



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# 2024

# DAY CAMP FAMILY HANDBOOK

The Steele Creek YMCA has two community partner sites offering youth programs during the summer season. Please review your registration and pre-camp email to confirm the location you should attend.

**9401 S TRYON , CHARLOTTE NC 28273**

At Central Steele Creek Presbyterian Church

**13501 S TRYON, CHARLOTTE NC 28278**

At Christ the King Church

## **WELCOME**

The YMCA is the nation's leader in camping, offering outdoor programming for over 100 years. The YMCA of Greater Charlotte serves over 19,000 children in day camp programs each summer and we are excited to have your camper experience what the YMCA has to offer. This year you have the opportunity to be a part of the Steele Creek YMCA day camp experience. You are in for a fun-filled, exciting summer.

## **BRIEF CAMP DESCRIPTION**

The YMCA Day Camp has two community partner sites where we run programs. Please review your registration and pre-camp email to confirm the location you should attend. Programs at both sites include Preschool, Traditional Day Camp, Leaders in Training (LIT), and Specialty Camps. This YMCA program is a small community camp that is ideal for campers to achieve their greatest potential in a small, but growing, setting.

At Steele Creek YMCA, our goal is to provide a safe, fun and educational environment for campers to experience outdoor adventures and grow physically, mentally and spiritually so that they may achieve their greatest potential. Our focus at day camp is to encourage campers to demonstrate five key character traits: Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Faith. Keeping our mission and purpose in the forefront allows us to reach our goal of building strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

## **REGISTRATION**

Camp registration begins at the end of January 2024. Registration and payment will take place at the Steele Creek YMCA Branch 2135-A Ayrslay Town Blvd Charlotte, NC 28273. Not the Youth Program Center or either Church location.

## **COMMITMENT TO QUALITY**

The Steele Creek YMCA is a professional organization that sets camping standards in the areas of facilities, programs, health and safety, administration and staffing through our Quality Standards. The purposes of these requirements are to ensure that your camper will have a safe, quality and varied camping experience. By putting our day camp programs through this process, we confirm our commitment to unique and quality programs at the Steele Creek YMCA.

## **STAFFING**

The Steele Creek YMCA is committed first and foremost to the safety of your child. A YMCA professional supervises all day camp staff. Counselors are recruited through local churches, leadership organizations and from high schools and area colleges. We place a serious emphasis on safety standards by offering a remarkable counselor to camper ratio and requiring our counselors to complete 40 hours of pre-camp training, including CPR, First Aid, AED and Child Abuse Prevention along with specific training in the areas of working with children, discipline, group dynamics and programming. All YMCA staff complete background checks and drug screenings prior to hiring. We take pride in the high expectations we set for our summer camp staff each year and evaluate them on a regular basis.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte recognizes that individuals, families, and communities are diverse. The Steele Creek YMCA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The YMCA reaffirms its commitment to equality of opportunity and pledges that it will not practice or permit discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

The YMCA strives to:

1. Welcome all individuals in its programs and facilities.
2. Develop programs that respond to the needs of its membership, participants and community.
3. Work to provide hiring and employment practices that is unbiased.
4. Hiring and maintaining diverse staff and volunteers.

5. Use resources to maintain a safe environment without discrimination to harassment against individuals.

The Day Camp Program is not licensed by the State Department of Child Development. The YMCA of Greater Charlotte Day Camp Programs adheres to the YMCA quality standards.



### **PAYMENT PROCEDURES:**

Please refer to the registration packet for Information on the following topics:

- > Registration Deposits
- > Cancellations/ Refunds
- > Late Registration
- > Registration Changes (Transfers)

### **PAYMENT DUE DATES**

Any balance due for each session must be paid in full before the camper can attend the session. **There will be no exceptions.** All payments/balances for camp registration must be made by the following payment schedule:

<b>Session</b>	<b>Camp Week</b>	<b>Payment due on or before</b>	<b>Registration cancel by</b>
A	June 3-7	5/27	5/27
1	June 10-14	6/3	6/3
2	June 17-21	6/10	6/10
3	June 24-28	6/17	6/17
4	July 1-3 & 5	6/26	6/26
5	July 8-12	7/1	7/1
6	July 15-19	7/8	7/8
7	July 22-26	7/15	7/15
8	July 29-August 2	7/22	7/22
9	August 5-9	7/29	7/29
10	August 12-16	8/5	8/5
11	August 19-21	8/12	8/12

### **CANCELLATION POLICY**

- Cancellations or requests for transfers must be received 7 days prior to the start of the requested camp week to qualify for a refund or transfer of money.
- Cancellations not received by the designated day will result in a forfeiture of all deposits and fees paid towards that camp week. Payments that have not been made will still be collected.
- Camp weeks that have not been paid in full will be cancelled 7 days prior to the start of the camp and will not receive a refund or transfer of funds.

## FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS/ASSISTANCE

Financial scholarships are available based on household income. The YMCA's rate structure designed to help us fulfill our mission to serve all by being affordable, logical and relevant.

In order to verify your annual income we will need to review your current tax return: 1040 line 22 or 1040 EZ line 4. If you did not file taxes last year, please call 1-800-829-1040 to receive a free statement of non-filing. If your current income does not reflect 2019/2020 1040, please provide your 1040 along with documents that support change in income (ex. Two current pay stubs from new job, unemployment documentation, divorce documentation, job separation, etc).

## RETURNED CHECK CHARGES

There will be a \$25.00 charge for any check returned to the Steele Creek YMCA. After two returned checks, we will accept money orders only. Outstanding balances resulting from uncollected returned checks must be rectified before the child may enroll or attend any YMCA program.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

Going to summer camp is a very exciting experience for campers and parents. It is very natural for everyone to be anxious about the first day of camp and meeting new friends. Hopefully, the following information will familiarize everyone with camp procedures and minimize "first-day" anxiety. The Steele Creek YMCA Day Camp has well-trained staff that are focused on meeting the needs of individual campers and are committed to serving as excellent role models.

### Suggestions from "experienced" parent:

- > Dress for the weather. **The camp day will continue rain or shine.**
- > Campers are very active during camp. Therefore, have your camper **wear "play clothes"** that can get dirty.
- > Your camper will probably come home tired and may need additional rest after a day of high energy activities.
- > **Label all items** with camper's name including: swimsuits, towels, water bottles and backpacks.
- > Please don't send valuable clothing or valuable items to camp
- > Make sure all your forms and payments are completed the week prior to attending camp. This will save time at check-in. Include camper's name/and week paying for on all checks.

## DAILY PROGRAM

It is important to us that your child has a wonderful "first", "second" ...or "seventh" camp experience. Therefore, our goal is to create an atmosphere of trust and friendship so that each camper will feel happy and confident at camp. Campers' activities include but are not limited to: devotion, assemblies, swimming, skits/stories, arts & crafts, fitness activities, archery, field trips, sports, games & relays, and character development.

We take special care of campers. The program is progressively structured to challenge children according to their age. Campers stay with their counselor throughout the entire day. However, YMCA lifeguards as well as day camp counselors supervise swim instruction. The program is planned to give children an introduction to a wide variety of camp activities, along with providing them the opportunity for creative expression.

## DAY CAMP SCHEDULE

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Drop Off (Rides In) and Supervised Activities
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Opening camp assembly (Day Camp Only)
9:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Morning snack/ bathroom break
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Group activities
12:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Lunch/bathroom breaks
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Group activities
3:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Afternoon Snack/ rides out prep
3:30 PM – 4:00PM	Closing assembly (Day Camp Only)
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM	Pick Up (Rides Out) and Supervised Activities



Our program is designed to provide a variety of activities throughout each day. Each day is consistently programmed to ensure special care to all campers.

## CAMP GROUPS

Trekkers: rising K  
Pathfinders: Rising 1<sup>st</sup> grade  
Discoverers: 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and rising 3<sup>rd</sup> grade  
Navigators: rising 4<sup>th</sup> grade and rising 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
Trailblazers: rising 6<sup>th</sup> and rising 7<sup>th</sup> grade  
Teens: rising 7<sup>th</sup> grade through rising 10<sup>th</sup> grade  
L.I.T.: rising 7<sup>th</sup> grade through rising 10<sup>th</sup> grade

You will receive a weekly newsletter every Wednesday prior to the start week, informing what group your child will be in. Groups are created based on grade level. Sometimes birthdays are taken into consideration when moving anyone to another group.

