



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THE GATEWAY FAMILY YMCA ELIZABETH BRANCH



SUMMER CAMP 2015 PARENT HANDBOOK



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Our Mission

The Gateway Family YMCA is a community based organization rooted in Christian principles and committed to building healthy lives through programs that strengthen the spirit, mind and body for people of all ages, religions and cultures.

Program Goals

- ✓ Promote YMCA Character Values: Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility.
- ✓ Develop a sense of belonging in each child.
- ✓ Provide a safe, secure atmosphere .
- ✓ Help each child grow personally.
- ✓ Encourage parent input and participation.
- ✓ Develop specific skills in children.
- ✓ Have fun!



Our Staff

Our staff is lead by a YMCA Director with a background in childcare programs. All staff must successfully complete a background check, drug test and reference checks prior to being hired. Many staff are college students and all have experience working with children. Staff must also attend extensive staff training, including a Child Abuse Prevention course. All Camp Directors and Assistant Directors are CPR and First Aid Certified. All aquatics staff are lifeguard, CPR and First Aid Certified.

A Typical Summer Camp Day

- 8:30am-9:00am Opening. Each group/camp will meet with their counselors for a brief discussion of the theme and/or core value of the day. Campers will drop off personal belongings.
- 9:00am-9:30am Breakfast
- 9:30am-10:30am Activity Period 1. Each small group works on various activities like arts and crafts, nature study, games, skills, CATCH, and sports Character Development.
- 10:30am-11:30am Activity Period 2
- 11:30-12:20pm Activity Period 3.
- 12:20pm-12:30pm Clean-Up/ Wash-Up
- 12:30pm-1:30pm Lunch
- 1:30pm-2:30pm Activity Period 4
- 2:30-3:00- Small Group Activity/Clean-Up/Wash-Up
- 3:00pm-3:30pm PM Snack
- 3:30pm-4:30pm Activity Period 5
- 4:30pm-5:00pm Closing. All camp comes together to review the day, and what to expect the following day. Any special dress up days will be announced.



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Camp Options

Discovery Camp (Entering Grades K & 1)

This is a perfect introduction for first-time campers who are “discovering” the camp experience, building relationships and **developing social skills**. Discovery campers will engage in a **nurturing** environment that includes CATCH games, swim lessons and recreational swim, performing arts, sports, arts and crafts and much more.

Explorer Camp (Entering Grades 2 & 3)

Campers are “exploring” new camp experiences by promoting the importance of **healthy relationships** and lifestyles through various activities. Explorer Campers will participate in CATCH games, swim lessons and recreational swim, sports, arts and crafts, interactive games, performing arts, and much more.

Adventure Camp (Entering Grades 4 & 5)

Campers will experience an “adventurous” summer, while they participate in team building exercises, and **build new relationships**. Campers will engage in CATCH games, swim lessons and recreational swim, team building activities, athletic activities, arts and crafts and much more.

Pioneer Camp (Entering Grades 6-8)

Campers are developing their **leadership** skills while engaging in an exciting camp experience. Pioneer campers get to take **responsibility** for their summer by planning and designing a camp specifically for them. Throughout the summer, campers will engage in CATCH games, team building activities, swim lessons and recreational swim, arts and crafts, and much more...

Leaders In Training (Entering Grades 9-10)

Campers will serve as mentors for younger campers, develop leadership skills, and experience the significance of **community service**. LIT is a leadership opportunity and must interview with the Camp Director.

***Held at the Five Points Branch**



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Camp Hours and Fees

	Entering Grades	Hours	Tuition per Week (full member)	Tuition per week (basic member)
Traditional Camps				
Discovery	K & 1	8:30am-5:00pm	\$150	\$160
Explorer	2 & 3	8:30am-5:00pm	\$150	\$160
Adventure	4 & 5	8:30am-5:00pm	\$150	\$160
Pioneer	6-8	8:30am-5:00pm	\$150	\$160
Leader In Training	9-11	8:30am-5:00pm	\$175 *Five Points Branch only	
Additional Options				
Pre Camp	K-8	7:00am-8:30am	\$25	\$25
Post Camp	K-8	5:00pm-6:30pm	\$25	\$25
Pre and Post Camp	K-8	7:00-8:30am & 5:00-6:30pm	\$45	\$45
Weekly Trip *Space is limited.	K-8	Varies based on trip	\$15 *Balance for week must be paid before registering for the trip.	



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Session Dates

Week	Dates
1	June 22 nd – June 26 th
2	June 29 th – July 3 rd
3	July 6 th – July 10 th
4	July 13 th – July 17 th
5	July 20 th – July 24 th
6	July 27 th – July 31 st
7	August 3 rd – August 7 th
8	August 10 th – August 14 th
9	August 17 th – August 21 st
10	August 24 th – August 28 th



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Before Camp Begins

Registration

Parents must complete all registration paperwork prior to child's admission into the program at the Elizabeth Branch. If you add on weeks throughout the summer you will need to register for those weeks at the welcome center. Due to state regulations, this paperwork must be submitted yearly including the medical form completed by the parent or the child's physician. If you qualify for 4Cs subsidy you must have a copy of your approved contract at the time of registration.

