



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Parent Handbook

YMCA Camp Oakasha

2017

Achievement • Relationships • Belonging

Address: STS Adventure Site, 1461 South Britain Road, Southbury, CT

Phone: 203-264-2817 *summer* 860-274-4820 *winter*

Fax: 203-754-9095

www.campoakasha.org

Camp Registrar: Tammie Lee, 203-754-9622 ext. 136

Mailing Address: 136 W. Main St., Waterbury, CT 06702

YMCA Camp Oakasha

THE DAY CAMP PROGRAM

At YMCA Camp Oakasha we believe that every child grows through the opportunity to participate in activities that are safe, fun, and rewarding. YMCA Camp Oakasha is a place that fosters achievement, relationships and belonging, as well as youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. We work to create a culture that is unique to YMCA Camp Oakasha and is physically, emotionally and spiritually safe for all.

Our day camp program is divided into two categories: Traditional Day Camp and Specialty Camp. Both have options for children of varying ages and both programs 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 will be exposed to all of the activities that YMCA Camp Oakasha has to offer as well as special highlights and themes 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 left for more traditional camp activities.

- Sports Camp • CITs (Counselors in Training)

DAILY SCHEDULE (example)

7:00am-9:00am	AM Care (Additional Cost)	Arts & Crafts, Gardening, Sports, and Games
9:00am-9:30am	Morning Circle	Morning Welcome & Announcements
9:30am-10:15am	Period 1	Archery, Rockwall, Gaga Dodgeball, Low Ropes, Field Games, Nature, Arts & Crafts, etc...*
10:15am-11:00am	Period 2	Rotate Activities Above
11:00 am-12pm	Period 3	Swim Time
12:00-12:45 pm	Lunch	
12:45 pm- 1:30pm	Period 4	Canoeing or Group Games
1:30pm-2:15pm	Period 5	Rotate Activities Above
2:15pm-3:00pm	LOGS & Dismissal	Closing Activities and Announcements
3:00pm-5:30pm	PM Care (Additional Cost)	Arts & Crafts, Board Games, Group Games

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

- Archery • Group Games • Hiking • Arts & Crafts • Nature Exploration • Recreational Swim • Boating
Climbing Tower • Team Sports • Low Ropes • Teambuilding • Water Games

CAMP CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: STS Adventure Site, 1461 South Britain Road, Southbury, CT
Camp Oakasha Director: Cori Behm
Phone: 203-264-2817 *summer* 860-274-4820 *winter* Fax: 203-754-9095
Email: cbehm@waterburymca.org
Camp Registrar: Tammie Lee, 203-754-9622 ext. 136

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

WHAT TO BRING

- A backpack to and from camp each day
- *Lunch*, refrigeration is available
- Sneakers or closed-toed shoes must be worn at all times
- Bathing suit and a towel; extra clothes are also appreciated, especially for our youngest campers
- A reusable water bottle

Sandals and open-toed shoes are prohibited for safety, except at the pool. Please dress according to weather conditions, campers are encouraged to wear a hat on sunny days and have rain coats/boots for rainy days.

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 is also not permitted.

FAMILY NIGHTS

Come and experience the traditions of Camp Oakasha! Family nights will be held on Thursday, July 13, July 27 and August 10. Special programs are planned for parents, campers, and family members from 5:30 – 7:30pm. Camp families are welcome to attend any of the family night dates and bring guests.

On Saturday, July 22nd, there will be a Family Overnight at YMCA Camp Mataucha that is open to all Oakasha campers that are enrolled in camp for the 2017 camp season. There is no additional fee for the overnight. Afternoon activities will be held with families responsible for bringing their own dinner as well as tents and sleeping bags. Please contact the Camp Director if you would like more information.

YMCA CAMP OAKASHA STAFF

YMCA Staff 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. Counselors 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 from summer to summer. Your child may already know many of our staff from last year. In mid-June, our staff participates in an in-depth training that covers areas such as program goals, emergency procedures, group work skills and child development. Each staff person is trained and certified in American Red Cross First Aid and CPR and Medication Administration. In addition to sharing a commitment to safety, our staff has one thing in common, they love working with children.