## SWIMMING

Swimming and splashing around are a great part of summer camp. Due to Covid-19, we are still trying to find a suitable facility for pool use. At minimum, each group will have an on-site water activity each day. If an off-site pool can be used, campers will be transported off-site one day a week for swimming at a partner YMCA facility.

## SWIM TEST

Safety is our top priority at the pool. Prior to entry into the pool all swimmers 12 years and younger will have their swimming ability tested and will be placed into one of three swimming categories designated by Green Band, Yellow Band, or Lifejacket. This test can be done during parent orientation or during camp. Swim tests are conducted on Wednesdays during the student's regular swim time. There are three levels of swim test:

**Non Swimmers** – 12 year and younger who cannot demonstrate the Green or Yellow Band skills will be required to wear a lifejacket.

**Yellow Band** – Float horizontal on the back and front and regain a vertical position. Swim unassisted 15 feet , without rest.

**Green Band** – Complete skills for the yellow band and swim 25 yards unassisted and without resting while maintaining a positive body position. Swimmer jumps into water over his/her head and easily returns to the surface. Tread water one minute.



Swimmers will receive a swim band before they enter the pool. Any swimmer that is seems to have difficulty after receiving a yellow or green band, may be retested.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Camp leadership staff will be available at this time with rosters to sign your child in and a runner will be there to take your child to their group. Campers must be “signed in” to the program each morning and “signed out” of the program in the afternoon every day. We cannot and will not permit children to leave camp on their own. For the safety of your child, participants will only be released to the legal guardian or responsible adult listed on the camper’s registration form (authorized pick up). **Every adult must present a photo ID at rides out.** In the event that a child will be picked up by an adult not listed on the registration form, a parent note (including the person’s name as it appears on their photo ID) is required and photo ID must be shown during rides out. Help us speed up the rides out process by having our ID ready.

## ABSENTEE POLICY

If for some reason you know, in advance, days your child will not be attending camp please inform the Director. Refunds will not be issued for the day(s) missed

## CUSTODY ISSUES

In cases of separated or divorced parents, where visitation rights are denied to one parent, we cannot deny releasing the child to such parent unless a court decree or separation document is in our file expressly forbidding each parent from picking up the child from our program, or from picking up at times not allowed by the court decree. The court decree must also be specific to the rights of visitation on the YMCA/Camp Property during camp hours. The court document must specify in writing that visitation is permitted by the non-custodial parent.

**Otherwise, visitation is NOT PERMITTED.**

## INTOXICATION

Your child's safety is our priority. At times we are called to make judgments concerning their safety. If a YMCA staff member believes that a parent is intoxicated when they arrive to pick-up their child, we will detain the child until an alternate plan can be arranged for the transportation of the child and their parent. We will first try to contact another family member or spouse; then one of the emergency contacts listed on the child's registration form.

## LATE PICK-UP/FAILURE TO PICK UP

Staff are scheduled until 6PM. However, staff will not leave a camper unattended. We realize on some occasions late pick-up will occur. We ask that you please call and report if you see that you will be late. The late fee will be dropped for excusable circumstances. These circumstances will be determined by the camp staff or Program Director. Chronic late pick-up may be grounds for extra fees and/or dismissal from the program. In the event that you or someone fails to pick up your child, the following will happen:

1. All phone numbers we have on file for your child will be called.
2. If no contact can be made at those numbers, we will continually assure the child that everything is ok. Your child will never be left alone with only one YMCA staff person in attendance.
3. We will notify the Program Director and call the Branch Executive to determine the appropriate next steps, which may include calling police and/or social services.

## WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP

### MEALS

During the summer we partner with CMS schools for their summer lunch and breakfast program. Campers in programs aged above 5 years old will be able to receive lunch and breakfast for FREE through the CMS summer lunch Program. Preschool campers will need to bring their own snack and lunch per program they sign up for.

If you choose to pack a nutritious lunch for your camper, include a healthy drink. Camp does not have refrigeration for lunches. Please do not send milk or mayonnaise based products. A small cooler with the camper's name works best for packing lunches and drinks. A water bottle is recommended. Also, hydrating drinks are recommended instead of carbonated drinks. Please do not send microwavable items. **Please note:** Camp does provide water during lunch for all campers.

