



YMCA CAMP MAHACKENO

2017 Parent Handbook



Please read and save all information

Westport Weston Family YMCA
Mahackeno Outdoor Center
14 Allen Raymond Lane
Westport, CT 06880
203-226-8981
Fax: 203-226-2607

Welcome to Camp Mahackeno 2017

For over 70 years, YMCA Camp Mahackeno has provided a fun environment for our campers to grow, be safe and have fun. Our program is designed to give each camper the opportunity to try something new, meet new friends and spend time enjoying our 32-acre property along the banks of the Saugatuck River and adjacent to our beautiful new YMCA facility. In order to make sure your camper is best prepared for camp, please read the following information and policies. If you have any questions, please contact the camp for further explanation and information. Together we can make this a great summer for our kids.

REGISTERING FOR CAMP

We are happy your camper will be joining us this summer. It is important to meet all the steps of the registration process to make sure your camper is ready to go at the start of this summer.

Forms required to attend camp:

- Camp registration, completed on both sides and signed
- Camper Pick up form, completed and signed
- Parent health form, completed and signed
- Copy of a physical less than 2 years old that includes dates of last physical, results and vaccinations history.
- Medication Authorization form for any medications coming to camp.

All the necessary forms are available on our website, westporty.org, or at the Bedford Family Center.

Forms can be submitted the following ways:

- Scanned and emailed to Mahackeno@westporty.org
- Mailed to 14 Allen Raymond Lane, Westport, CT 06880
- Dropped off in person at the Bedford Family Center
- Faxed to 203-226-2607 (please call to confirm receipt).

All fees must be paid in full prior to the start of camp or the child may not be allowed to attend.

REFUNDS

- Refunds for camp fees are granted ONLY for a child's illness or injury which takes him/her out of the camp session. Medical requests from your physician must be in writing.
- Refunds requested before May 1, 2017 will be refunded minus \$75 per session.
- Refund or credit requests will NOT be accepted after May 1, 2017.

GENERAL POLICIES

- There is a \$25 late fee for any past due account.
- Failure to remit full payment by the due date will result in an inability to attend camp.
- Incomplete registration forms will not be processed. All registrations must include a current physical, the parent health form and the pick up authorization form.
- We cannot assist with arranging play-dates, carpooling, or babysitting. We will not give out the contact information for other campers or parents.
- The Westport Weston Family YMCA does not provide health or accident insurance. The parent/guardian assumes total liability for all charges incurred for medical treatment or property damage.
- If excessive behavior/disciplinary problems occur, we reserve the right to terminate placement.
- All policies apply to Leaders/Counselors in Training as they are campers.
- Anyone who is going to be picking up your child from camp must be listed on the pick up authorization form. You may add an individual by emailing the camp prior to that day's pick up. Everyone who is picking up must provide a photo ID each day.
- The first aider or director reserve the right to send a camper home in case of illness or injury.
- If your camper is ill and must go home, parents will be contacted by phone. Parents must immediately pick up the child or make arrangements for emergency contact to pick up.
- If your camper is having a problem at camp, we ask that you inform your camper's Unit Director of the situation as soon as possible so that we may be more effective in providing a solution.
- Positive and honest communication between the parents and camp staff is important. If your child has limitations or behavioral challenges, the more we know the more we can make their summer successful. Failure to inform the camp of these situations at the time of registration will affect their participation and experience at camp.

CAMPERS CODE OF CONDUCT

The Westport Weston Family YMCA promotes character development. Campers and Parents are expected to abide by the Camp Mahackeno rules and policies. Guardian signature on the registration form acknowledges the agreement to follow these policies.

- Show respect to other campers, staff and property at all times. Swearing, fighting and/or disrespectful behaviors are not permitted.
- Be accepting of others to join in any activity.
- Listening to instruction from camp staff.
- Be a good sport whether you win or lose and stand up for the rights and wellbeing of others.
- Leave items such as electronics, sports equipment, pets and other things of value at home. The Westport Weston Family YMCA will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables.
- Do not bring or use non prescribed drugs, alcohol, tobacco products or weapons to camp. These are strictly forbidden at all times. Violation is cause for immediate dismissal from any Family YMCA program.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Staff will work with children to correct behavior problems. This may include talking about the behavior, mediating conflicts between campers, giving time outs or limiting camp activities that the child may participate in. If behavior continues, the punishments may increase to suspension from camp or termination of their time at camp. Camp staff will contact parents to let them know if bad behavior is progression to a point where suspension may be warranted.