Membership Fee

All participants are required to be members of the YMCA. The Annual Membership fee is \$41 per child for a Basic Program Membership. This year we will have a camp membership, which is used solely for camp and the fee is \$25. Please check with the Welcome Center regarding membership privileges and joiner's fees.

Registration Fee

There is a one-time \$25 registration fee per family for processing for children who have not attended one of our child care programs within the last year.

Deposit and Balance of Fees

A \$30 non-refundable deposit per child, per session is required with registration for all private pay participants. The balance of the camp fee is due prior to the first day of the session your child is attending.

Returned Check Fee

There will be a \$25 fee for all checks returned by the bank of insufficient funds. If a check is returned, all future payments must be made with cash or credit card.

Refund Policy

In order for the Elizabeth Branch to keep our fees as low as possible, we are unable to give refunds if your child does not attend camp. Refunds will only be given if the YMCA finds it necessary to cancel a camp.

Camp Change Request

If you need to switch your child's registered week of camp with a different week you need to fill out a camp change request prior to the week(s) you are requesting to switch. These forms are available at the Welcome Center.





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While At Camp

What to Bring to Camp

- ✓ **Clothing** – Campers should wear comfortable and weather appropriate clothing. All clothing should be labeled with the camper's name.
- ✓ **Sneakers or Closed Toe Shoes** (*For the safety of each camper, no open toe shoes are permitted except for swim time*).
- ✓ **Swimsuits and Towel:** Swimsuit should be worn under clothes on days swimming will be included with the trip. Towels, dry clothes, and a plastic bag for wet swimsuit should be kept in a labeled tote bag or backpack.
- ✓ **Sunscreen**–Please send your camper with sunscreen as we spend time outdoors.
- ✓ **Water Bottles** - Campers may want to bring a water bottle each day for extra water on hot days and for field trips.
- ✓ **Camp T-shirts**- Campers will receive one t-shirt prior to their first field trip.

What **NOT** to Bring

- Money
- Valuables
- Toys
- Cell Phones and other electronic devices.

Any campers who bring these objects will be asked to put them away. If they are taken out again, staff will ask the camper for the item and the Camp Director will hold until parent picks up at the end of the day. The YMCA is not responsible for items that are lost.

Lost and Found

At the end of each day, parents should check with their campers to ensure that they have all of their belongings. There is a lost and found area under the pavilion where any recovered items will be placed. The YMCA is not responsible for items that are left behind. All unclaimed articles will be donated at the end of the summer.

Rainy Days

Depending on the severity of the weather conditions, we will follow a typical day schedule incorporating activities both inside and outside. For severe heat and thunder and lightning conditions, children will engage in a variety of indoor activities.





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Arrival Procedures

Check-In between at 8:30am-9:00am each morning. Please do not arrive early, as you will be required to wait until 8:30am.

- ✓ Parking: Park in the lot and walk your camper into the building. All children will need to be signed in and then can join their designated camp & counselors in the gymnasium between 8:30-9am. If you are dropping off after 9am, go to the Welcome Center and ask for direction.

Departure

Please indicate on the registration form the names of people allowed to pick up your child. Counselors will ask for identification until they know you and the other people listed by sight. If you need to have someone who is not listed to pick up your child, written, signed notice must be given. The person listed will be asked to show a photo identification upon pick up.

If a parent has been denied access to a child by court order, the center needs to be given a copy of this documentation and it will remain on file.

Release of Child

If the parent or person authorized to pick-up the child appears to be physically or emotionally impaired to the extent that the welfare of the child is in danger the following steps will be taken:

1. The child will not be released to that person;
2. Staff members will try to contact alternate persons authorized to pick-up
3. If staff is unable to make alternate arrangements, a staff member will call the Division of Youth and Family Services, 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline to seek assistance in caring for the child.

Pre and Post Camp

The YMCA offers extended care hours: Pre Camp (7am-8:30am) and Post Camp (5pm-6:30pm). Your child must be registered with all associated fees paid in full prior to the first day of the camp week in order to be dropped off before 8:30am or picked up after 5pm.

Late Pick Up Fee

If your child is not picked up by the end of the program in which they are registered, you will be charged a late fee of \$1 per minute and these procedures will be followed:

1. Child will be supervised at all times by at least 2 staff;
2. Staff members will attempt to contact parent or persons authorized to pick-up child;
3. If after an hour no one can be contacted, the YMCA staff member will call the Division of Youth and Family Services' 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline (800) 792-8610 to seek assistance in caring for the child until someone can be contacted to pick-up the child.

Field Trips

All field trips are optional and there is an additional trip fee. **To guarantee your child's seat on the bus, you MUST register in advance because space is limited.** Once the trips is full, additional spots will not be added. **In order to register for the trip your child must be registered for that week of camp with the balance for that week paid in full.** Campers must wear their designated camp t-shirt on all field trips. All campers will receive one camp t-shirt, additional shirts are available for \$10 per shirt.

Spending Money

No additional spending money is needed. Campers will not be allowed to purchase food or souvenirs on trips. Please do not send money!



