



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# BEST SUMMER EVER™



**YMCA of Greater Michiana  
Day Camps**

**Parent Handbook 2025**



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# WELCOME TO THE YMCA OF GREATER MICHIANA SUMMER DAY CAMP PROGRAM!

Dear Parents,

We are committed to providing your child with a safe, enriching summer experience that incorporates the YMCA core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Inclusion.

Camp is a fun place for your child to meet friends and learn new skills. Furthermore, at our Y you can also expect that your child will benefit by learning lifelong skills and building a stronger character. Through the week, campers will participate in a plethora of activities that teach our character values while being encouraged and recognized for demonstrating these values throughout their camp experience. Y character counts!

At the Y, it's vital that children are engaged in activities in which they are continuously learning and provided experiences that build self-esteem. Our summer camps include programs where children learn by hands on experiences, dramatic play and are physically active.

We know that the quality of your child's camp experience hinges on the excellence of our staff members. Because our staff team means so much to each of our campers, we focus on selecting, retaining and training the best Camp Leaders. Our staff members are engaging, energetic, fun and excited to spend each day of camp teaching your child.

**You have made a great investment in your child's future!**

YMCA Summer Camp Leadership





## MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

This parent handbook provides valuable information about your camper's activities, the Program's philosophy, policies, and general information about our program. You may refer any questions regarding this handbook to the Program Director at your chosen branch.

### YMCA MISSION STATEMENT

We put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

### PHILOSOPHY

YMCA day camp programs foster each child's cognitive, social-emotional and physical development through opportunities and experiences which focus on achievement, relationships and belonging. It is our belief that each camper is a unique individual with his or her own rate of development. Our goal is to introduce the campers to as many positive experiences as possible that will assist in the development of individuality in each camper and encourage an awareness of themselves and others.

The planning of each activity is offered in a physically and emotionally safe environment consistent with evidence-based principles of youth development. Each child is encouraged to develop at his or her own unique rate by encouraging skill development and leadership opportunities. Through the Y's day camp program, campers participate in fun and educational activities that help them with:

- **ACHIEVEMENT** – Learn and master skills that help them realize their passion, talents and potential
- **RELATIONSHIP** – Build friendships with new friends and staff adding to their well-being
- **BELONGING** – Help them feel like they belong so they feel safe, welcome and free to express their individuality

We are partners in your child's development. We aim to provide opportunities to strengthen the family unit and give the family and the YMCA the opportunity to work, play, learn and thrive together.

Finally, the YMCA collaborates with other organizations which are committed to serving the needs of all children and families. It's through these collaborations, a strong youth development focus and intentional program assessment that the Y delivers consistent quality programs.

## SPECIAL NEEDS

If a child has special needs, please contact the Y so that we can set up a time to talk before the child begins attending our program. We welcome all children at the Y, however, we do not have the capacity to provide one-on-one staffing support and attention. This meeting is designed to exchange information to make sure we can accommodate your child's needs within our staffing capabilities. We want to see that the family's needs and expectations are met. We encourage open dialogue about what works, and what doesn't, for your child.

## ENROLLMENT PROCESS & EXPECTATIONS

This information will help you understand the enrollment and payment processes. Payments are due every Thursday before the week of attendance.

- A \$10 late fee per child will be assessed to all payments received after due dates
- Cash payments are not accepted; payment options are credit card, check, money order, or credit card draft.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Y is firmly committed to access for all, regardless of family financial situations. The amount of financial assistance awarded each year is dependent on the amount of fundraising and donations received each year. Financial assistance is available for families who qualify. MDHHS funding applies to select camps: Gla-Da-Wen-Ta & Young Adventure.

Scholarship forms must be fully completed with all information included. Allow a minimum of three weeks for processing. All fees apply as normal until the application has been reviewed and approved. All scholarships are subject to availability of funds.

## DROP OFF & PICK UP

Parents will be required to sign their children out. For the safety of your child, campers will not be released to anyone whose name is not on the Child Information Record Form. Parents must send a note if someone not listed on this form will pick up your child. A photo I.D. will be required when picking up your child from camp.

**FOR SAFETY REASONS,** Children will not be dismissed early without written prior notification to the camp supervisor.

### What if I am late picking up my child?

We understand unavoidable situation may arise. If you find that you are going to be late, please call immediately to let us know so neither staff nor your child will worry.

After waiting for 15 minutes, staff will begin calling the child's emergency contact list for those allowed to pick up the child. If staff has waited an additional 30 minutes and you have made no contact, proper authorities will be called.