STAFF RATIOS

YMCA Camp Oakasha has a counselor to camper ratio that ranges from 1:7 to 1:12. We maintain a ratio of 1:7 for our youngest campers and a ratio of up to a 1:12 ratio for our older campers. Counselors are generally 18 years of age or older and have prior camp-related or child care experience.

OUR FACILITY

YMCA Camp Oakasha uses the Adventure Center at the Southbury Training School as its home base. The beautiful woods, fields and streams are an ideal setting for a rewarding outdoor experience. Children ride a school bus down the hill to the Roselle Pool for swimming and to Lake Stibbs for canoeing and kayaking. The camp includes a first aid station, a camp office, changing rooms and bathrooms and a multi-purpose sunroom. There are trails to explore, sports fields, a basketball court, climbing tower, low ropes elements, an archery range, an amphitheater and a Gaga dodgeball pit.

ROSELLE POOL AND LAKE STIBBS

Our swim programs are one of the highlights of our camper's day. The pool is divided into two areas of varying depth which are used in accordance with the ability of the swimmer: a zero-entry, shallow area for beginners and a deep area for intermediate and beyond (4ft max depth). On the first day of each session, campers will be given a swim test. This allows staff to determine whether campers are shallow or deep water swimmers. Proving safe care at our pool is very serious. For the safety of our campers, they must be able to complete both the endurance and technical skills requested of them, no exceptions.

We strongly believe in providing a fun, safe atmosphere at our pool. Campers are encouraged to swim every day. Aside from swimming, we also have picnic tables under a canopy that campers can use if they do not feel like swimming. Please send a note if your child cannot participate on a certain day.

The "buddy system" is used during recreational swim time. "Buddy Checks" are conducted throughout the period to be sure all swimmers are accounted for. The lifeguard to swimmer ratio is 1:25 with additional counselors assisting in supervision. All waterfront staff hold current Lifeguard, First Aid, and CPR certifications and are drilled periodically during the summer to practice their skills.

CAMP MEDICAL FORMS

No child will be allowed to attend camp without completed forms.

New Campers - All campers must have a *Physical Exam/Health Assessment Record* and a *Yearly Camper Health Form* on file to attend camp. These forms are available during online registration or on our website at www.campoakasha.com. A physician must complete the physical form and it must be returned at least two weeks prior to your child attending camp. Campers must have had a physical within the last three years. Both parent and physician must sign the physical form.

Returning Campers - All returning campers must have a current *Yearly Camper Health Form*, with parent signatures, on file. Camp keeps physical forms from previous summers, which are valid for three years. If you are unsure when your last physical was, please contact your doctor. We will contact registered families whose physicals are expired or not on file, in May.

Additional forms are required if your child will be bringing medication to camp (see below for Medication Policy). If you did not receive the medical forms please contact the camp registrar, Tammie Lee, at 203-754-9622 ext. 136. Please mail or fax forms to the Waterbury YMCA, fax #203-754-9095 or upload on our camp registration site.

FIRST AID

Staff at YMCA Camp Oakasha are certified in CPR and First Aid. In addition, we have a First Aider that is on site during all camp hours. In the event of an emergency or illness, camp staff will notify parents/guardians, to the best of their ability with given contact information. Unless otherwise notified, any camper that requires further medical attention will be transported via ambulance to Waterbury Hospital. In addition, a doctor is on call and supervises our medical and emergency procedures.

Please keep sick campers home so that germs and illnesses will not spread to other campers and/or staff. However, no refunds can be given for time missed due to illness.

MEDICATION POLICY & FORMS

YMCA Camp Oakasha provides staff certified in Medication Administration. If your camper needs to take medication (either over the counter or prescription) during the camp day, 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 filled out and signed the *Authorization for Administration of Medication Form* and it's on file in the camp office.
3. The medication has not expired.
4. All medication, including inhalers, must be given directly 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 first 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.

