

PARENT/CAMPER HANDBOOK
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Dear Parents and Campers:

Welcome to Summer Camp! We are glad that you have chosen our quality program to meet your needs this summer. There are many camps in this area and we know the decision may have been difficult. Our staff will soon have the opportunity to prove to you that you made the right decision!

The Morris YMCA Summer Camp is unlike any camp experience in the area. Our staff works year round to prepare for a successful 8-week summer program for children in our community. Many hours have been spent planning, preparing, and creating new program areas to give children a summer camp experience with lasting memories.

This handbook was created with your concerns in mind. We try to remain as consistent as possible from year to year, but there are always new issues we need to address to families enrolling in our Summer Camp Program. It is our hope that you find this handbook useful in easing any concerns that you and your child may have, as well as fully understanding the policies and procedures at the Morris YMCA Summer Camp.

We are excited that summer is here, and look forward to a safe summer full of activities with our campers. Again, welcome to the Morris YMCA Camp and thank you for your commitment to our program. With your help, we now have the opportunity to build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities.

Sincerely,

Laurie Halaska
Executive Director

Patricia Walton
Camp Manger

Morris YMCA Camp Mission Statement: To put Christian principles into practice by developing relationships among all persons and providing programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body.

Morris YMCA Camp Goals: Our goal is to enrich children through a positive and rewarding summer camp experience. A healthy spirit, mind, and body will be the directive, as well as to build internal and external assets, thus enriching life experience and the learning process.

About Our Staff: We hire mature and enthusiastic staff to help us provide a quality, safe and enjoyable program for all involved. All staff are trained to work with children in a Summer Camp, as well as trained in CPR/First Aid, Child Abuse Prevention, and Blood borne Pathogens. A criminal background check and reference checks have been conducted, documented, and filed on all staff. The majority of our staff are college age and above, and have a passion for working with children.

Hours and Days of Operation: The Morris YMCA Day Camp at Saratoga Elementary begins at 9:00am and lasts until 4:30pm, Monday thru Friday. Extended care, which begins at 7am - 9am and 4:30pm - 6pm, is available for an additional charge.

The Morris YMCA Camp offers 8 weeks of Summer Day Camp. Camp dates are listed below:

Week # 1: June 8 - June 12

Week # 5: July 6 - July 10

Week #2: June 15 -June 19

Week # 6: July 13 - July17

Week# 3: June 22- June26

Week # 7: July 20 - July 24

Week # 4: June 29 - July 3

Week # 8: July 27 - July 31

Camper Sign in/Sign out Procedures: Campers must be signed in/out by a parent/guardian or an individual 18 years or older who is listed on the authorization form. No exceptions will be made in these procedures as we are required by law to keep detailed records. Parents/Guardians will be asked to provide a picture ID, which allows access to the Morris YMCA Camp to pick up a child. This must be presented to the staff person sitting at the check in/out table. To avoid any confusion and frustration, please have your ID with you. All campers are encouraged to be signed in by 9:00am, as scheduled events typically begin after this time. Parents wanting to pick up their child before 4:30pm will need to let the camp staff know in writing at the beginning of the day. This will allow us to keep children easily accessible for pick up. If a child is picked up from camp after 6:00pm, parents will be billed \$10 for every 15 minutes, per child. Late fees will be expected to be paid the next day. Repeated late pick-ups may result in removal from the summer camp program. Please be considerate of our staff and facility program schedule.

Sign In/Pick-up Location: Please use the designated pick up point by gymnasium. Adults over 18 years old MUST sign in children each day. Park in the designated areas near the gym doors.

Early Pick-up: Should you need to pick up your camper before 4:30pm we will require a written note from you that morning (or earlier, if possible) specifying what time you will be arriving for your child.

Parking Policies: Since the majority of parents/guardians will be responsible to drop off and pick up their child from camp, it is very important to state our parking lot policies!

***PLEASE DO NOT Double Park anywhere in Saratoga Elementary school lot. (It is not safe, and is frustrating for other drivers.)**

***PLEASE DO NOT park in a designated handicapped space unless you have the required permit.**

***PLEASE DO NOT under any circumstances park in the fire lane in Saratoga Elementary school lot, not even with hazard lights on! (This presents a safety hazard.)**

Payment and Cancellations: Any camper fees beyond the initial registration should be made either by mail to **Joliet YMCA, 749 Houbolt Road, Joliet, IL 60431**. Alternatively, by phone using a credit or debit card to (815) 729-9622. The weekly deposit and registration fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. Chronic late payment will result in suspension from camp. **Weekly payments MUST be received by the Joliet YMCA no later than the following dates.**

Weeks	Payments due
1, 2, 3,4	May 30 ,2009
5,6,7,8	June 30, 2009

Refund/Credit Policy: Due to extensive scheduling for staff, activities, and materials, we will not be able to refund any camping fees.