You will be required to pay an additional fee of \$10 for each 10-minute increment past closing time. Payment is to be made at pickup.

## HOURS OF OPERATION, HOLIDAYS, & UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

### Glad-Da-Wen-Ta

Monday-Friday  
9:00 AM-4:30 PM

### Young Adventure

Monday-Friday  
Half Day: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Full Day: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

### Summer My Way®

Monday-Friday  
9:00 AM-3:00 PM

YMCA day camp programs will be open Monday through Friday. Hours vary at each program. Pre- and post- care are available.

For more information, please check with the director of your camper's program.

### DAY CAMP PROGRAMS WILL BE CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS:

- Independence Day (July 4 & 5)

The program will make every attempt to remain open. However, it reserves the right to close based on licensing recommendations and the safety of the children in our program. In the event of severe weather, closings will be posted via email and the YMCA website ([www.ymcagm.org](http://www.ymcagm.org)). Tuition remains the same, regardless if the program closes for any unforeseen circumstances (severe weather, power outage, as examples).

## **\*MANDATORY\* SIGNING IN & OUT**

**Signing in and out is required by state licensing, and is also required for the purposes of financial assistance through DHS.**

All children must be signed in and out of program daily by a responsibly adult (18 years or older). The individual signing the child out of the program must be listed on registration information and be prepared to show identification. The child will not be released without written permission from the parent/guardian.

It is a good idea for the family to acknowledge a member of the YMCA Child Development staff, whether they are inside or out, so we can fully acknowledge your presence. This is helpful for our staff to physically see that the children are present as well as taking note from the attendance sheet.

## **DISMISSAL FROM CAMP PROGRAMS**

Families with the following unresolved issues may be dismissed from the program:

- Excessive tardiness in late pick-up fee payments or failure to pay fees
- Discipline problems that cannot be solved after repeated attempts
- Disrespect from parents toward staff or youth
- A child's behavior becomes detrimental to him/herself or others
- Repeated late pick-up

## **ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

Admission to this YMCA of Greater Michiana Program will be made available to children enrolled. Being a state licensed program, we are limited to allowing a certain number of enrollees. Parents will need to completely fill out of the Child Information Record Form to register their child.

Parents wishing to remove their child from the program may do so with a notice given to the site coordinator or the program director. On rare occasions, the program director may determine that a child be withdrawn from the program due to behavior concerns or other problems that are disruptive to the program. Partial refund determined by participation may be made if payments have already been made and the service is no longer needed or in use.

## **PAYMENT SCHEDULE AND FEES**

Parents will be informed of their tuition payments, and payment due dates upon enrollment. Tuition changes will occur only after a minimum of two weeks' notice has been given to parents.

## WHAT TO BRING

- Backpack or bag to keep your items in
- A water bottle (water will be provided)
- A lunch and snack **COLD LUNCH ONLY**
- Tennis shoes are required (please no sandals for safety reasons)
- Bathing suit and towel or a change of clothes (we will have daily water activities)
- Sunscreen/Bug Spray

**Please write your child's name on EVERYTHING.** Please keep valuable items at home. We are not at fault for lost or stolen items. Unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to local charities.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Campers should have their name on all belongings. Do not bring anything valuable to camp that could be lost or taken, including electronics and cards. All belongings are the responsibility of the camper and should be kept in a tote bag or backpack. Lost items will be displayed at pick-up time, check through these items periodically. We will not be responsible for lost or missing valuables brought to camp.

## SCREEN-FREE CAMP

Camp is a screen free and cell phone free zone. Cell phones, video games, iPods, etc., become disruptive to camp life and detract from camp experience. If a cell phone, iPod, DSi, etc., comes to camp it will be collected and placed in the supervisor's possession until pick up. Please contact the camp supervisor in cases of an emergency and you need to reach your child. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## MEALS

### Gla-Da-Wen-Ta

Please pack perishable items in an insulated lunch bag, cooler, or with a cold pack, as there are no refrigerators.

### Summer My Way®

Breakfast and lunch are provided for campers.

### Young Adventure

Snack provided.

## SUNSCREEN POLICY

Should our camper be required to use sunscreen while participating in the camp day, the following procedures **MUST** be followed in accordance to YMCA policies.

- Keep the sunscreen in the original container, labeled with your campers name
- Camp staff will remind campers to apply sunscreen multiple times a day
- Camp staff will apply sunscreen to campers under the age of nine years old. All campers that are older than nine years old will be permitted to apply their own sunscreen

# MEDICAL MATTERS

## Children\* should stay home if they:

1. Are feverish or have has a fever in the last 24 hours
2. Have a hacking cough or sore throat
3. Have vomited or had diarrhea in the last 24 hours
4. Have pink eye or symptoms which might be pink eye
5. Have been on antibiotics for strep or other contagious infections less than 24 hours
6. Are too "out of sorts" to participate in class activities

\*These standards apply for staff and volunteers as well

## Medicines

Prescription medication must be in the original container with the original label and current date attached.

