



# FAMILY HANDBOOK



## SOUTH MOUNTAIN YMCA CAMPS

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Let's get ready for a different kind of summer!

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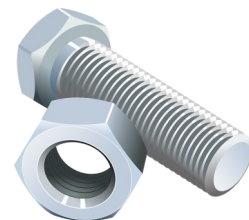
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## Day Camp Nuts and Bolts



Once you have registered your camper for a week at the Summer Adventure Series, and paid the \$50.00 deposit, your child is signed up for camp. However, there are still other steps you'll need to take to complete the registration process. These steps include:

- 1. Initial Registration and Payment of a Deposit.** This could be done online or by phone. We will not be accepting paper registrations or health forms.
- 2. Health Forms, Waivers & Memos of Understanding** should be completed prior to the start of camp. If you arrive at Camp without these forms, you will not be able to leave your child in the program until you complete them online.
- 3. Tuition Balances must be paid 1 week prior to your child's camp session.**
- 4. Refunds.** For this special 2020 program, all deposits are non-refundable unless we are forced to cancel a camp program. If you register and cancel 2-weeks prior to your camper's session, payments will be refunded, MINUS the deposit. After this time, no refund will be given and families are responsible for paying any remaining balances.
- 5. Camp Hours are 8:00am—5:00pm.** Car-line drop-off begins at 8:00am and ends at 8:40am. In 2020, parents are asked to pull through the Bynden Wood Loop and remain in their cars as directed by camp staff. Our nurse, or a designated staff person, will take your child's temperature at the car. If your child's temperature is 100.3 or below, he or she will be taken to their camp group. Parents picking up their children at the end of the day can do so between 4:15pm and 5:00pm. Proper ID is required to sign your child out of our program.
- 6. Before and After Care.** In 2020, we are unable to offer Before and After Care. To address this need, ***we have extended our camp program day by 1 hour*** without requiring additional payment.
- 7. Bus Transportation.** In 2020, we will be unable to offer bus or van transportation to Camp.
- 8. Lunch.** In 2020, campers will need a packed, nut-free lunch and snack each day.
- 9. Behavior.** We want all of our children to be successful in the Summer Adventure Series. There are, however, behaviors we do not tolerate. For example, if a child is unable to stay with their group, for his or her own safety, a camper may be dismissed from the program. Likewise, racially insensitive language or violence may result in immediate dismissal. For minor transgressions, we will make every attempt to work with the camper and family. We believe in partnering with parents to ensure every campers continued growth and success. More information on our behavior policies are included on page 10.
- 10. Family Nights.** In 2020, we will not be offering Family Nights or camper overnights.



Surrounded by nature, our Summer Adventure Series takes place at our mountaintop facility and provides campers with a unique camp experience. We offer a wide range of activities and *we are one of the only day camp programs in Berks County that offers swimming in an **outdoor pool every day***. Our goals for your child are that he or she makes a new friend, tries a new activity, grows in independence, spends significant time outdoors, and learns about the YMCA's values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.

While our campers will remain in their tribes for the entire day, as directed by the CDC, we are striving to allow the group an element of program choice in addition to pre-planned core programs (archery, climbing, crafts, swimming, etc.). Our staff are professional role-models and they provide the support, leadership and supervision for children to learn new skills, build self-confidence and make new friends. Our staff truly believes that ***Kids Come First***.

**Special Note:** To assist with the locker room sanitization schedule, we ask that campers arrive each day in their swim suit, ready for the pool

## What to Bring

Each camper must wear **closed-toed shoes**, such as sneakers or comfortable hiking boots. Most activities done at camp require such footwear at all times. We also recommend **clothing that can get dirty**, since camp is mostly outdoors!

