum
- Special custody arrangements (please also provide a copy of any applicable court documents)
- Any other health or behavior related special instructions

Financial Aid

At YMCA Camp Oakasha, our goal is to provide a summer camp experience to as many children as well possibly can. We understand that some families may require financial assistance to send their child to camp. We offer several different financial assistance options that can be used together to help make camp accessible to everyone.

United Way Campership

Offered through the Greater Waterbury Campership program, a campership can provide one two-week session to eligible children. Criteria for eligibility include residency in the Greater Waterbury Area, receipt of SNAP benefits or meeting specific financial guidelines. Applications open in early April and are accepted until early May at the Front Desk of the Greater Waterbury YMCA.

Care4Kids

Sponsored by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood and aimed at assisting low to moderate income families in Connecticut with Child Care costs. Criteria for eligibility include residency in Connecticut, parents/guardians must be working or in approved education or training activity, and completed Care4Kids provider forms. Forms can be dropped off at the Front Desk of the Greater Waterbury YMCA to the attention of Tammie Lee.

Open Doors

The Greater Waterbury YMCA keeps our promise to serve the community by making our programs, services, and facilities accessible to everyone, regardless of the ability to pay. The Y's Open Doors Financial Assistance Program brings this commitment to life. Even if you do/don't qualify for a Campership or Care4Kids apply for our Financial Assistance program Open Doors. Applications are available at waterburyymca.org/open-doors-program.

Payment Policy

There are a few ways to make payments for camper registration. One of the three payment options must be chosen at the time of registration. You may call the Camp Office at any time to make changes to your payment option or to pay by cash or check. If you do not call the Camp Office to make changes to your account, your original option will be used as payment and will be automatically deducted on the dates determined in the option of your choice. We do not carry over payment plans from previous years. **The payment options are:**

1. Pay in full at the time of registration
2. Pay the applicable deposit at the time of registration, then the remaining balance will be automatically charged to the card on file in equal, monthly installments on the 10th of each month through August.
3. Pay all applicable deposits and begin automatically monthly installments, then have any Financial Assistance applied to your account once it is approved.

Refund Policy

There are significant fixed costs relating to the operation of a day camp program, YMCA Camp Oakasha has the following policies in place for camp program refunds:

- YMCA Camp Oakasha reserves the right to cancel a camp for low enrollment. If your child's camp is cancelled, you will be notified prior to the beginning of a session. At that time, you may choose to enroll in another camp option or you may withdraw for a full refund.
- There will be no refunds issued for failure to attend during term of enrollment, delayed attendance at camp, dismissal, or excessive absences. If your child has a medical reason that they cannot attend a session, please contact the Camp Office at (860)274-4820.
- In the event of a cancellation, all notice must be given in writing to the Camp Office. The Cancellation Policy of YMCA Camp Oakasha is as follows:
 - If more than 14 days' notice is given for a cancellation, a full refund minus the non-refundable deposit will be issued.
 - If a notice of 7-14 days is given for a cancellation, a refund of 50% minus the non-refundable deposit will be issued.
 - If a notice of less than 7 days is given, there will be no refund issued.

What to Bring to Camp

At YMCA Camp Oakasha, we believe that the best way to enjoy our beautiful facility and day camp program is by being prepared. Each camper should bring a backpack to and from camp each day. Their backpack should include a lunch and a drink, which is collected and refrigerated each day. A water bottle, towel and bathing suit (one piece for girls) and change of clothes, if needed, should also be included. **All campers need to wear sneakers or closed toed shoes.** Sandals and open-toed shoes, including crocs, are prohibited for safety reasons. Please label all items with your camper's first and last name.

What to Leave at Home

We believe that certain items are best left at home to maximize your camper's outdoor experience. Campers may not bring Ipods/Ipads, mobile gaming devices, 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 smoke, drug, and alcohol free facility. Any camper found with tobacco, vaping devices, drugs, or alcohol will be immediately suspended from camp. Clothing with messages referring to tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or sexual topics are not permitted. YMCA Camp Oakasha is not responsible for lost or damaged property.

Cell Phones

YMCA Camp Oakasha programs are designed for building friendships, adventure, and memories. Cell phones can be a significant distraction to our camp program, and take away from the overall camp experience. If you need to reach your child throughout the camp day, or have an update in their Afternoon Transportation, please call the Camp Office at (860)274-4820. If a camper has a cell phone at camp, we ask that it remain in their backpack until they return home. If a camper is using their cell phone at camp, our staff will take the following steps

1. If a camper is using their cell phone, Camp Staff will remind campers that cell phones need to be kept away during the camp day.
2. If a camper continue to uses their cell phone, Camp Staff will confiscate the cell phone and bring it to the Camp Office. The Camp Office will call home, and the phone will be returned to the camper at the end of the day.
3. If the camper continually uses their cell phone at camp, Camp Staff will confiscate the cell phone and bring it to the Camp Office. The Camp Office will call home, and the cell phone will only be returned to a parent or guardian.

