



Summer Y Camp 2026 (12.10.25)

Parent Handbook

YMCA OF PIERCE AND KITSAP COUNTIES GORDON YMCA

Welcome to Y CAMP at the YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties

Every summer the YMCA offers youth an enriching camp experience to help get more out of summer break, more friendships, more accomplishments, and more confidence. Please use this information as a reference to prepare you and your camper for camp before you get there. Enjoy the summer.

Have the best camp experience at the YMCA!

At the Y, we believe the values and skills learned early in life are vital building blocks for future success. YMCA Camps provide quality camp experiences, which help children learn skills, develop lifelong friendships, and discover how to be their best while having fun, all while in a safe and supportive environment.

What is Special About Camp at the Y?

YMCA Y Camps are special for so many reasons. From learning our YMCA core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility; to gaining lifelong friendships with other campers, the Y provides smiles and laughter in a safe and happy environment. Campers will experience the week in their camp group being led by a counselor and teen CITs. They'll participate in small and large group games, campfires, singing, specialty camps (All-Week Campers only), swimming, and crafts throughout the session. The following three focus for our staff and program for Y Camp are:

ACHIEVEMENT: Surrounding campers with chances to try new experiences.

RELATIONSHIPS: Inspiring campers to work and play together, creating friendships that last.

BELONGING: Making campers feel safe, welcomed, and able to express themselves.

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Center Information

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Open House

Join us for a fun-filled Y Camp Open House where families can explore everything our camp has to offer! Meet the friendly staff, tour the activity areas, and get a sneak peek at the exciting programs planned for the season—from arts and crafts to outdoor adventures. Kids can participate in sample activities while parents learn about registration, safety protocols, and daily schedules. It's the perfect opportunity to ask questions, connect with other families, and get your child excited for a summer of discovery and play.

Y Camp Open House Thursday June 18th 4:30-6:30pm

2026 Summer Schedule	Week	Dates	Week	Dates
	Week 1	6/15-19	Week 7	7/27-31
	Week 2	6/22-26	Week 8	8/3-7
	Week 3	6/29-7/3	Week 9	8/10-14
	Week 4	7/6-10	Week 10	8/17-21
	Week 5	7/13-17	Week 11	8/24-28
	Week 6	7/20-24		

Please note: Lakewood Family Center is the only program that operating Week 1. All other centers begin the summer season on Week 2.

What to Bring and Wear

- Dress your child in athletic apparel that allows them to fully participate in camp activities and games and leave sandals, flip flops and clothes that you don't want dirty at home.
- Coats and jackets to accommodate weather.
- Filled water bottle with camper name
- Small backpack
- Sunscreen
- Lunches and snacks in cooler lunch bags

Check In and Check Out Information

Campers must have their Camper Enrollment Form completed before arriving at camp on Monday morning.

Extended Program (EP)

Black Top
Mid-Week and All Week Campers Only Ages 5-12
7 – 9am
4 – 6pm

Extended Program is available at no additional charge for those registered for Mid-Week and All-Week camp. Campers needing to be checked in or checked out during these time frames will participate in independent activities or small group activities, but not within their assigned Camp Groups. This time frame has a higher staff to camper ratio and activities

will consist of board games, arts and crafts, and informal small group games often initiated, but counselor supervised, by the campers.

In the morning, EP campers will be accompanied to their assigned Camp Group between 8:30 and 8:45am. In the afternoon the campers will be guided to the Extended Program staff at 4:15pm. All campers must be checked out by 6pm.

Important! Please Note:

Extended Program will transition from EP to Camp Groups from 8:30am-8:45am and Checking In during this time frame will not be immediate as the camp staff manage the transition. Early Check Out will also be slower from 3:45-4pm to ensure all campers are ready for Check Out and in the correct locations.

Check In

Y Campers not attending EP may begin checking in as early as 8:45am. The Camper Enrollment Form must be turned in prior or on the first day of the week. Additionally, waivers must be completed prior to check in. Families with incomplete Camper Enrollment Forms will be delayed at Monday's Check In to complete the required forms.

Parents will have the option to escort their child to their Camp Group and meet their Counselor and CITs or have one of the Y Camp Staff Chicken Runners escort them. We do encourage parents to meet our counselor staff, especially on the first day.

Late Check In

Campers arriving after 9:30am will need to check in at Check In Tents. Please note that Late Check In may be delayed depending on where the Camp Group and Y Camp staff are located.