- ☐ **Clean cloth mask**
- ☐ Swimsuit (wear it to camp, please)
- ☐ Packed Lunch and Snack
- ☐ Beach Towel
- ☐ Sunblock
- ☐ **Water bottle**
- ☐ Dry change of clothes for after swim time
- ☐ Small backpack/bag

You do not need to pack these items, but some campers have found them helpful:

- ☐ Swim Goggles
- ☐ Flip Flops (For use at the Pool)
- ☐ Bug Spray
- ☐ Jacket or sweatshirt (weather dependent)

## Leave this Stuff at Home!

**Cell Phones, Tablet Devices, MP3 players, Computers, Video Games, Knives, Weapons, Fireworks, Wheeled Shoes, Skateboards, In-line or Roller Skates, Pokemon, and Money.**

If these items are seen at camp, they will be held by the Camp Director and returned to the parent or guardian at the end of the day. Our ***Memo of Understanding***, which is signed by both Guardian and Camper and required before your camper attends Camp, outlines our policies on these items.

### PRO TIP

Label all your camper's belongings with their **FIRST and LAST name!**



Your family's safety is our primary concern. Safe and orderly check-in and check-out procedures help us avoid stress and accidents that could mar your summer camp experience.

This year, we are asking your camper to arrive in his or her mask. This will allow multiple staff interactions to safely occur at check-in. Many thanks for your patience and understanding as we navigate these strange times.

**Please note:** At the time of registration, parents are able to list individuals approved to pick their children up from Camp. If you need to make a change to these arrangements for any reason, we ask that you provide us with written permission (in advance), for another individual to make the pick-up.

## Driving Into Camp

The main entrance to the South Mountain YMCA Camps is at the top of Cushion Peak Road. The entrance is marked by a large sign to let you know you have arrived. Please be aware that cars do approach our entrance from both directions. Please pay attention to your surroundings and follow the rules of the road as you turn into our drive.

Our main drive into Camp is a single lane. We have installed "pull-overs" along the drive so motorists can pass one another safely. Please be alert as you drive in, and yield appropriately.

At Bynden Wood Lodge, you will find signage directing you into our loop for camper drop-off. Staff will be on hand along the lane each morning to help our families arriving on our campus. Parents will be asked to stay in their cars, our staff will approach your vehicle in cloth masks for sign-in and health checks.

**Health Histories and Memos of Understanding must be completed online prior to arriving at Camp.** You will not be able to leave your child at Camp without completing this step.

**The Posted  
Speed Limit  
Driving into  
Camp is  
15 mph!**

## Check-In & Check-Out

Each morning as you pull through the loop to drop off your child, we'll ask you to stay in your vehicle while we check your child into camp.

**We ask that your camper arrive wearing a mask each day.** This is for their safety, as well as the safety of the nurse who will be doing their daily health screening upon arrival. Once your camper joins their tribe, they may wear their mask down, or carry it in a pocket or backpack.

When your car is stopped, the nurse and a summer camp staffer will approach your car for sign-in and the health check. This process will include:

- Take your camper's temperature
- Complete the health screening
- Check your camper into the program

We hope this process will take approximately 1 minute.

Your child will be given a nametag and whisked off to an activity with our counseling staff.

At the end of the day, we'll follow the same procedure in reverse. **At sign-out, you will be required to show your ID every day.**

# During Camp

## Starting the Day

Families and campers are greeted at their cars in front of Bynden Wood Lodge with a temperature check and a health screening. During the check-in process, campers should be wearing their masks. Once cleared, campers are taken to meet their counselors and begin their day. ***Parents are instructed to remain in their vehicles.***

**Please note:** If a camper has a fever of 100.4 or higher, he or she may not attend camp for the day and must remain out of the program for 48 hours.

Campers are assigned to their tribe, or pod, of **4-6 campers** of the same age with **one adult counselors**. The camp day is full with a diverse activity schedule including one hour every day at the pool for recreational swimming.