Camp Programs

Our day camp is broken into program areas that campers graduate into as they grow. Each program has specifically trained staff members, activities, and facilities designed to meet the needs of that particular group.

Traditional Camp

- Traditional Camps are those programs that offer a well-rounded and complete 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 and choices are offered. These camps are recommended for first-time campers and children interested in all areas of camp. The groups are divided by grade that the camper is entering in the new school year.

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| • Podunks | Entering Gr. K, 1 & 2 |
| • Mohegans | Entering Gr. 3 & 4 |
| • Nehantics | Entering Gr. 5 & 6 |
| • Cherokees | Entering Gr. 7, 8 & 9 |
| • CITs | Entering Gr. 10 |

Counselor in Training (CIT) Program

Our CIT program is a 4 week program that is designed to teach our oldest campers the ins and outs of being a camp counselor at YMCA Camp Oakasha. The first 2 weeks of the program consists of various trainings, workshops, activities, lessons, teambuilding, and regular camp fun with the intention to give them knowledge about how and what it is like to be a counselor. During the second 2 weeks, each CIT will be placed in a camp group to shadow a counselor and practice what they have learned. CITs will only be placed with K-4th Grade Groups.

CITs are still considered campers, so you will need to register them just like you would any other camp program by visiting our website.

This program is great for developing leadership skills, personal values, teambuilding and communication. Additionally, the hours can be used to fulfill any requirements for community organizations.

Daily Schedule

Campers will stay with their group in ratio's that range from 5:1 to 12:1 and move from activities with their counselor. In addition to regular scheduled camp activities, Activity Periods can include:

- **Swimming:** Our waterfront is led by a Waterfront Director who is a 21+ year old certified lifeguard accredited by the American Red Cross. The Waterfront Director leads a team of certified lifeguards. Every camper is swim tested before they can enjoy the waterfront, and there are multiple safety protocols in place. For more information on the safety protocols and swim test procedures please call the Camp Office at (860)274-4820.
- **Unit Period:** The entire Traditional Camp unit (Podunks, Mohegans, etc.) will gather for an activity organized and planned by the Unit Director.
- **Rotating Period:** Each group will spend one period at a different camp activity area such as Arts & Crafts, Low Ropes, Field Games, Nature, Archery, Boating, etc. We try our best to get every camper to participate in as many activities as possible at camp, if your child missed an opportunity to participate in an activity- don't hesitate to contact the Camp Office.

First Aid and Camper Safety

Staff

We believe that the success of our camp program lies in the quality of our staff. We spend a great deal of time recruiting, interviewing and training our camp staff team. Our day camp team is made of a caring, passionate group of people who have a passion for youth development. In June, prior to the start of camp, our staff participate in in-depth training programs that cover program goals, emergency procedures, group work skills, and program planning. We have specific procedures for a variety of emergencies including "Lost Camper Drills", as well as fire, severe weather, and medical emergencies.



- **Outside Care Policy:** It is the policy of the Greater Waterbury YMCA that no staff member may solicit any outside service (i.e. babysitting, lifeguarding, etc.) from program participants or their parent/guardians. If families have questions regarding this policy, please contact the Camp Office at (860)274-4820.
- **Ratios:** Camper to counselor ratios range from 5:1 to 12:1. Podunks are 5:1, Mohegans are 8:1, and all other camp groups are up to 12:1 with most being 10:1.

Waterfront

YMCA Camp Oakasha has multiple safety protocols on the waterfront that are used every day, as well as safety drills practiced each session. During each swim period, "Buddy Checks" are called every 5-7 minutes. All campers, regardless of which camp they are

registered for, are swim tested before being allowed to swim in the deep end, or use our inflatable water parks. The swimmer to lifeguard ratio is 25:1. IN addition, the counselor for each group swims in the water along with their group, maintaining the original group ratio even while swimming. Each waterfront is led by a Waterfront Director who is 21+ and accredited by the American Red Cross. All waterfront staff hold current Lifeguard, First Aid, and CPR Certifications.



First Aid/Injury Procedures

- The Camp First Aider is present during regular camp hours (8:30am-3:30pm). The Camp Nurse is a licensed LPN or RN and manages all of the medical and health needs of our campers and staff during the day, including; first aid, illnesses, medication administration, concussion management, as well as ensuring we have the correct medical forms and documents on field for each camper.
- A local physician is on call and supervises our medical and emergency procedures.
- First Aid Staff are present each day to assist the nurse with minor injuries and routine care. The "First Aider" is certified in First Aid, CPR, and Medication Administration.