***If your child will be riding the bus, you must decide whether their medication will accompany them on the bus everyday or if it will remain at camp for the week. You will need to complete and sign the *Bus Med Option Form*.**

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 need to provide the *Non-Prescription Medication Form* to YMCA Camp Oakasha as well as a container of sunscreen/insect repellent, clearly marked with the camper's name. Depending on the application type, camp staff may be able to assist as indicated on the form.

RAINY DAYS/EXTREMELY HOT DAYS

Activities on rainy days take place just like any other day. Depending on the severity of the rain, campers may be moved inside different buildings and under pavilions. Campers should still be prepared with proper rain gear and foot gear for transitions to and from program areas. We discourage early pickups on these days unless absolutely necessary. On extremely hot days, we make sure campers have ample opportunity to get water and spend time in the shade as well as providing campers with water based activities to keep them cool. A great tip is to send campers with a reusable water bottle, a hat, and sunglasses every day.

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 also have procedures for "strangers" in camp, or anyone that is in camp and not wearing an Oakasha Staff Shirt. 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. Children may be transported to other STS buildings or the Greater Waterbury YMCA during inclement weather, if needed.

ABSENTEEISM

If your child will not be attending camp on a specific day, please be sure to contact the Camp Office at 203-264-2817 or to email the Camp Director. Each day we will call the parents of campers who are absent unless we have received prior notification of the absence.

PICK-UP & EARLY PICK-UP POLICY

When a camper is picked up by a parent or someone other than a parent, that person must be listed on the camper's authorized pick-up list and must present a valid photo ID. Children will not be released to anyone not on the list or to persons on the list who do not present a valid ID. The camp office must be notified in writing if a child will be picked up early, will not be taking the bus home or is to be picked up by someone not listed on their pick up list. Please plan to provide extra time when picking up a camper early. Campers cannot be picked up between 2:30 and 3:00PM because our closing ceremonies make pickup difficult.

FIELD TRIPS

During Sessions 2, 4, 6 and 8, campers will have the chance to travel on an adventurous day trip within Connecticut. All trips require travel by bus and will leave by 9:30am and aim to return by 3 pm. If the busses are running late, parents will be notified as soon as possible. Field trip locations will be published prior to the start of camp. *Each camper will receive a permission slip at the beginning of each session that they must return with a parent's signature in order to attend.*

All camp staff attend field trips, so if a camper will not attend the field trip, they will not be able to attend camp that day. The price of the field trip is included in the cost for camp for that session. Campers are encouraged to wear a green or YMCA Camp Oakasha shirt (available in the camp store) on all field trips.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Our goal is to provide quality programs for all. The YMCA extends financial assistance based upon demonstrated and documented need and availability of funds. Financial Assistance applications for United Way Camperships will be available beginning at the beginning of April. Applicants are also encouraged to apply for the State of Connecticut Care 4 Kid childcare subsidy program. The Y Open Doors program may be able to help as well. Please contact the Camp Director for more information.

YMCA MEMBERSHIP

Campers are not required to hold YMCA membership to attend camp. Campers with a membership will receive a discount as outlined in camp brochure. A youth membership can be purchased for \$62, and includes opportunities for other youth programming at the Waterbury YMCA.

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 in the office. Socks and underwear are discarded immediately; everything else is held through the summer and then donated.

CAMP STORE

The Camp Oakasha Store sells quality camp merchandise and snacks during the day and on family nights. Campers visit the store as their schedule permits, generally during lunch time. Camp Oakasha is not responsible for lost or stolen merchandise or money, please consider putting money into a camp account for your child.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Camp Oakasha adheres to guidelines set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA states that: Childcare programs must provide equal access to all children regardless of disabilities. There are many children

in our program who fall within the ADA guidelines. Children with special needs are important members of our programs. It is every staff person's responsibility to provide opportunities for each child in the program to be assimilated and to feel welcomed. Children with special needs may at times demand extra attention, special care and ongoing communication with parents, school and professionals. For some children, staff will need to consider environmental factors within the program that will inhibit the child from equal access to the daily activities. The Y will provide training, literature and available resources to help staff meet the needs of the children in our care. We all must work together to provide quality programs to every child enrolled in Camp Oakasha.