Transportation Information: The Morris YMCA charters buses to transport campers on field trip days. At no time may campers be transported in a staff vehicle before, during, or after camp.

Field Trip Information: Field trips are a major part of our Camp Program. We feel that we have chosen destinations that are age appropriate for our campers. It is very important that campers are prepared for the day, and arrive at camp on time on field trip days. Campers who arrive after buses have left on field trip days will not be allowed to stay. All campers are required to wear their camp T-shirt on field trip days. All field trip destinations will be posted in the weekly newsletter. There will be times when the destination will change at the last minute due to circumstances beyond our control. We will try our best to make parents aware of these changes as soon as possible. We schedule field trips to return to the Saratoga Elementary school no later than 4:30pm. There may be times when the bus is late due to traffic, issues on the trip, or situations we cannot control. We hope this does not happen often, but if it does, we ask that parents be understanding about this matter.

Bus Rules: All Morris YMCA staff will be enforcing the rules listed below when our campers get on the bus. Please make sure that your child is well aware of what is expected of them when they step foot onto the bus during camp.

- * Do not leave your seat while the bus is moving.
- *Remain in the bus during a road emergency until the driver has given directions.
- * Keep hands, arms, head, and feet inside the bus at all times.
- * Do not throw anything out of the bus windows.
- *Treat bus equipment as you would treat your own belongings. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
- *No food, drink, candy, or gum is permitted on the bus at any time.
- *Voices must be kept low at all times. The bus driver needs to be alert at all times, and loud voices may cause confusion.
- *Be sure to take all belongings with you when you get off the bus. The YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen property.
- *The bus driver will have the final authority on the bus regarding rules, regulations, And policies. Campers are expected to follow these rules.

Camper Dress: A camper's clothing should reflect good taste and concern for the values and standards of all campers enrolled at YMCA Summer Day Camp.

Campers may be asked to change their clothes if deemed inappropriate by the Camp Staff.

Inappropriate dress includes, but not limited to the following:

- Hats worn backward or to the side
- Short shorts
- Clothing promoting alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products
- Provocative clothing and bare midriff

Clothing which is recommended includes:

- T-shirt or sweatshirt (depending on weather)
- Shorts or jeans (depending on weather)
- Gym shoes that tie

Summer Camp T-Shirts: All campers will receive one YMCA Day Camp Shirt that is to be worn on field trip days. Additional camp shirts are available to purchase for \$7 each. Any camper who does not wear a camp shirt on a field trip day will be issued a new shirt, and the parents will be billed for that shirt.

Lunch and Snacks: Campers are required to bring their own lunch to camp. We recommend that campers bring a brown bag lunch. Please make sure appropriate snacks and drinks are provided.

Enrollment Forms: Upon registration, parents/guardians will receive a packet of enrollment forms. These forms need to be filled out completely, as neatly as possible, and then turned in at the time of finalizing registration. These forms will be kept confidential; only staff working with your child will have access to this information. A copy of these forms will be sent with staff when campers are out of the building. If we do not have all forms completed, your child will not be able to start our Summer Camp Program.

Illness and Injury Policies: With each child's welfare in mind, we ask parents not to send a child to camp if he/she is sick or has a fever. We also ask that if a child has an injury that may affect their positive Summer Camp experience that

parents do not send their child to camp. Campers are asked to participate in a wide variety of activities each day and if they are injured or ill, they may not feel up to or have the ability to take part in planned activities. If a child becomes ill or injured during camp hours, appropriate measures will be taken. Parents/guardian will be contacted and asked to pick up their child from the YMCA. In the event that we are unable to contact the parent or guardian, we will review the emergency contact information to locate one of your designees who can pick up the child.

If your child is injured at camp, the Camp Manager will take whatever steps necessary to obtain emergency care, and try to make your child as comfortable as possible. We will then seek to contact the child's parent/guardian. If a camper is suspected to have head lice, we will conduct a check on all campers as a precaution. Head lice is unfortunately common when there are large groups of children, and in order to prevent a major breakout at our facility, no camper with head lice may be in our care. A child may return to camp after treatment. Evidence of treatment includes no lice, clean hair and scalp, and a note from a parent or child's physician stating treatment used.

Medications: Any medications given to a child during our Summer Camp Program must be in its original container. Our staff will only dispense prescription medication. We will not distribute medicine to control a fever or relieve pain. The Morris YMCA Camp staff will not be allowed to give the first dosage of medicine to a child. If a child needs to take medication in our care, the parent must complete a Request to Dispense Medication form. This information must also be listed on the enrollment form. For campers that have asthma, please be sure to send along an inhaler. Campers will be required to carry their own inhaler unless otherwise noted by a parent. Many children who have asthma know best when they need to use their inhaler, and will be supervised by a camp counselor. All medications will be labeled and locked up. Please be very specific when giving us information regarding your child's medication, as each camper's health is important to us.