In the case of an injury that requires further medical attention, campers will be transported to Waterbury Hospital.

First Aid Notification: All campers who receive first aid will have their injuries recorded in the First Aid Log Book by the Camp Nurse or appropriate staff. Our Camp Nurse can get very busy during the day for minor first aid treatments such as Band-Aids and sunscreen application. The Camp Nurse will call parents/guardians to notify them of mild injuries at their professional discretion and for all serious injuries that occur at camp. If your camper comes home with a Band-Aid and/or a story about an injury and cannot answer your questions, please do not hesitate to call the Camp Office.

Illnesses/Communicable Diseases: Campers must be healthy, injury free, and well enough to fully participate in camp programs. If your child becomes ill at camp, we require that they be promptly picked up and transported home or to a medical facility within 30 minutes of being notified. Any child that has a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting, must be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to camp. Any child with a communicable disease must remain out of camp for the prescribed isolation period designated by the physician for that particular situation. Please do not send sick campers to camp.

Concussion Management: If there is any sign that your camper may have suffered a concussion due to a trauma to the head, they will be removed from activities immediately. The Camp Nurse will evaluate your child and make a call home so that you can follow up with your primary care physician. Your camper will not be permitted to return to camp until written medical clearance from a licensed health care professional is received. For more information on Connecticut regulations regarding concussion protocols for licensed youth camps, please visit www.ct.gov/oec/camps.

Weather

During the course of the summer, we may experience rainy days and "extreme weather"(extreme heat/humidity, heavy rain/thunderstorms). On days where there is light rain, camp activities will run as normal. When more severe rain begins, campers will move into buildings and pavilions. Campers should be prepared with rain gear during transitions to and from program areas. On extremely hot days, we make sure that campers have ample access to water based activities and drink plenty of water.

Behavior Management & Positive Discipline

At YMCA Camp Oakasha we believe that the best way to prevent 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. We strive to build strong character in all campers by implementing the YMCA's 4 core character values (Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility) in all aspects of our programming.

In alignment with our mission, staff are encourage to be positive role models at all times, teaching campers positive social and emotional values. Our staff will implement the following initial efforts to positively change a camper's behavior:

- Create group rules/set expectations
- Keep activities moving and not allowing for down-time
- Use positive reinforcement
- Be tolerant of certain behaviors
- Redirecting attention
- Have consequences for unacceptable behavior and rewards to acceptable behavior
- Use "cool-off" breaks
- Never use physical or emotional punishment

If behaviors persist, staff may be assisted by our Camper Support Specialist, who can provide additional resources and tools to campers and staff which may help address behaviors. Unfortunately, there may be times when camper behavior escalates. The following steps will be followed in the event of behavior escalation:

- A verbal discussion will take place with the child.
- If behavior continues, the child may be removed form an activity or their group.
- If behavior continues, the child will meet with their Unit Director and a phone call home will be made.
- If behavior continues, or a serious infraction occurs, the camper will be brought to the Camp Office and may be put on suspension or asked to leave the program.
- Serious infractions or issues that result in the physical or emotional harm of other campers will result in immediate suspension or expulsion form YMCA Camp Oakasha and its programs.
- If a camper is suspended from YMCA Camp Oakasha, the first suspension will be 1 day, the second will be 3 days, and the third suspension will be 5 days. After the third suspension, YMCA Camp Oakasha may dismiss the camper from the program.

Pick Up and Drop Off Procedures

AM Drop off: 8:45am-9:00am

PM Pick Up: 2:45pm- 3:00pm

- All campers must be signed out when being released to an approved pick-up person.
- Photo Identification of all person's picking up is required each and every time.
- Campers who are arriving after 9:30am need to be signed in late in the Camp Office. Camp staff will get campers to their groups after being signed in. Campers must be signed in by the person who is dropping them off- they cannot sign themselves into camp.
- No camper will be released to individuals who are NOT on the approved pick up list unless written permission is given by the parent/guardian, or with verbal permission from the parent/guardian with consent from a member of the leadership staff.
- Please leave pets in the car when picking up/dropping off campers.
- If a child has not been picked up 5 minutes after dismissal has been completed, the staff will contact the child's parent/guardian. If they are unable to reach them, and the child is not picked up within 15 minutes after dismissal, emergency contacts will be called. If staff is not able to contact an authorized person 1 hour after dismissal, the camp will contact the Southbury Police Department for further assistance.
- A charge of \$10.00 for every 15 minutes will be added to the camp balance for continued late pickups.

Picking up your camper from camp is very different than picking up early from school because they are not in the same space all day. At different times throughout the day, the campers will "in transition" from one activity to another. In addition, they may not be easily accessible if they are hiking, boating, etc. During these times, it will be difficult to get your campers to the camp office quickly. For this reason, getting your camper to the office for pick up may take 15 minutes or longer.