There are some behaviors that may lead to a child being suspended or expelled from camp without notice. These can include behaviors such as hitting, fighting, running away from the group or showing extreme disrespect to other campers, staff, camp property or to themselves. If we do call home to have a child picked up, we do require that it happen as soon as possible. A delayed pick up may result in suspension from the next day.

TERMINATION OF CAMPERSHIP

Camper's attendance will be terminated if a camper engages in vandalism, theft, or unnecessary roughness, uses obscene or threatening language, or acts in an abusive or intimidating manner to other campers or staff including cyber-bullying. Staff are responsible for enforcing the Camper Code of Conduct. Refunds are not given for suspension or termination.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH CAMP

We realize that parents will have lots of questions about camp and we want to do our best to have good communication with you. If you have questions or concerns about camp, please let us know. Phone 203-226-8981 or email us at Mahackeo@westport.org. We will try to respond to you as soon as the camp day allows. Camp will also be sending out email newsletters, so please be sure camp has your correct email address so you can be included in these emails.

If you send a note into camp, please be sure to include your child's name and group number, the date of the note and clearly explain what you need so that we can be sure to respond correctly.

The Camp Phone number is (203) 226-2565. If you are trying to reach camp and are unable to get through, you may leave a message or call the main desk at the main building at 203-226-8981. The Bedford Family Center will relay messages to camp through cell phones. The main branch can not give out a staff member's cell-phone number.

FIELD TRIPS & BUS SAFETY AT CAMP

When the Ranger Unit is off the property, they are expected to return by 4:00 pm. In the event of a delayed return, the parents of any Ranger camper will be notified. Siblings of Rangers must be picked up at the normal time. If your child is using a camp bus for a field trip, please remind them to follow the camp bus rules including to stay seated at all times and to listen to the staff. Bus drivers are YMCA employees. We will also have a second staff member on the bus at all times.

CAMP EVALUATIONS

Each session you will receive a camp evaluation. This tool allows us to see how we are doing. It is a chance for you to tell us what we are doing well and how we can improve. Please take the time to complete these evaluations when they come to you.

FAMILY NIGHT

Family Night is a chance for campers to show off camp to their families. Parents are able to see camp, participate in some fun activities and meet the staff. We will notify parents for the date for Family Night.

SPECIAL EVENTS WEEK

Special Events Week is the last week of camp before school starts. Enrollment is limited so sign up early if you are interested. The day follows the same drop off and pick up schedule as a typical day of camp. Each day of Special Events Week campers will participate in some popular camp activities and try our some new ones specific to SEW.

RAINY DAYS

The Mahackeno Outdoor Center is a traditional outdoor day camp; indoor facilities are limited. In the event of rainy days, the schedules and activities for all campers are modified to include indoor games, craft projects, talent shows and skits. We ask that you pack a jacket with your camper on days when rain is expected. We make every effort to keep to our regular schedule and only go to the Dew Day schedule in case of severe weather. Campers will only be moved to the Bedford Family Center in the instance of extreme weather.

CAMPER DROP OFF

All campers must be dropped off at the Allen Raymond Lane entrance to our Mahackeno campus between 8:30 am and 9:00am. Please follow signage to the drop-off area, which is in the southeast corner of the parking lot at the camp access by the "Welcome" sign. Camp Assembly begins at 9:00 am.

During drop off, there will be a line of cars. Please be patient and remain in line for the safety of the children. Camp staff will direct you to pull your car up and will come to your car to help children out. If you have a question for a staff member or director, please park your car and walk up to drop off. Once we begin emptying cars there is no time for conversations in the drop off line.

CAMPER PICK UP

NOTE: OUR CAMP HAS TWO DISMISSAL TIMES, 3:15 AND 3:45 PM:

All Abenacki, Shawnee and Mohegan campers are dismissed at 3:15 pm. Any camper who has a sibling in an older camp unit will be with staff while they wait for the 3:45 pm dismissal. Younger siblings waiting for their older siblings will be supervised until pick up.

All Lakota, Cayuga, Apache, Rangers, LITs and CITs are dismissed at 3:45pm. If your camper is not dismissed until 3:45 pm, please do not arrive at Mahackeno early. This will only block traffic for the 3:45 pm dismissal and slow down the whole dismissal procedure. You will not be able to enter the pick up line if it is not your designated time. Camp staff will direct you through the pick up line. Pick up takes place in front of the YMCA building, but the pick up line loops through the parking lot.