Check Out

4pm Parents/Guardians will pick up at their campers up at Check In Tents. Adults checking out the camper will be required to show ID, sign out in the Check Out notebook and locate their camper with their camp group.

Early Check Out

Campers needing to be checked out prior to 3:45pm will need to check out at Check In Tents. Please note, unless prior notice is provided, location and retrieval of the camper may take some time due to the large program areas. If written prior notice is provided to the Coordinator or Director, Y Camp staff can arrange to have the camper arrive at the Check Out location.

Please note: 3:45-4pm Check Out will be delayed to ensure we have all the campers ready and in the correct location for Check Out. Please do not engage the Camp Group Counselor for an early Check Out.

Program Descriptions

Camp Fire

This occurs a few times a day. The time is used for sharing morning greetings, announcements, songs, skits and for breaking into Specialty Camp activities and after Specialty Camp is completed.

Camp Groups

Campers will participate in most of the activities with their Camp Group (assigned by age) and led by their counselor and Counselor In Training. Crafts, games, group and group challenges will fill the days.

Campers are grouped by the following ages: 3-4|5-6|7-8|9-10|11-12. Depending on registration numbers, most groups will be formed within these age combinations.

Lunch Time

Campers will eat lunch at 11:30am. Please pack lunches in a cooler style lunch box.

Specialty Camp (SC)

SC camp sessions are Monday through Thursday 1-2:30pm for the All Week Y Campers and was selected at the time of registration. Campers will break into the SC for the time and return to Camp Groups to finish the day. **Specialty Camp Schedule:** Please consult the YMCAPKC.org website for the complete Specialty Camp Summer Schedule.

Themes

Each week at camp is a new adventure! Our themed weeks are packed with fun and creativity. Campers enjoy a variety of activities including crafts, outdoor games, team challenges, and Friday Dress Up Day. Weekly themes like *Superhero Week*, *Jurassic Jungle*, *Bug Bonanza*, and *Around the World* inspire imagination and learning while building friendships and confidence. Every day brings something new, and every week ends with a celebration of the campers' creativity and accomplishments!

Week	Dates	Theme
Week 1	6/15-19	Superheroes
Week 2	6/22-26	Tropical Paradise
Week 3	6/30-7/3	Holiday Hoopla
Week 4	7/6-10	Under the Big Top (Circus)
Week 5	7/13-17	Jurassic Jungle
Week 6	7/20-24	Most Valuable Player
Week 7	7/27-31	Under the Sea
Week 8	8/3-7	Around the World
Week 9	8/10-14	Bug Bonanza
Week 10	8/17-21	Wizards and Warlocks
Week 11	8/24-28	Color Blast

Weekly Schedule

Please consult the website at YMCAPKC.org to see the weekly and daily schedule.

Additional Information

Accommodation

At our YMCA family center Y Camps, we are committed to providing a safe and enjoyable experience for every child. Due to the size of our facilities and the structure of our programming, we are unable to provide 1:1 aide. Campers must be able to function within the group dynamic to maintain safety. To participate successfully, all campers must meet key behavioral and functional expectations.

Campers must be able to:

- Follow basic safety instructions: This includes staying with the group, following rules, and respecting closed areas (pool area, gymnastics rooms, etc...).
- Independently manage personal needs: Campers should be able to dress themselves and use the bathroom without significant assistance.
- Respond to their name and stay with the group: It's essential that campers can stay with the group in our large outdoor environment for safety reasons.

The Y Camp environment and schedule is demanding and fast paced; if your child requires a 1:1 aide at school, they will likely need similar support at Y Camp.

Accommodations for Aides

While we cannot provide 1:1 Aides, we can accommodate personal aides provided by families. If you plan to have an Aide accompanying your child, please contact us early to complete the required background check and orientation process.

Our goal is to create a safe, structured environment for all campers. If you have questions or need to discuss accommodations, please contact our camp office.

Behavior

The YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties' summer day camp programs take pride in being a part of a community composed of individuals working together to provide the best camp experience for all participants. We view ourselves as a family, providing a platform for our participants to be caring, honest, respectful and responsible.

Our goal is to have our campers exercise these character values in enhancing the camping experience. Therefore, campers are responsible for following YMCA Camp rules which are designed to give the best possible experience for everyone in a safe atmosphere, so that we all may learn and grow from each other. We realize that all children, at some time, may make undesirable choices or misbehave. We view these times as opportunities for teachable moments, and a chance to reinforce our character values.