The Morris YMCA Summer Day Camp Policies

Please read the following pages carefully; feel free to contact the Day Camp staff with any concerns. The issues listed are ones that seem to be concerns throughout the summer.

Civil Disobedience or Camper Disruption: Camper conduct, either individually or in a group, that is intentionally disruptive to or designed to be disruptive to the normal operation of the camp program may result in being sent home and/or suspended from the camp. Conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Starting arguments with staff or campers
2. Refusing to cooperate with camp staff
3. Destruction of Morris YMCA Camp and White Oak School property
4. Harming a camper or staff member

Corporal Punishment: The Morris YMCA DOES NOT use corporal punishment as a means to discipline campers. See page 12 for details on the YMCA's behavior management policy.

Dangerous Weapons: Items that campers bring to camp that may cause harm or are deemed potentially harmful will be confiscated. Bringing such items to camp may result in suspension or removal from YMCA Summer Camp for the summer. Items will not be returned to the camper, but to a parent after a meeting with the Camp Director.

Fighting: The staff of the Morris YMCA Summer camp will not tolerate verbal or physical abuse between campers. Physical or verbal fighting, degrading, making fun of others, demeaning, or threatening other campers or staff will not be allowed. Any campers involved in these types of activities will be subject to discipline, and may be sent home for the day, suspended from camp, or removed from the program.

Deceitful Activity: Any camper who lies to or tries to deceive camp staff will be subject to disciplinary action.

Intimidation/Bullying: Any camper found to be harassing, making fun of, or intimidating another camper is subject to disciplinary action and may be sent home from camp.

Obscenity: Obscene, profane, or vulgar language written, oral, or expressed by symbols is not tolerated. Being respectful to staff and campers is important

and expected. Any camper who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action, and may be sent home from camp.

Gangs: Campers must refrain from any gang activity while in camp. No camper shall wear, possess, use, distribute, or display clothing, jewelry, or other things, which are evidence of membership or affiliation in a gang. Any act or omission, or use of speech, either verbal or non-verbal, showing membership or affiliation in a gang will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including removal from camp.

Gum Chewing: Gum chewing contributes to higher maintenance costs, creates unsanitary conditions, and has a negative effect on camp decorum, other peoples' clothes, shoes, and hair. Campers will not be allowed to chew gum while at camp.

Lost and Found: The Morris YMCA Camp will have a lost and found area where you may attempt to find your child's missing belongings. Please mark all of your child's belongings with his/her full name. Do not use initials, as some campers may have the same. Parents will be able to look for missing items during drop off and pick up times. Lost and found items not claimed will be given to a charitable organization.

Paging Devices and Cellular Phones: Paging devices and cell phones have no place at the YMCA Day Camp. Your child will be too busy with daily activities to use these items. They cause distraction among campers and are not necessary. If a parent needs to get in touch with their child in case of an emergency, we ask that they call the Morris YMCA Camp and ask to speak to the Camp Manger.

Social Conduct: Camper conduct should reflect concern for others. Camp is not the place for any type of public display of affection. Intimacy and physical contact will be grounds for disciplinary action.

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Stealing: A camper who steals property, other camper's or staff belongings is subject to disciplinary action. This could include suspension or removal from camp.

Vandalism: Campers committing acts of vandalism or malicious mischief either against Saratoga property or against another camper or staff will be disciplined immediately. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to any type of graffiti in,

out, and around the Saratoga Elementary, as well as locations, which our campers frequent. Payment to repair damage accrued because of vandalism will be the responsibility of the camper's parent/guardian.

Visitors: Visitors at camp are always welcome, but at times can be disruptive to the camper, other campers, and the program. If you would like to visit camp, please contact the Camp Manger to arrange a time to visit. This allows our staff to be prepared, and we can direct you to your child immediately.

Family Issues: If there are family issues that may affect the camper in our care, we ask that you make the Camp Manger aware of these concerns. These issues will remain confidential, and the Camp Manger will only share the information with the necessary people involved with your child. Issues such as custody, legal care arrangements, restraining orders and other additional family concerns are necessary for Camp Administrators to know. Our top priority is the safety of our campers, and we do not want to put ourselves in a position of not knowing these issues.

Personal Belongings: Campers will be responsible for all of their own belongings throughout the day. We ask that campers refrain from bringing anything of value and anything that may be a distraction from camp. The Morris YMCA Camp will not be responsible for items that are lost or stolen at camp. This rule also applies to money brought to camp. Please monitor what your child is bringing to camp to avoid unnecessary problems. We have included a "Camper Check List" on the following page. **All personal belongings should have your child's name clearly printed on them.**

Camper Check List

Please be sure to label all of your child's belongings!