RELEASE OF CAMPERS

Anyone picking up the child must have their photo ID on them and must be on the pick up authorization form. Please be patient during the pick up process. When everyone works together we will keep the line moving and our campers safe.

LATE PICK UP

There is fee for arriving late to pick up your camper: \$25 for each 15-minute increment. Emergency contacts will be called after 15 minutes. Per State licensing regulations, if no one is available for pick up the Westport Police Department will be contacted.

PRE CARE AND POST CARE PROGRAMS

Pre Care and Post Care are extended hours of camp. Drop off for Pre Care is after 7:30 am. Pick up for Post Care is before 6:00 pm. There is an additional fee for this service. During Pre Care, campers participate in quiet activities. During Post Care, campers will have an opportunity to swim again and to play games.

ARRIVING LATE/LEAVING EARLY

Please make every attempt to have your child to camp on time and to schedule pick up at the normal time. A late arrival or early pick up will likely result in your child not being able to participate in an activity. For example, if you are picking up or dropping off during swimming, your child will likely not get to participate.

Please contact the camp in the morning if you are picking up early. Please request to have your child 15 minutes prior to when you must be leaving camp. This gives us time to collect their things and have them ready for you. Also, please be patient if your child is running behind. Early pick ups can be disruptive to the camp schedule and sometimes we can't meet the desired time for a variety of reasons. If you are dropping off late, please call the camp and let us know when you plan to arrive. Bring your child straight to Beck Lodge on our camp property to check in with a staff member. Parents may not walk around camp unaccompanied.

A TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP

Each group at camp follows a similar time schedule but has a different set of activities each day. On Fridays, there is a special event in the afternoon that takes up the two last activity periods. The camp schedule is:

7:30-8:30 Pre care

8:30-9:00 Drop Off

9:00-9:25 LOGS

9:25-10:10 1st Period

10:15-11:00 2nd Period

11:05-11:50 3rd Period

11:55-12:25 Lunch

12:30-1:10 4th Period

1:15-2:00 5th Period

2:05-2:40 6th Period

2:45-3:15 Snack

3:00-3:30 LOGS

3:10-3:30 Dismissal for Grades K-3

3:30-4:00 Dismissal for Grades 4-10

MAHACKENO SWIMMING/CANOEING PROGRAM

All campers swim in our six-lane outdoor pool. On the first day of each session campers take a swim test and are grouped with other campers according to ability. Swim lessons are Monday- Thursday with free swim on Fridays. This schedule may be adapted if needed during the summer. All staff and campers are required to wear a personal flotation device. Counselors receive training in teaching paddling skills.

Health/Medication Policy

Each camper must provide a copy of a current physical that is no more than 2 years old at the time they register. Registrations will not be completed until health forms are submitted. We do accept a copy of the school health form, but also require parents to complete the parent side of the camp physical as well. Children may not attend Camp without this form being submitted.

Minor injuries or illnesses will be treated at camp and may not warrant a phone call home. The Westport Weston Family YMCA reserves the right to temporarily deny any child admittance to the program for reasons of obvious illness, or to request early departure should symptoms become apparent during the course of the day. When a child becomes ill during the day, we will allow him/her to rest quietly, away from the other children. Families will be contacted immediately to arrange for the child to go home. If families cannot be reached or are unable to pick up their child, the listed emergency contacts will be called. Children diagnosed as having a contagious disease must remain at home until all danger of contagion has passed. The Family YMCA will not administer medications (Tylenol, Benadryl or prescription). The parent/guardian must administer all medication.

If your child requires emergency medication (Benadryl, epi pen, inhaler or Auvi-Q), you must provide the camp with a completed Medication Authorization form that is signed by the physician. We require a form for each type of medication coming into camp. All medications must have the correct dosage amount and delivery method (pill vs. liquid) listed on the form, may not be expired and must come in the original container with the pharmacy label. No medication will be accepted without the authorization form.

Emergency Policy

In the event of an emergency, the camp staff will decide how to best treat the child or respond to the situation. Our response to the emergency will be the priority for our staff. We will contact parents at the first possible moment as long as it doesn't interfere with treatment of the child or emergency.

If family cannot be reached, we are authorized by your signature on the health form to secure appropriate medical attention from your child's physician or our consulting pediatrician. Treatment may also be provided by Westport EMS. Should your child's condition warrant further action, we will utilize 911; an ambulance will transport your child to the nearest hospital (Norwalk Hospital). In the event of a medical emergency, our staff may call 911 prior to your arrival. That decision will be made by our staff and transporting your child to the hospital will be decided by the staff and paramedics.

