



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA CAMP MATAUCHA Parent Handbook



YMCA CAMP MATAUCHA

For Youth Development; For Healthy Living; For Social Responsibility

THE DAY CAMP PROGRAM

At YMCA Camp Mataucha we provide the opportunity for every child to participate in activities that are safe, fun and rewarding. We believe camp is a place that fosters adventures, memories and friendships. All aspects of our program are designed to create memorable experiences for campers to learn and grow from. The magic of Mataucha comes from campers who have developed physically, emotionally and spiritually due to the safe and healthy environment our staff provide.

Our day camp program is divided into two categories: Traditional Day Camp and Specialty Camps. 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 Mataucha 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:

- Explorers • Mohawks • Iroquois • Pequots • Trailblazers • LITs • CITs

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. These camps are recommended for children who have a specific interest or who wish to develop special skills or interests in one area.

- Sports Majors & Minors • Fishing • Survival • Aquatics • Mt. Biking • Performing Arts • and more! •

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00am-9:00am	Before Care (Additional Cost)	Games/Activities & Snack
9:00am-9:30am	Arrival	Parent Drop Off & Busses
9:30am-9:45am	Opening Ceremonies/LOGS	Flag, Announcements & Lots of Great Stuff
9:45am-10:45am	Period 1	Swimming, Rotating & Unit Activities
10:45am-11:45am	Period 2	Swimming, Rotating & Unit Activities
11:45am-12:30pm	Lunch	Lunch
12:30pm-1:30pm	Period 3	Swimming, Rotating & Unit Activities
1:30pm-2:30pm	Period 4	Swimming, Rotating & Unit Activities
2:30pm-3:00pm	Unit LOGS & Dismissal	End of Day Announcements & Busses
3:00pm-5:00pm	PM Care (Additional Cost)	Snack & Games/Activities

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

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

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 Mataucha 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 not permitted.

FAMILY NIGHTS

Family nights are held on the second Wednesday of each session. 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. Again, this year we will be hosting a Family Overnight that will be open to all friends of Mataucha. There is no additional fee for the overnight but parents must accompany campers. Please see our YMCA Camp Mataucha brochure for more details about the Family Overnight.

YMCA CAMP MATAUCHA STAFF

YMCA Camp Mataucha Staff is the most important part of every Mataucha 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 Mataucha 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.

STAFF RATIOS

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

OUR FACILITY

The Outdoor Center at YMCA Camp Mataucha is roughly 80 acres of beautiful woods, fields and streams and is ideal for a rewarding outdoor experience. Our property is on Smith Pond, with separate waterfronts for swimming and boating. The camp includes a first aid station, a camp office, changing rooms and bathrooms, an arts & crafts cabin, a nature cabin, and several pavilions. We also have a large indoor program building that is used for additional rainy day space. There are trails to explore, sports

fields, basketball courts, a climbing tower, high and low ropes courses, an archery range, and our 70' super slide we call The Big Red Super Slide.

WATERFRONT

Our waterfront programs are one of the highlights of our camper's day. The waterfront is divided into two areas of varying depth which are used in accordance with the ability of the swimmer: a shallow area for beginners and a deep area for intermediate and beyond. We strongly believe in providing a fun and safe atmosphere at our waterfront. Campers are encouraged to swim every day. Aside from swimming we also have a full beach for waterfront activities and we have several waterparks that campers can use. Campers will need to be tested separately for the waterparks. Please send a note if your child will not be participating on a certain day.

On the first day of each session, all campers will be given a swimming test. This allows the swim staff to determine whether campers are shallow or deep water swimmers. It also enables us to put campers in the appropriate swim groups. Proving safe care on a pond waterfront 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.

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 1:20 with additional counselors assisting in the supervision. All waterfront staff hold current Lifeguard, First Aid and CPR certifications and are drilled periodically during the summer to practice their skills.

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 be prepared with proper rain 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 drinks of 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 water bottle and an extra beverage for lunch. Sunscreen should be applied before the campers arrive.

FIRST AID

All staff at YMCA Camp Mataucha are certified in CPR and First Aid. In addition, we have a Camp Nurse (RN) that 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.

Our goal at camp is to have a fun summer. We play hard at camp and we play outside at camp. Due to the nature of what camp is we get skinned knees, some minor bumps and bruises and come into contact with all forms of wildlife including animals and insects. Because we expect these types of injuries and contact, we will only give you a call for injuries that are more severe. In order to best serve your camper our safety measures must be a joint effort.

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 camp. Parents and Guardians should also check campers each day for ticks, new mosquito bites and anything out of the ordinary that may be affecting your camper.

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 a Mataucha 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. In the event of an emergency that requires campers to be transported to the Waterbury YMCA, YMCA Camp Mataucha will contact families once campers have safely arrived 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 right behind Woodward Hall. Socks and underwear are immediately discarded; everything else is held for two weeks and then donated.

CAMP STORE

The YMCA Camp Mataucha 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 Mataucha is not responsible for lost or stolen merchandise or money.

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 will be available beginning April 1st. Applicants are encouraged to apply for a United Way Campership and to the State of Connecticut Care 4 Kid child subsidy program.

HOURS OF OPERATION

YMCA Camp Mataucha 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 outlined in the YMCA Camp Mataucha brochure.

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. 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.

Non-MEDICATION POLICY & FORMS

If your camper needs to take medication (either over the counter or prescription) during the camp day our Camp Nurse or 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!

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 the Non-Prescription Medication form to YMCA Camp Mataucha as well as a container of sunscreen/insect repellent. Depending on the application type, camp staff may be able to assist campers with the sunscreen/insect repellent.

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.

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 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. 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 2:45 and 3 PM because closing ceremonies are being held and pickup of children is very difficult.*

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

All programs at YMCA Camp Mataucha 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

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

PARENT'S AGREEMENT

IMPORTANT — PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

- A \$100 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. Late charge of \$25.00 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.
- 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.
- 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. *Explorers and Mohawk Campers 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 times.
- 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, swimming, field games, etc.
- 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 Mataucha. I further waive, release, absolve and indemnify the Greater Waterbury YMCA, YMCA Camp Mataucha, its directors, volunteers, officers or employees for injuries or accidents occurring while participating in the programs of YMCA Camp Mataucha.
- Any unauthorized video, picture, twitter, Facebook post or any other social networking site posts about YMCA Camp Mataucha, 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 Mataucha 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 Mataucha 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.
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 Mataucha and its programs.
6. If any camper is suspended from YMCA Camp Mataucha the first suspension will be 1 day, the second suspension will be 3 days and the third suspension will be 5 days.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Camp Mataucha 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 programming to every child enrolled in Camp Mataucha.

Campers that require direct one-to-one services in school will need to have the same care provided while they are at YMCA Camp Mataucha. One-to-one services will not be provided by YMCA Camp Mataucha, but those caregivers will need to follow the staff guidelines for camper supervision.

THE OUTDOOR CENTER AT YMCA CAMP MATAUCHA 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. Our versatile staff can customize a program to fit the needs or goals of your group! Some of our programs include:

- *Team Building Programs*
- *Outdoor Education Programs*
- *Facility Rentals*
- *Volunteer Opportunities*

For more information on these or other exciting programs please contact Kelly Welch, Outdoor Center Director at 860-274-4820. 270 Smith Pond Rd, Watertown, CT www.campmataucha.org