### SNACK

Each day there will be two snack periods. One will be in the morning and one in the afternoon. Please remember to pack a snack (one healthy drink, one healthy snack item) for each snack time. Please send all items in a lunchbox or small cooler with ice packs. The Steele Creek YMCA **will not** provide a snack for campers.

### CLOTHING

Please dress your child appropriately. You should take into consideration the weather forecast and the camp activities. Campers must wear play clothes to camp and tennis shoes as your camper will be participating in outdoor activities. Campers should also bring a swimsuit and towel each day. In addition, for safety reasons, sandals are not permitted at camp.

### BATHING SUITS

Please send a bathing suit and towel with your child every day. Each camp day will include either swimming and/or water activities. You may send goggles with your child as well, however the YMCA will provide all flotation gear. Please remember to label all items.

### SUNSCREEN

Since kids spend majority of the time outdoors, we are committed to keeping your child safe from the sun. To help prevent sunburn, it is recommended that parents apply sunscreen prior to arriving at camp. Our day camp spends a large amount of time in outdoor activities. Please apply 8-hour sunscreen that will last all day, before arriving at camp each day. In addition, parents should provide campers with sunscreen to keep with them throughout the day. This can be sent in a zip lock bag labeled and given to the counselor or camp director. As needed, staff will aid children in applying sunscreen.

### WHAT NOT TO BRING

Camp is a natural setting to retreat from the amenities of electronic technology and get more in touch with peers. Toys, radios, electronic games, cellular phones, and iPods do not fit into this setting. Please leave these items at home. In addition please leave firearms, fireworks, knives, matches, lighters, tobacco products, expensive items, illegal drugs, money, trading cards and bad attitudes at home.

### LOST AND FOUND

We will make every effort to return lost and found items while your camper is in camp. Your camper can do more than anyone else to insure that nothing is lost. Please mark all items with a permanent marker or laundry label for easy identification. If you discover something is missing please check lost and found immediately. Items found after your child's camp session will be donated to a local charity. The more time passes, the less likely it can be found. The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged clothing or equipment.



## MEDICATIONS

The Steele Creek YMCA Day Camp prefers that all medications be administered at home before the camp day. However, if medication needs to be administered, all prescription medication must be in the original container that identifies the prescribing physician, the name of the medication, the dosage, and the frequency of administration. All medication, including over the counter items (vitamins, creams, lotions, etc.) must be dispensed by the camp office. Check all medications in at the camp office on the first day of each session. Please make sure camper's name is on all items. Refrigeration will be provided if necessary. **DO NOT PACK MEDICATION IN BACKPACK, OR IN LUNCH.** Medication must be given directly to Leadership staff at drop-off along with the "Authorization to Administer Medication" form.

It is our policy for the camp office to keep camper's inhalers during camp. The office is always open, and inhalers can be obtained at a moments notice. However, if a parent requests in writing that the inhaler is kept with the camper, we will honor the request provided the camper can demonstrate responsibility for the use and possession of the inhaler. Any misuse or misplacement of the inhaler during the camp session will be cause for the inhaler to be kept at the camp office.

## INSURANCE

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte provides liability insurance on all its programs. It is the program participant's responsibility to provide his or her own accident insurance coverage. Parents / guardians include their personal Health Insurance information in the space provided on the Camper Health Form. This information will only be used to facilitate outside medical treatment if required. In the event of serious illness or accident, the parents will be notified at once. Parents / guardians are responsible for prescriptions and charges incurred for outside medical treatment of their child, should services be required while in attendance at camp.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

It is our sincere desire to provide quality care for your camper while they are participants at the Steele Creek YMCA. It is absolutely imperative that we work together to make this happen. Please be advised that staff will not exclude your camper from care unless one or more of the following exists:

1. The illness prevents the camper from participating comfortably in camp activities.
2. The illness results in greater care need than the counselor can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other campers.
3. The camper has any of the following conditions: **Fever, Signs of Possible Severe Illness: including lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing or other unusual signs – until medical evaluation allows inclusion, Uncontrolled Diarrhea - one or more watery stools in a 24 hr. period and Vomiting.**

If your camper has any of the symptoms listed above, or is removed from camp because of an above listed condition please refrain from returning to camp until condition discontinues (a minimum of 24 hours). This is in the best interest of all the campers in the program. Please assist us in our efforts to maintain a healthy environment for our children.