If your camper normally rides a bus, and you wish to pick them up instead, please call the Camp Office ASAP and NO LATER THAN 1:00PM! With approximately 200 campers here every day, we work hard to ensure that every camper is dismissed to their correct place. To accomplish this, we log EVERY dismissal change and absence in our computer and generate daily reports informing each Unit Director and Bus Monitor of dismissal changes that are reviewed at 2:30pm during the end of day announcements. **Busses DO NOT leave camp until every dismissal area (pick up, busses, and aftercare) are audited to ensure that every camper is accounted for.** Please help us ensure that your change to your campers dismissal make the reports, and does not delay the busses leaving camp.

Bus Transportation

YMCA Camp Oakasha offers bussing with stops in Southbury at no extra cost. We use First Student, Inc. for all of our camp bussing. The First Student Office is located at 82 Knight St. Watertown, CT. If you need to contact First Student, Inc. for any bus related issues, such as concerns with the driver or late AM buses, please call (860)274-5212.

- Predetermined stops have been established, and can be found by visiting campoakasha.org. **Door to Door service will not be provided.**
- We run 1 bus with 5 stops in the area for all sessions of camp.
- You must choose your stop and register for the bus during the camp registration process. Space on the bus is limited, and may fill up from session to session. If a bus reaches capacity, your camper may be added to a bus waitlist.
- All buses have a YMCA Camp Oakasha staff member serving as a bus monitor. Bus monitors will take attendance each morning and afternoon to ensure that the campers are on the correct bus. They will also be responsible for supervision of campers while on the bus.
- In the afternoon, bus does not leave until everyone is accounted for. To avoid delays, please avoid last minute changes to your child's dismissal.
- Please allow a 10 minute grace period before and after the scheduled pick up and drop off times posted. The bus will usually run later on the first day of a session.
- Campers entering grades K-4 will not be dropped off without an authorized adult or sibling present at the bus stop. Campers entering grades 5-10 can sign themselves and their siblings off the bus.
- Without an authorized adult or sibling at the bus stop, the camper will remain 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 campers from either location.
- Campers are expected to maintain appropriate behavior on the bus and while at the bus stop. Campers are subject to removal or suspension from riding the bus based on the Camp Director's discretion.

Extended Care

An extended day at YMCA Camp Oakasha is offered at an additional cost and can be added as an option during registration. **Extended care is available for full weeks only. We cannot accommodate random or single days.**

Our Morning Care Program is available at YMCA Camp Oakasha and begins at 7:00am. Campers will remain with the Morning Care Staff until the camp day begins.

Our After Camp Care is held at YMCA Camp Oakasha with pickup by 6:00PM.

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

The Waterbury Young Men's Christian Association d/b/a the Greater Waterbury YMCA (Greater Waterbury YMCA) is committed to making its programs and activities available on a nondiscriminatory basis as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Greater Waterbury YMCA will not discriminate against any individual on the basis of disability with regard to the full and equal enjoyment of its goods, services, privileges, advantages and accommodations. The Greater Waterbury YMCA will make reasonable modifications to its programs for children with disabilities, both new applicants and those already enrolled, on a case-by-case basis, to permit them to participate in its programs in the most integrated setting possible unless Greater Waterbury YMCA can demonstrate that making the modification would fundamentally alter the nature of its goods and services.

Individualized Assessment and Reasonable Modification

When informed that a child with a disability has applied to participate in one of Greater Waterbury YMC's programs, the Greater Waterbury YMCA will provide the parent/guardian of that child with a copy of this Policy. Greater Waterbury YMCA will also provide a writing copy of this Policy upon request. When a request for a modification is made, Greater Waterbury YMCA will individually assess the needs of the child on whose behalf the request is made and will address each request for a modification on a case-by-case basis. Greater Waterbury YMCA will work with families to provide reasonable modifications in accordance with this Policy and applicable laws and may, to that end, request certain documentation concerning the child's needs. Absent extenuating circumstances, Greater Waterbury YMCA provide the parent/guardian with a decision on the request for a reasonable modification within 5 business days of the request having been made.

If an agreement cannot be reached for Greater Waterbury YMCA to provide reasonable modifications, Greater Waterbury YMCA will notify the parent/guardian, in writing, of the modifications Waterbury YMCA will provide (if any) and which modifications it will not provide. Pursuant to the ADA, Greater Waterbury YMCA may choose not to provide a modification if that modification would fundamentally alter the nature of its service, program, or activity.

Point of Contact if you have any questions about this Policy, please contact Tami Macary, Human Resource Director, at The Greater Waterbury YMCA at (203)754-9622 ext. 104 or tmacary@waterburyymca.org