Each tribe follows a different weekly schedule. The activities may include: **archery, arts & crafts, bbs, climbing tower, hiking, nature, sports (in small groups), sling shots, swimming, and special programs.**



## Daily Schedule: Monday -Friday

8:00	AM	Drop Off Begins
<b>8:45</b>	<b>AM</b>	<b>The Adventure Begins</b>
8:45	AM	Flag Raising & Announcements
9:00	AM	Activity Period 1
10:00	AM	Activity Period 2
11:00	AM	Activity Period 3*
12:00	PM	Activity Period 4*
1:00	PM	Activity Period 5*
2:00	PM	Activity Period 6
3:00	PM	Activity Period 7
4:00	PM	Flag Lowering
4:00	PM	Snack
<b>4:15</b>	<b>PM</b>	<b>The Adventure Ends</b>
5:00	PM	Pick-up Ends

**Please Note:** *Of the 7 activity times each day, 1 period will be lunch and 1 will be swim time.*

*\*Lunch times will vary by tribe and will be on 3rd, 4th, or 5th activity period.*



# During Camp

## Lunch

In 2020, we ask that campers and their families pack lunch each day. We ask that you are sensitive to our campers with nut allergies, and that you avoid peanut and other nut products in your lunches.

## Allergies

Please make sure to include any food allergies or dietary restrictions on your required health history form. South Mountain YMCA Camps runs a peanut free facility. For the health of the children we serve, we ask that you consider this when packing lunches for your camper. Please be nut free!



## Water bottles

In 2020, water bottles are as essential as sunscreen. Due to the infectious disease risk, we will not be using drinking fountains or coolers to keep our campers hydrated. **Campers must have their own, personal water bottle each day they are in Camp.** Staff, gloved and masked, will refill bottles as need throughout the day.



## Tribe Mates

Camp is all about making new friends, however we understand that for some campers it's scary to go somewhere new when you don't know anyone. We guarantee to honor requests for tribe mates, in pairs only, if requests are **mutual** and campers are **within the same age/grade range**.

Due to the age requirements for some activities we cannot match a camper who is 7 years old with a camper who is 8. Please e-mail tribe mate requests to [askidmore@smymca.org](mailto:askidmore@smymca.org) or [ycamps@smymca.org](mailto:ycamps@smymca.org).

## COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

Many things have changed over the last year, but our commitment to providing an extraordinary camping experience for our campers and their families has not. In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we have implemented many changes. Here are just a few:

- We will have health screenings each morning for campers and staff.
- There will be temperature checks twice a day for campers and staff.
- Check-in, Check-Out, and Screenings will be conducted through the window of your vehicle.
- **If a camper or staff has: a temperature of 100.4 or higher, then they must stay home for 48 hours.** Additionally, health screening staff will be asking if the camper has had a sore throat, cough, runny noses, loss of taste/smell, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, shortness of breath. You will be asked if your camper has been in contact with someone who may have these symptoms in the last 14 days, or has had contact with family members travelling to a place with significant COVID-19 cases. Family vacations to current COVID-19 hotspots may also restrict a camper's attendance in this program.
- If it is discovered that a staff person, camper, or camper parent tests positive for COVID-19, we may close the camping program for up to 5 days depending on circumstances.
- Hand-dip sanitizing stations have been added around Camp with a CDC recommended 5% bleach solution.
- There are new sanitizing policies and procedures for camp activities and equipment.
- Campers will be kept in the same group, the same "pod," for the entire camp week.
- For campers or staff that exhibit symptoms or a temperature during the camp day, there will be an isolation space for them to wait until they can be picked up from the program.
- An appropriate use of masks will be required of staff and campers.\*

**\*MASKS:** According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, **masks are required for our staff while indoors or in close proximity to our campers.** We will also ask our children to arrive at camp wearing their masks for initial health screenings and temperature checks. Most of the day, campers will simply wear their masks around their necks or carry them in their backpacks, but we may ask children to use masks while participating in indoor, stationary programs. We WILL NOT ask children to wear masks during physical activities and games.

These precautions, and other changes in our operations, have resulted from the CDC summer camp guidelines, as well as the Pennsylvania summer camp guidelines. Again, we appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to deliver a safe and fun program for your children.



## COVID-19 CLEANING & SANITIZING

Throughout the day we will be sanitizing surfaces and equipment across our program areas as our camper groups make their way through their day.