If you wish for us to administer prescription or over-the-counter medicine, we must have a doctor's order on file that indicates the dosage, the frequency, the name of the medicine and the symptom. These orders are valid for one full year.

Medications must be signed in by the parent and the staff will complete the form upon administering the medication after a safety check is performed.

We must have a signed parent's note if a child should be kept indoors.

Condition for Exclusion	Condition for Returning
Axillary or ear temperature 100 degrees or greater	Fever free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication)
Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (such as unusual lethargy, uncontrollable coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs)	Until medical evaluation allows inclusion (doctor's written approval for return)
Abnormally loose, uncontrolled diarrhea, that is—increased number of stools, increased stool water, and/or decreased form that is not contained by a diaper	Diarrhea free for 24 hours
Vomiting	Vomit free for 24 hours and able to eat solid foods or until health care provider determines the illness to be noncommunicable, and the child is not in danger of dehydration
Red or blue in the face, or making high-pitched croupy or whooping sounds after coughing	Until health care provider or health official determines the condition is noninfectious
Unusual spots or rash with fever or behavior change	Until health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge)	Until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
Untreated scabies, head lice, or other infestation	After treatment and free of infestation, such as lice or nits
Known contagious diseases while still in the communicable stages	Until health care provider determines the condition is noncommunicable



## HAND WASHING

Children are to wash their hands upon entering a classroom, before and after meals, after toileting, before and after the use of sand, water or Play-Doh, and after wiping a nose, touching mouth, etc.

### THE STOP DISEASE METHOD OF WASHING HANDS:

1. Turn on water and wet hands
2. Soap for at least 20 seconds outside the stream of water (scrub backs of hands, wrists, between fingers and under fingernails)
3. Rinse
4. Towel dry (or place hands under electric hands-free dryer)
5. Turn off faucet with paper towel (if faucet is not hands-free)

## HOW TO PROPERLY WASH HANDS



### STEP 1

Wet hands



### STEP 2

Dispense soap



### STEP 3

Lather hands  
for 20 seconds



### STEP 4

Rinse hands



### STEP 5

Towel dry



### STEP 6

Turn water off  
with paper towel

## ZERO ABUSE POLICY

Our YMCA Promotes a safe environment that is free from abuse. No form of abuse will be tolerated. The YMCA of Greater Michiana will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of children, vulnerable adults, or any person on our premises, in any form: physical, neglect, emotional, or sexual. All allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to in accordance with our reporting procedures. Any instances of confirmed abuse will result in immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, volunteer engagement, or membership, and may also include reporting to the appropriate legal and reporting authorities, where necessary as mandated reporters. We will fully cooperate with authorities if allegations of abuse require investigation; staff and volunteers should also cooperate fully with any investigation of child or vulnerable adult abuse by assigned authorities. Refusal to cooperate can lead to termination of employment, expulsion from volunteering or membership services. Our YMCA and its staff will not retaliate against any staff, volunteer, participant or otherwise who makes a report or participates in an investigation of alleged child abuse.

If at any time you have concerns or questions we are trained and willing to support you and your family.

## ACCIDENT, INJURY, INCIDENT, AND ILLNESS REPORT

Any time there is an accident involving your child, whether it be a behavioral incident or physical incident, all occurrences will be documented. These documents are confidential, and are not to be discussed with other families. Our job is to protect all parties involved. When the center observes changes in a child's health, a child experiences accidents, injuries or incidents, or is too ill to remain in the group, parents will be notified via written report or phone call based on circumstance.

If it is a major incident, such as: head injury, broken bone, severe lacerations—parents will be notified immediately. If it is a minor incident, such as: stretch, bruise, bump—parents will receive a report upon pickup at the end of the day.

## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY DEVELOPMENT & DISCIPLINE

We want your child to enjoy the activities planned, and benefit from his/her experience. Staff will work with them to help them understand the rules and give clear definitions of acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

### Y Ties

We will be using our Y TIES Program to develop our children's social responsibility. This program allows the opportunity for students and staff to make living the Y character values tangible and collective. Children will be able to make individual pledges or goals, demonstrate their pledge, recognize their efforts and success, and reflect on their pledges and goals.