SUNSCREEN/INSECT REPELLENT

Please have your camper's sunscreen clearly marked with their name. Please make sure you check the box on your child's health form allowing a staff member to apply sunblock. Bug spray should be applied at home and should not come into camp.

LUNCH/SNACK

Please send your child's lunch in a soft-sided bag clearly marked with name and group #. If you are not sure your child will remember to bring their lunch bag home, send a disposable one. We refrigerate each camper's lunch. Campers should also have a snack in their bag that does not require refrigeration. During snack time campers will be allowed to purchase ice pops or other small snacks at the camp store. We are a nut-free facility. So please ensure that all lunches and snacks are nut-free. If you send in a peanut substitute (sun butter, wow butter, etc) please send in a note letting us know that.

THINGS TO WEAR AND BRING TO CAMP

Please be sure that your child comes to camp in appropriate clothing for outdoor activities. Please make sure your child wears closed toed sneakers to camp. Sandals, flip flops or crocks may lead to injury and inability to participate in some activities. Other items that are brought to camp:

- Towels
- One piece-bathing suit
- Sun Block
- Weather appropriate clothing
- Water bottle
- Lunch with snack

Make sure all items are clearly marked with your child's name so that we can return lost items.

LOST AND FOUND

We accumulate a large quantity of lost and found items each day. Please help us by labeling any item that your child wears or brings to camp with his/her full name. Please do not send video games, large amounts of money, iPods, cell phones or other expensive items to camp with your child. Mahackeno cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. All lost and found items will be available daily at Beck Lodge. Campers are not allowed to have cell phones at camp; they will be confiscated.

CAMP STORE

Each day during snack time, campers will have a chance to buy ice pops or other small snacks at the camp store. Campers are responsible for their money and camp is not responsible if it is lost. Campers should not bring more than \$1.00 a day.

GOALS THAT MAKE THE MISSION HAPPEN

- Encourage the development of physical skills through participation in a variety of active programs.
 - * Measured through seeing campers progress in swim lessons and the development of other skills.
- Encourage and teach positive Character Development with a focus on the four core values of the YMCA: Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.
 - * Measured through comments in parent surveys and seeing social development in the campers and their relations with each other.
- Promote feelings of self-confidence and self-worth through participation in group activities where campers leave camp with a greater respect for others and respect for self.
 - * Measured through comments in parent surveys as well as staff recognition of camper improvement of self-confidence.
- Teach and model an appreciation for the natural beauty of the outdoor world and teach the need to work toward its preservation through programs that develop knowledge of respect for our environment. Campers leave camp with a sense of their role in preserving the environment.
 - * Measured through behaviors of campers toward camp and the preservation of camp space.
- Develop skills such as persistence, determination and good judgment through progressive learning systems such as swimming, archery and canoeing.
 - * Measured through comments in parent survey as well as staff recognition of camper improvement.
- Develop leadership and life skills in each of our campers by providing programs that nurture and explore each camper's personal growth.
 - * Measured through comments in parent survey and staff recognition of camper improvement and growth.

SPECIAL CARES PROGRAM

YMCA Camp Mahackeno offers our Special Cares program to children who require a 1:1 aide for camp. The counselors who serve as a 1:1 aide will assist children in navigating the camp day. Counselors will help with transitions, changing, participating in activities and making their way around the facility. The aides that we provide are typical camp staff and are not trained professionals in the special needs field. Please contact the Camp Director, Meg George, to talk about whether or not Mahackeno would be a good fit for your child.

CAMP STAFF

Many of our camp staff have grown up in Mahackeno and are enthusiastic about sharing our traditions. Camp staff are selected because of their experience working with children and the skills and interests they can share with our camp community. Throughout the summer your child may find a staff member that they enjoy a great deal. We are happy that these relationships are built, but we do not allow our staff to babysit for families they meet at camp. Please respect that camp staff are asked not to have private communications with campers and parents outside of camp. This includes emailing, texting and Facebook.

CAMP IS FOR EVERYONE

Camp Mahackeno is part of the Westport Weston Family YMCA. Each year the YMCA raises funds through our Annual Campaign to help families in need participate in all the things the YMCA has to offer, including sending children to camp. If you know a family who you think could benefit from camp but may not be able to afford it, please feel free to contact us. Also, if you would like to help others experience camp, please contact us to contribute to this campaign. To donate, please contact Meg George at mgeorge@westportymca.org.