Locker Rooms: Campers will be required to arrive in their bathing suits and will be able to change after their groups designated swim time. The locker rooms will be sanitized after each rotation of campers have swum and changed

Programs & Equipment: Equipment at other areas will be either wiped down or dipped between groups, campers will be sanitizing their hands before handling equipment. At each program area there will be a sanitizing bucket for dipping/wiping down equipment after use. The buckets will have a 1:20 ratio (bleach:water) premixed every day for sanitizing purposes.

Facilities: We will clean our program spaces, our buildings and rooms, throughout the day, and also disinfect and sanitize each night after the camp day is over.

Outdoors: Our campers will spend as much time as possible outdoors. This would be our goal in any year, but it's even more critical in 2020.

Shutdowns: If it is discovered that a member of our staff, a camper, or a parent tests positive for COVID-19, portions of our campus may close for up to 5 days depending on circumstances. While we hope our small-group approach with dedicated counseling staff limits the possibility of "cross contamination," it is possible that the Summer Adventure Series may need to shut down should an outbreak occur.

## Staff

The number one priority of all staff is the health and safety of our campers. **Kids Come First.** We take great pride in selecting the best team to create a FUN and SAFE atmosphere in which your camper can do their best.

Our team is specifically chosen to be able to excel in a busy camp program and to be able to bring enthusiasm and energy to create an atmosphere of fun for all of their campers. Counselors are hired because they have demonstrated a true desire to develop, work with, and mentor children.

All staff are individually selected after an extensive application, interview and national background check process. The age of our staff ranges from 18-24. We value the diversity in our campers and staff, but in 2020 our staff will be local young adults.



# During Camp

## Health Care

Each camper must have a completed Health History Form online 1 week prior to their first session at camp. We have a Registered Nurse on-site each day during our summer season.

### Medications

Children may not keep medication with them. All medications must be turned over to the Camp Nurse upon arrival. This is for the safety of everyone at camp. Medication **MUST** be in its original container and clearly labeled with written directions signed by the parent. If your camper has medication such as an inhaler or Epi-Pen, their Tribe Leader will carry it with them. ***Our Medical Staff will not administer any medications not in the original container or without a doctor's prescription.***

### Emergencies/Illness

In an emergency, we will transport your child to the Wyomissing Children's Clinic or to the local hospital. In the case of a serious accident, or illness, you will be contacted by our medical staff. ***If your child becomes sick during the day, we will ask you to pick up your camper at camp immediately.***

## Behavior at Camp

Our staff will make every effort to provide positive, realistic expectations for your child. Campers who cannot live within the rules of camp, or those that are adversely affecting the experience of other children, will be dismissed without a refund. In this case, it is the parent's responsibility to come to camp to pick up their children.

### 3 Strike Policy for Behavior Concerns

For minor behavior issues, Bynden Wood Day Camp has a 3 strike policy. If a camper repeats unacceptable behavior, it is documented and brought to the attention of the Day Camp Director. The Director will call the parents and explain the warning their child is getting. After 3 warnings the camper will not be allowed back at camp that week and no refund will be given.

We believe in partnering with parents and will do our very best to make the camp experience successful for each individual child.

### Serious Concerns Requiring Immediate Action

For the safety of your child and everyone at camp, the South Mountain YMCA Camps cannot and will not tolerate any of the following:

- Offensive or threatening language.
- Bullying (physical or emotional).
- Physical violence or abuse.
- Intentional germ-spreading (i.e. intentionally coughing on another person).
- Possession or use of any illegal substances, alcohol, tobacco, lighters, matches or knives (including pocket knives) or any other instruments that may be construed as a weapon.

**Any of the above actions may require immediate dismissal from camp with no refund.**

## Talking with your Child About Camp

There is nothing more exasperating than asking your child, "What did you do today at camp?" and getting the following response, "Nothing." While some children are bursting to share their experiences on the ride home, others are tired or may simply need a little more time to process. Over the week, draw your child out slowly by asking specific questions about tribe mates and counselors. You can also contact your Camp Director, Antonio Skidmore by phone or email ([askidmore@smymca.org](mailto:askidmore@smymca.org) or 610-670-2267).