### Expectations

- Follow directions
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself

### Positive Reinforcement

- Praise
- Group rewards
- Special privileges
- Y Bucks

### Consequences

- Warning
- Activity restriction
- Behavior documented
- Parent notification
- Immediate call to parents for pick-up
- Suspension

**\*\*In severe incidences, the site director will determine appropriate consequences. We do not condone use of corporal punishment, making fun of, threatening or yelling at children, using profanity, or leaving student unsupervised. Fighting, hazing of peers and disrespect toward staff will not be tolerated.\*\***

## STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

All our staff at Camp are required to attend 21 hours of training. Most of this training is completed before hand and some throughout the course of summer camp.

Our comprehensive training and development program includes CPR/ First Aid, behavior management, conflict resolution, planning age-appropriate activities, and risk management. In addition to learning all the policies and procedures of the YMCA summer camp programs, they learn how important it is to remind campers to apply sunscreen throughout the day, how to do head counts, how to check children in and out, how the drop off and pick up operates. They explore techniques of how to better interact with children, build others self esteem and confidence, and become experts in sports, games, and arts and crafts.

Volunteers are required to go through screening and a background check. Please contact camp director for opportunities.

## PEST MANAGEMENT

As required per Licensing rules each classroom has an integrated pest management program and parents will be notified prior to the pesticide applications.

### YMCA OF GREATER MICHIANA NOTICE OF PESTICIDE USE

Pesticides are periodically applied to school district property as part of the district's pest management program. Please be advised that parents or guardians of children attending the school or day care center are entitled to receive the advance notice of a pesticide application, other than a bait or gel formulation, by first class United States mail postmarked at least 3 days before the pesticide application, if they so request. If you prefer to receive notification by first class mail, please obtain a form from your building principal.

Please understand that emergencies do arise and that pesticides may be applied without prior notice to parents or legal guardians. Parents or legal guardians that have requested prior notification, however, will be notified after pesticide application.

Application of pesticides will be performed only by certified or registered applicators where and when required. If a pesticide is applied in a building, students will not occupy the room for a minimum of four hours. Forty-eight hours prior to the time of application notification will be posted near the building's primary point of entry and in a common area of the building. When a pesticide is applied to school district grounds, the application will not be made within 100 feet of occupied classrooms, and flags will be inserted in the ground to mark the application area.

This notice was given in compliance with Regulation 637, as amended by Public Act 131 of 1993.

# GLA-DA-WEN-TA

Gla-Da-Wen-Ta is an 10-week camp held at our Benton Harbor-St. Joseph YMCA. Each week has an assigned theme to it where campers will have the opportunity to do many fun and exciting activities while interacting with their friends. Gla-Da-Wen-Ta offers a fun-filled field trip every week for their campers.

## Location

Benton Harbor-St. Joseph YMCA  
3665 Hollywood Road, St. Joseph, MI 49085

## Hours of Operation

Monday–Friday  
9:00 AM–4:30 PM

## Extended Care

Extended hours are an option for families who need care for their children before and after the camp day. Extended hours provide a supervised activity time for children of working parents. Available for specific YMCA camps. **Preregistration is required.**

**Pre-Care** 7:00–9:00 AM • \$45/week (member), \$55/week (community)

**Post-Care** 4:30–5:30 PM • \$35/week (member), \$45/week (community)

**Both** \$70/week (member), \$90/week (community)

## Field Trips

Weekly field trips will be divided into two age groups. Ages 8–12 will go on Tuesday and ages 5–7 will go on Thursdays.

## Registration

A non-refundable \$75 deposit is due at the time of registration for each week of camp. All remaining balances are drafted two weeks before the first day of camp.

## Financial Assistance

See page 5 for more information on financial assistance.

## Daily Schedule

Time	Activity
9:00–9:15 AM	Arrival/Check-In (at tent behind the Y)
9:15–9:30 AM	Daily Debrief/Counselor Time
9:30–10:15 AM	Rotation #1
10:15–11:00 AM	Rotation #2
11:00 AM–11:30 PM	Clean Up/Prepare for Lunch
11:30 AM–12:15 PM	Lunch
12:15–12:45 PM	Counselor Led Activity
12:45–1:00 PM	Head inside for Reading/Swim Time
1:00–2:00 PM	Groups 1,3,5,7: Swim Groups 2,4,6,8: Reading/Educational Activity
2:00–3:00 PM	Groups 1,3,5,7: Reading/Educational Activity Groups 2,4,6,8: Swim
3:00–4:00 PM	Large Group Activity/Rotation 3
4:00–4:30 PM	Clean Up/Dismissal

## Notes

- Hand sanitizer after reach rotation
- Hand washing before and after lunch
- Groups will be allowed to use restrooms during their rotations

# SUMMER MY WAY®

Thank you for choosing Summer My Way® Day Camp! Our goal is to provide every child with a fantastic camp experience. We strive to create opportunities for personal growth and new friendships while keeping physical and emotional safety a priority. At Summer My Way®, our staff will greet your child warmly with a smile at the start of their day. Students will be provided with breakfast, lunch and numerous activities to help them grow into healthy, productive and responsible people.