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Children's Code of Conduct

The YMCA of Eastern Union County, Elizabeth Branch, works hard to create a positive atmosphere with emphasis on the YMCA Four Core Values of Character Development: Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. Proper participation and conduct by each child is expected.

<p>Caring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Be considerate of each other's feelings. ➤ Treat others as you would want to be treated. ➤ No bullying. 	<p>Honesty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tell the truth to your parents, YMCA staff, and other children. ➤ Tell a staff member immediately if someone is making you feel uncomfortable; example: upsetting or bothering you. ➤ Ask a staff member if you need help.
<p>Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Listen and follow directions. ➤ Use calm and appropriate language and tone of voice. ➤ Keep your hands and feet to yourself (No hitting, kicking, or fighting). ➤ Use equipment correctly. ➤ No touching other children's belongings. 	<p>Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Be responsible for your actions. ➤ Clean up after yourself. ➤ Tell a counselor if you feel sick. ➤ Tell a counselor if you are hurt. ➤ Do not bring toys, games, video games, trading cards or any other personal items that could get lost or damaged.

The Camp Staff will notify parents at pick up if their child does not follow the code of conduct. The YMCA of Eastern Union County, Elizabeth Branch, will use the following procedure:

1. Participant receives a verbal warning. Staff and child discuss the incident together, to ensure the child understands acceptable behavior. Staff will notify parents at pick-up in reference to the incident.
2. Participant receives another verbal warning, as well as a written, follow up letter sent home. Parents are notified at pick-up. Letters will become part of the child's file.
3. If another incident occurs, child may be suspended for one to three days. Before or within three days of returning to the program, parents, child, staff, and Director must meet regarding the incident and a behavior plan.
4. If behavior continues, child will be suspended for up to one week.
5. Continuance of the behavior will result in termination of the program for the remainder of the school year.

Note: Any action endangering one's self or other participants will result in immediate parent pick-up and an automatic one day suspension. For the safety of the children and staff, the Elizabeth Branch practices Zero Tolerance for any incident involving a weapon. Any Zero Tolerance violation will result in immediate expulsion from the program. All suspensions will be determined by the Camp Director, based on the severity of the incident.



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Health Procedures

The State Department of Licensing requires that:

1. Each child have a medical form completed by a parent or physician yearly and submitted prior to admission (Immunization records must be included);
2. Children are not be sent to the program if they have any of the following symptoms: **fever or headache, rashes or inflamed skin, nausea or vomiting, abdominal pains, diarrhea, sore throat, earache, inflammation of the eyes, enlarged glands, or persistent coughing.**
3. If a child develops any of the above symptoms while in the YMCA's care, the parent will be notified to have the child picked up. Doctor's permission may be required for the child to return to the program in some cases;
4. No medicine will be administered by staff.

If your child will not be attending the program please contact the YMCA at
(908) 355-9622 by 8:30 a.m.

Licensing Information

Included on the medical form is a section entitled "*Permission for Emergency Medical Care.*" It is imperative that this area be signed so that in the event of an emergency situation we can obtain medical treatment for your child.

Our program is licensed by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services. In order to maintain this licensing, there are certain standards with which our camp must comply

Violations of Standards: If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing standards, you are entitled to report them to the Bureau of Licensing. Of course, we would appreciate you bringing these concerns to our attention too. Parents are also entitled to review the site's copy of the Inspection/Violation Report issued after the inspection of the site.

DYFS Investigation: Our center must cooperate with all DYFS inspections and/or investigations. DYFS staff may interview both staff members and children.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect or exploitation by an adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by state law to report the concern immediately to the Division of Youth and Family Services Office of Child Abuse Control, Toll-Free at (800) 792-85610, or to any District Office. Such reports may be made anonymously.



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We are required to have certain paperwork on file for each child *prior* to their beginning the program. Please understand that no child may attend camp, under any circumstances, if this paperwork is missing. This paperwork includes: registration form, persons authorized to pick-up child, emergency information, permission for emergency care, permission for field trips, current medical form, and record of immunizations.

License Display

A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our site. An information board will have the license, diagram of rooms and areas approved for use and emergency exits; emergency numbers, daily schedule and rules posted.

Information to be reported to the Division of Youth & Family Services

Verbally within 24 hours:

1. Injury or illness that results in the admittance to a hospital or death of a child.
2. Occurrence of a reportable disease.
3. Change in use by other occupants of a multi-use building in which center is located.
4. Permanent closing of the center.
5. Damage to premises of the center caused by fire, accident or the elements.
6. Proposed use of emergency space including use of rooms not approved by local municipal officials or the Bureau.
7. Any criminal conviction(s) or guilty plea(s) of the sponsors, director, or any staff member.

Verbally within 3 working days:

1. Any change in information previously submitted to the Bureau on the application.
2. The center must then complete an amended license application form and submit it within 30 calendar days of the change.



We hope this handbook will be a useful guide as you prepare your child for his/her best summer ever. If you have any additional questions, please contact,

Dante Burgess, Camp Director
(908)355-9622 or DBurgess@tgfymca.org

We'll see you this summer!