Each day, counselors will complete a Tribe log and submit it to the director. The log will include each camper's rating of the day, his or her favorite programs, and the activities the tribe participated in. The Camp Director is happy to share this information with you at your request.

## Lost and Found

**Please make sure all of your camper's items are clearly marked with his/her first and last name.** We try to manage lost and found items continually throughout the season, but it is a challenge! If you discover your child is missing something upon their return home, please notify the Director, Antonio Skidmore, via email so we can assist you in finding your lost items ([askidmore@smymca.org](mailto:askidmore@smymca.org)). Lost and found items are not the responsibility of South Mountain YMCA Camps. After the camp session, we will donate any unclaimed items to a local charity.

## Surveys

We will provide a survey after your camper's session. We value your feedback and use it to improve our programs and services for your children. If at any time you have a concern or question, please contact Antonio Skidmore at [askidmore@smymca.org](mailto:askidmore@smymca.org) or by calling camp at 610-670-2267.



## Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.

Please know our camp discourages camper-staff interactions on social media. This is part of our training. If, however, your child seeks to "friend" camp staff after the summer is over, it may be very difficult for a young adult to deny or ignore the request (despite our best efforts to train them to do so). After all, we also train our counselors to be attentive role models for your children. If your child speaks to you regarding this issue, please explain that staff members "need their space" during their time away from camp.

We do encourage you to visit our official South Mountain YMCA Camps site on Facebook rather than contact any individual camp staff member. We also encourage parents to talk to their children about this issue, and research their own child's activities so they can stay "in the loop".



# A Letter From the CEO

## Greetings from Camp!

We know this year has been tough for all our families. Our kids have stayed home and missed their concerts, musicals, science fairs, and - most of all - their friends. In May, we even announced the cancelation of our Camp Conrad Weiser and Bynden Wood Day Camp programs.

As we reached the "Green Phase" of our recovery here, in Berks County, we were excited to announce the **Summer Adventure Series** for children ages 6-14. While not our traditional Bynden Wood Day Camp, we hope this program is a positive experience for our campers; one where they can see friends, play outside, and swim. They deserve it.

How will the Summer Adventure Series be different from a week at Bynden Wood Day Camp? You will see counselors in masks, you'll be greeted at your car by the nurse for a health screening, and we'll be skipping some of our traditional, large-group activities in favor of small group programs. There will be sanitizing and hand-dip stations at each program, and camper will be encouraged to wear masks for some indoor activities. We'll be asking families to pack lunches each day, and we'd be extending the camp day by 1 hour because we aren't able to provide transportation or before/aftercare. Camp will also be much smaller than you've come to expect with 60 or fewer campers each week.

Nonetheless, we are determined to make the Summer Adventure Series a fun, safe, outdoor alternative to a typical day camp or childcare. There will be climbing, archery, and swimming, but we'll be skipping campfires and large group games like capture-the-flag. There will be basketball, slingshots, and crafts, but we'll be staying in our "pods" all day and practicing social distancing. This summer, we will not be able to accommodate requests for children to switch pods during the week.

Many things will not change this summer. Our passion for creating a place for everyone to feel safe and appreciated will not change. We want to challenge our campers to expand their minds, use their bodies, and to create relationships and bonds that last lifetimes. Our hope is for each of our campers to walk away with tools and skills they can use everyday, be it relationship building, conflict resolution, or simply being open to trying new things. None of that will change.

I cannot express how grateful we are that you have entrusted your children to our camping programs at the South Mountain YMCA Camps. Please know that we take that trust seriously and offer you our sincere thanks. Like you, my wife and I have children who will attend the Summer Adventure Series this year, and we want them to learn and grow in an environment that nurtures and values them as community members. I want the same for your children. Until we see you back on the mountain, **keep the fires burning!**

We'll see you at Camp!



Nathan Brant, CEO  
South Mountain YMCA Camps  
WWW.SMYMCA.ORG