Counselors will outline expectations of behavior on the first day as well as reinforce the expectations daily. Camper and counselor relationships is an integral key in preventing negative behavior and ensuring one on one communication. Each day, counselors will work with the campers to help them make the best choices for the day, and when needed share with the parents, the camper's successes and learnings.

If a pattern of behavior that does not align with our Y values is exhibited by a camper and is negatively impacting the camp experience for others, the camper may be removed from camp.

Y Camp Directors and staff will determine if a camper needs to be removed from camp on a temporary or permanent basis based on the incident.

Potential Reasons for dismissal from YMCA Y Camp.

- Verbal abuse to another camper or adult
 - Language with sexual connotations
 - Foul language
 - Foul body language
 - Extreme disrespect
- Camper physically confronting another camper or adult
 - Physically fighting
 - Biting
 - Touching another individual in a threatening manner
 - Inappropriate touching
- Damage to YMCA property
 - Damage to property off YMCA site while on a YMCA function
 - Parents will be held financially responsible for all damages ((caveat: if a camper brings item on the "what not to bring list," that camper is responsible for loss or damage)
- Theft
 - Theft from the YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties
 - Theft of another participant's safety
 - Theft of property off YMCA site while on a YMCA function

Inclement Weather

YMCA staff are prepared and trained to activate emergency procedures in the event of severe weather, fire, building evacuation, or other immediate safety measures. Each YMCA branch has a specific disaster plan and a YMCA Emergency Management Guide.

Lightning

Campers will be moved indoors for no less than 30 minutes after the last strike of lightning visible or within hearing of the area.

Smoke

Using the Air Quality Index (AQI), all activities will move indoors when the AQI is at 100 or above. Campers with asthma or respiratory conditions will be under advisory when the Index Value is 51-100.

Heat

When temperatures are Ninety (90) degrees or higher outside activities will be closely monitored with time constraints. Activities will be moved indoors if necessary. Please provide your camper with head covers, sun tan lotion and clothing that will keep them cool.

Illness and Injury

In consideration of other campers and staff, please do not bring sick children to camp. In the event of exposure to a communicable disease or virus, parents will be notified as quickly as possible. Make sure we have current contact information on file. We will contact you to pick up your camper immediately if:

- Camper is feeling ill for 30 minutes or longer
- Camper has a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Camper is vomiting, has diarrhea, persistent cough, watery or inflamed eyes, or sore throat.

Children absent because of contagious disease may return with a statement from a physician indicating the child is no longer contagious. Children absent because of lice may return

when there is no sign of lice.

In the event of injury, the Y's first-aid/CPR-certified staff will provide basic first-aid and/or CPR as the situation requires. Emergency Medical Services will be used to manage injuries requiring care beyond basic first aid which may include transportation for the injuries warranting such action. Parents will be notified immediately and in conjunction with 911 calls.

Insurance

Campers have an opportunity to participate in program activities which may involve a degree of risk. The parent or guardian is responsible for any medical expenses for an injury incurred at camp and to provide accident and health insurance while participating in all YMCA activities. The Y does not provide any health or accident coverage for its participants.

Lost and Found

Lost and Found items at the end of the summer will be retained no longer than a month. All items will either be recycled, trashed, donated, or repurposed.

Media

Photographs/videos may be captured for YMCA records, program projects, marketing, and public relations and be used in media releases benefiting the YMCA. Parent/guardian must provide written notice to the Director if the camper's image is not taken and used.

Medication

All medication must be brought to a camp director in its original container labeled with the camper's name, date, directions, and physician's name. A medical authorization form is also required, the only exception is inhalers. If your camper requires an EpiPen®, see a camp director at the start of the camp session (please note, staff are unable to administer EpiPen®). Medical authorization forms will need to be completed by parents of children attending school-based locations.

If medication needs to go home with the camper at the end of each day, the parent must pick it up from the camp director. Unused medications will be returned at the end of the camp session.

Personal Belongings

Only allow your child to bring items that are necessary for day camp. Money, toys, sports equipment, gum, and makeup are not permitted. Any lost or damaged toys or other personal belongings brought to camp are not the responsibility of the YMCA. Please label all belongings with child's name.

Sunscreen

Apply sunscreen to your child every day before camp begins. If additional applications are necessary, send sunscreen with your child to reapply later in the day (staff are unable to apply sunscreen). Remember to label the lotion with your child's full name.