## SPECIAL EMOTIONAL / PHYSICAL NEEDS



Campers with special emotional or physical needs should be called to the attention of the Camp Director by fully describing any unique requirements of the camper at least two weeks prior to arrival. Please call Camp if you have questions regarding children with special needs. **We will make every reasonable accommodation possible to serve children with special needs.** However, some activities make it difficult to provide efficient care to some physically challenged campers. Please contact the Day Camp Director regarding special circumstances.



## **DISCIPLINE**

The philosophy of our program is based on the character traits of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and faith. All discipline will be modeled around these traits. Our discipline policy at the YMCA is to redirect inappropriate behavior to help the child make a decision that will benefit him or her and those surrounding them. It is our goal to help every child learn to make the right decision in every situation.

### **TYPE 1 BEHAVIOR:**

Type I behavior includes, but is not limited to; serious infractions such as damage or theft of property, assault, possessing weapons, tobacco or tobacco products, alcohol, narcotics or illegal drugs, gang-related activity, sexual misconduct, repeated Type II violations, and any conduct that may be detrimental to the best interests of the other members of the camp. Type I behavior can result in immediate dismissal from camp. Parents will be responsible for any transportation to return the camper home. No refunds will be issued.

### **TYPE II BEHAVIOR:**

Type II behavior is less serious, but disruptive and therefore unacceptable. This includes, but is not limited to: profanity, verbal abuse, keeping hands to themselves, staying with the group, uncooperative behavior, etc.... Campers who engage in Type II behavior will be told of their unacceptable behavior and asked to correct it. Further problems will result in a written reprimand with logical consequences, and viable alternatives for future behavior will be discussed. Continuing problems may result in a meeting with the Camp Director and the parent or camper will be removed from the program. No refunds will be issued if child is removed from the program.

Our goal is to guide children in becoming happy, responsible and cooperative participants through positive teaching techniques. In the event that behavior requires discipline:

- > Staff will not damage the camper's self-image or embarrass the child.
- > Staff will help campers learn self-control, choose alternatives, identify feelings and develop an understanding and respect for feelings of others.
- > Every effort will be made by staff to enlist the cooperation of the child and parents to solve problems. Issues that continue may result in removal from the camp.

## **WHAT'S GOING ON AT HOME**

Children's actions in camp often reflect situations they are experiencing at home (i.e pet's death, divorce, sibling conflict, etc.) If any disruptive or traumatic experience should occur, please inform the director or counselor. Please review the following regarding the YMCA's policy:

- YMCA Staff and volunteers are not allowed to transport children at any time outside of YMCA programs.
- Parents may not leave children at the YMCA or program site unsupervised.
- The YMCA is federally mandated reporter of any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.
- YMCA staff is not allowed to babysit any campers involved in any YMCA programming.
- Any traumatic experience from home that might reflect camper behavior should be reported Camp Director.

## **SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES**

In the event of severe weather such as thunderstorms or tornado warnings we will start to take immediate cover. The Camp Director along with the branch will stay alert for weather advisories issued over the radio.



Counselors are trained to handle severe weather conditions such as storms, tornadoes and heat conditions. During heat advisories, campers continue activities at a slower pace. We will adjust group schedules so that children will not be participating in field sports during the hottest part of the day. During ozone alerts of orange or red, most activities will take place indoors.

In the interest of the safety of the children in our Day Camp programs, the YMCA of Greater Charlotte reevaluated our transportation guidelines. It is the decision of the YMCA of Greater Charlotte that we will not operate vehicles on inclement weather days. This policy went into effect on January 1, 2004. While we understand this may cause some inconvenience for some families, we feel it is in the overall best interest of the children and staff to operate in this way.

## **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES COMMUNICATION**

Parents it is extremely important that we communicate as a team. **Any notices, flyers, newsletters, payment concerns or any updates will be sent via email.** On our website you will see a weekly photo gallery of all the happenings at camp that week. The website will hopefully become a resource for you as parents to see what is going on at camp.

## **EVALUATIONS**

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte uses an independent marketing firm to evaluate all of our programs. You may receive a call regarding your camping experience. We appreciate you taking the time to offer your feedback during this call. If you would like to offer feedback for your camping experience please contact [campstelecreek@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:campstelecreek@ymcacharlotte.org)



## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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