Campers that require direct one-to-one services in school will need to have the same care provided while they are at Camp Oakasha. Camp Oakasha will work with families to provide accommodations for one-to-one services. One-to-one services will not be provided by Camp Oakasha, but those caregivers will need to meet with the Camp Director prior to camp and will need to follow the staff guidelines for camper supervision.

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 to help the campers and 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

Respect (Yellow)

Value the worth of every person and myself

Treat others as I would have them treat me

Honesty (Blue)

Tell the truth

Make sure my actions match my values

Responsibility (Green)

Do what ought to be done

Be accountable for my behavior

BEHAVIOR POLICY

At YMCA Camp Oakasha we believe that the best way to deal with behavior issues is to provide a quality, structured 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.
5. Serious infractions or issues that result in the physical or emotional harm of other campers will result in immediate suspension or expulsion from YMCA Camp Oakasha and its programs.
6. If any camper is suspended from YMCA Camp Oakasha, the first suspension will be 1 day, the second suspension will be 3 days and the third suspension will be 5 days.

Please also remember, 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.

PARENT'S AGREEMENT
IMPORTANT — PLEASE READ CAREFULLY
I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

AS LISTED IN REGISTRATION MATERIALS FOR PARENT SIGNATURE

- A \$75 non-refundable deposit is required for each child registered for camp and must accompany each application. This deposit will hold the camper's place and will be applied to the total camp tuition.
- Remaining balances are due according to payment plan selected. Lack of payment for two consecutive months will result in loss of reserved space. Monthly billing requires full payment by June 10th. EZ Pay requires full payment by August 10th.
- If registered for the EZ Pay system, I hereby authorize the Greater Waterbury YMCA to charge my account monthly, as such amounts become due, without further authorization. The YMCA reserves the right to adjust monthly payments for changes in registration, for uncollected fees, and to terminate this agreement due to nonpayment of camp charges.
- All cancellations must be received **IN WRITING** 15 days prior to the start of the camp session to receive a refund.
- No refunds will be granted less than 15 days prior to the start of the camp session.
- I will be responsible for payment of any collection fees incurred by me should my account become delinquent. An NSF fee of \$25.00 and a late fee of \$25.00 will apply; the fee may be waived if the balance is paid before the last day of the month in which the payment failure occurred.
- Bus service is provided for campers. Routes for campers are predetermined for specified 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. Campers K-6 will not be dropped off without an authorized adult or sibling present 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 times.
- I give permission for photographs and other recording devices of my camper to be used in marketing and camp publicity.
- Campers must be in good health, injury-free and well enough to fully participate.
- I give permission for my camper to participate in all camp activities, including swimming, archery and climbing tower.
- 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 MUST be completed by the 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 or social media post about YMCA Camp Oakasha, the Greater Waterbury YMCA or their participants is prohibited. It must be removed within 24 hours after notification. Violations of these conditions will result in immediate dismissal without a refund.

YMCA Camp Oakasha is part of the Greater Waterbury YMCA and offers year-round programming in Waterbury and in Watertown at the Outdoor Center at YMCA Camp Mataucha.

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. 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 & Birthday Parties***
- ***Volunteer Opportunities***
- ***Holiday and Family Events***
- ***School Vacation Camps***

Spend school vacation days at Camp Mataucha in Watertown. Vacation Camp days for 2017 are Winter Break – February 20 & 21; Spring Break – April 10-14 & 17; Columbus Day – October 9 ; Election Day – November 8 ; and Winter Break – December 27, 28 & 29

Free Special Events: Breakfast with Santa, Halloween Carnival, Easter Egg-stravaganza and more!

YMCA Camp Oakasha

1461 South Britain Rd. Southbury, CT
Winter: 860-274-4820
Summer: 203-264-2817
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The Outdoor Center at YMCA Camp Mataucha

270 Smith Pond Rd. Watertown, CT
Phone: 860-274-4820
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