Please take time to carefully read through this parent handbook and the rest of your parent packet. This will inform you of any information that must be submitted to us before your camper attends camp and important camp information that you and your camper should know and understand.

## Locations

K-3rd grade	4th & 5th grade
Northside Child Development Center	Niles-Buchanan YMCA
2020 N. 5th St., Niles, MI 49120	905 N. Front St., Niles, MI 49120

## Hours of Operation

Monday–Friday  
9:00 AM–3:00 PM

## Summer My Way® Bussing

Niles Community Schools will provide bus transportation to and from Northside Elementary. You will be provided transportation information regarding bus pick-up/drop-off times & locations. Please note that there will not be supervision at these drop off locations for your child. Please contact First Student with any questions at 269-684-1420.

## Extended Care

Extended hours are an option for families who need supervised care for their children before and after the camp day. Preregistration is required.

**Pre Care** 7:00–9:00 AM • \$30 /week per child  
**Post Care** 3:00–5:30 PM • \$30 /week per child

## Financial Assistance

See page 5 for more information on financial assistance.

## Daily Schedule

Time	Activity
7:00–9:00 AM	Pre Care
9:00–9:15 AM	Breakfast
9:20–11:10 AM	Morning Tracks
11:30 AM–12:30 PM	Lunch & Recess
12:30–12:45 PM	Independent Reading
12:45–1:45 PM	1st Special
1:50–2:50 PM	2nd Special
3:00 PM	End of Day
3:00–5:30 PM	Post Care



# YOUNG ADVENTURE

Young Adventure is an 9-week camp held at our Benton Harbor-St. Joseph YMCA. Each week has an assigned theme to it where campers will have the opportunity to do many fun and exciting activities while interacting with their friends.

## Location

Benton Harbor-St. Joseph YMCA  
3665 Hollywood Road, St. Joseph, MI 49085

## Hours of Operation

Monday–Thursday  
Half Day: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
Full Day: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

## Registration

- A \$50 deposit is due at the time of registration for each week of camp. The remaining amount will be drafted on the Friday two weeks before care.
- Registration is available online for those who have visited the YMCA. You must have an email or current billing method on file to access your online account. Please stop by the Member Service Desk if you are new to the Y or need to update your account.
- Registered families will receive a “What to Expect” email before the start of each week.

## Extended Care

Extended hours are an option for families who need care for their children before the camp day. Extended hours provide a supervised activity time for children of working parents. **Pre-registration is required.**

### Pre-Care (7:45–8:55 AM)

Member: \$25/week  
Community: \$30/week

## Financial Assistance

See page 5 for more information on financial assistance.

## Pool

Campers will swim twice a week.

### Half Day Schedule

Time	Activity
8:50-9:10 AM	Drop Off/Free Play
9:10- 9:15 AM	Clean-Up
9:15-9:30 AM	Circle Time
9:30-10:15 AM	Centers
10:15-10:30 AM	Clean-Up
10:30-10:45 AM	Snack
10:45-11:00 AM	Songs/Music Dance
11:00-11:30 AM	Outside Time
11:30 AM-12:00 PM	Story/Get Ready for Dismissal
12:00 PM	Dismissal

### Full Day Schedule

Time	Activity
8:50-9:10 AM	Drop Off/Free Play
9:10- 9:15 AM	Clean-Up
9:15-9:30 AM	Circle Time
9:30-10:00 AM	Centers
10:00-10:15 AM	Clean-Up
10:15-10:30 AM	Snack
10:30-11:00 AM	Outside
11:00-11:15 AM	Songs, Music, Dance
11:15-11:45 AM	Free Play
11:45 AM-12:00 PM	Clean-Up
12:00-12:30 PM	Lunch
12:30-12:45 PM	Clean-Up
12:45-1:15 PM	Outside Time
1:15-2:00 PM	Rest
2:00-2:45 PM	Wake-Up/Table Activities
2:45-3:00 PM	Get Ready for Dismissal
3:00 PM	Dismissal/Post Care to Childwatch

\*Swim Days and Water Slide days and times to be determined