Required Items:

- *Backpack
- *Cool, comfortable play clothes
- *Swim suit

- *Towel
- *Gym shoes (no sandals please!)
- *Complete lunch with drink
- *Water bottle
- *Bug Repellant
- *Sunscreen
- *Camp T-shirt (field trip days only)

Optional Items:

- *Healthy snacks
- *Hat
- *Sunglasses
- *Goggles
- *Spending money (please limit the amount of money you send with your child. A few dollars is usually more than enough on field trip days.)

Items to leave at Home:

- *Tape/CD player
- *Game boy/Video Games
- *Sandals/Dressy clothes
- *Jewelry, make-up, nail polish
- ***ALL TRADING CARDS!**
- *Water guns, personal toys
- *Items of value
- *I-Pods, MP3 Players and any other electronic devices similar to these items.

The Morris YMCA Camp will not be responsible for items that are lost or stolen.

The Morris YMCA Day Camp Character Challenge:

To accept and demonstrate Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility in everything we do.

Behavior Management Policy: The Morris YMCA Day Camp has a Behavior Management Policy that compliments our program by assuring that each camper is safe, learns, grows, and has fun! Whenever possible, our staff will encourage appropriate behavior by positively reinforcing good behaviors. Discipline is

carried out in a way that helps a camper develop self-control and assume responsibility for his/her own behavior. The discipline balances firmness and kindness. The policies are based on three overall rules:

- * A camper may not disturb or hurt others, verbally or physically.
- * A camper may not damage equipment or camp property.
- * A camper may not place themselves or others in a dangerous situation.

Our Behavior Management Policy is limited to a few techniques of discipline, the first being rationalization and education. This allows the camper to problem solve and the staff to assist with choices for more appropriate behavior. Another technique will be the removal of a camper from a problem situation in a time out. Removal gives the camper time to calm down, reflect on his/her actions, and the staff the chance to discuss with the camper what happened. Our staff is trained to use a combination of techniques to encourage the best behaviors from our campers.

In the event of a major infraction of the rules, the Camp Manger will contact a parent/guardian to discuss the issue and if warranted, arrange for the camper to be sent home. **Refunds will not be issued for the campers sent home for disciplinary reasons!** All parents and campers will be required to sign a "Character Counts" agreement stating that they understand what type of behavior are expected of all children enrolled in the Morris YMCA Day Camp Program at Saratoga Elementary School. Samples of expectations is listed on the following page.

Character Counts! At Morris YMCA Day Camp:

Camper rules are rooted in the four core values that are at the heart of the YMCA and that we feel every camper can practice and model:

CARING, HONESTY, RESPECT, AND RESPONSIBILITY

CARING

- * We care about each other's feelings; we do not tease or make fun.
- * We take care of the camp equipment so that others can enjoy it too.
- * We care for the White Oak School property by keeping it litter free
And by cleaning up after ourselves.
- * We care about our bodies: NO smoking, alcohol, or drugs.
- * We care for others by keeping our hands and feet to ourselves. We do not hit, kick, push, or play rough.

HONESTY

- * We try our best to always tell the truth.
- * We treat each other fairly.
- * We are honest with ourselves, and ask for help when we need it.
- * We try to "do the right thing" without being asked or told.

RESPECT

- * We listen to our counselors and other staff members.
- * We follow directions the first time given when asked to do something.
- * We speak to each other nicely and with respect.
- * We ask before touching or taking someone else's belongings.

RESPONSIBILITY

- * We come to camp prepared by bringing what we need.
- * We leave unnecessary items at home when we come to camp.
- * We only talk about appropriate topics and use appropriate language.
- * We stay with our groups where our counselors can see us and know where we are at all times.
- * We ask permission if we need to leave the group for any reason.

Morris YMCA Day CAMP DONATION WISH LIST: Many parents ask if there are any items that they can donate for campers to use throughout the summer. We are always willing to accept donations. We have included a list of some of the most sought after items this summer. Feel free to drop them off with any Camp Staff.

- * Children's Board Games (with all the pieces)
- * Puzzles
- * Fabric, Yarn, Ribbon
- * Gently used sports equipment
- * Crayons, Markers, Colored Pencils, Chalk
- * Buttons, Beads
- * Cotton balls, Cotton swabs
- * Rubbermaid Plastic Bottles
- * Straws
- * Newspaper
- * Plastic Bottles
- * Construction paper, White paper, Lined paper
- * Baby Food Jars
- * Old Greeting cards, Playing cards
- * Paper Towel Rolls
- * Glue/Glue sticks
- * Old Keys, Silverware
- * Magazines (Kid Friendly please!)
- * Styrofoam (pieces, plates)
- * Tape (masking, scotch, packing, duct...)
- * Wood Scraps
- * Used hand tools (hammers, nails, screws)
- * Table Cloths (plastic or cloth)

Thank you! We appreciate your generosity.

