

**McCormick Tribune YMCA
Summer Camp
Parent Handbook
2012**



McCormick Tribune YMCA

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Chicago, IL 60647

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Contact Information

Summer Camp Staff

Rosa Nodal

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Summer Day Camp

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday

7:00 am – 6:00 pm

We are pleased that you and your child have chosen to be a part of this wonderful program. We look forward to working with you, together as partners. Our partnership is essential to the success and quality of the program. This Parent Handbook was developed to provide you with information on our policies and programs. Please take the time to read this handbook and keep it for future reference. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please feel free to contact us at 773 235.2525.

Week	Dates	Theme
Week 1	06/11/2012 - 06/15/2012	Super Hero Week
Week 2	06/18/2012 - 06/22/2012	Jammin in the Jungle
Week 3	06/25/2012 - 06/29/2012	Treasure Island
Week 4	07/02/2012 - 07/06/2012	Stars & Stripes
Week 5	07/09/2012 - 07/13/2012	Wet & Wild
Week 6	07/16/2012 - 07/20/2012	Gadgets & Gizmos Week
Week 7	07/23/2012 - 07/27/2012	Whose got talent?
Week 8	07/30/2012 - 08/03/2012	Great Outdoors
Week 9	08/06/2012 - 08/10/2012	Olympic Week
Week 10	08/13/2012 - 08/17/2012	Game Show Week
Week 11	08/20/2012 - 08/24/2012	All-Star Week

McCormick Tribune YMCA Day Camp is ACA accredited!



American Camping Association (ACA): ACA is an organization with members in all 50 states that accredits all types of organized camps. Camps are accredited based on the administration, policies and camp operation- particularly those related to program practices and quality along with health and safety of campers and staff. The standards establish guidelines for needed policies, procedures, and practices. Our camp is fully accredited with a score of 100% on last summer's audit. We are committed to providing the highest standards established for the camping industry.

YMCA Day Camp Character Development

Character Development is challenging people to accept and demonstrate the four core values- Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. It is the foundation for the development of the important character traits that will remain with a child for their entire life. The YMCA camp mission statement puts it best: The YMCA provides trained leadership and the resources of the natural surround to help each camper achieve his/her fullest potential in terms of mental development, physical well being, social growth, and spiritual awareness. Challenging people to accept and demonstrate positive values is more effective than treating problems because it deals with the roots and not just the results.

YMCA Day Camp is important to a child's development because...

Campers grow personally. They are given the chance to experience new things and interact with other children on a daily basis.

Campers learn new things. Whether it's playing a new game, practicing an existing skill or developing their social skills, campers leave our camp having learned something they can remember for a lifetime.

Campers learn to appreciate diversity in each other. We live in a multicultural community and our camp reflects this. Campers learn each person is unique. They have fun and respect each other regardless of race, religion, gender, or social status.

Campers learn lifetime values. From the simplest of values and attitudes like sharing, sportsmanship, and giving respect to others, comes our basis for making more complex value decisions as they mature.

Campers have fun! Without fun, the above reasons for children to attend our camp become harder to accomplish. Games, stories, hikes, field trips, swimming, sports, and crafts are all done with the campers as the primary focus.

McCormick Tribune YMCA Summer Camp Discipline Policy

Our mission at camp is to provide a safe environment where kids can grow emotionally, physically and mentally. Throughout the summer our dedicated counselors seek to teach and emphasize the core values of the YMCA: respect, responsibility, caring and honesty. We ask you to take a moment with your child to read through this policy, discuss what it contains and initial the character contract TOGETHER.

___ Appropriate Conversation – Campers will not be allowed to discuss inappropriate topics or contribute to demeaning conversations about other campers or staff. We will only seek to lift others up and encourage them in the way we speak.

___ Appropriate Language – Children must refrain from using obscene language or gestures for any reason. The way one speaks or acts is a negative reflection not only on oneself, but also on that individual’s family and the YMCA.

___ Bullying – Picking on other campers through physical, verbal or any other means will not be tolerated. No camper is seen as more or less important as others. We will not tolerate any sort of mentality which degrades others.

___ Caring -- It is important to use and care for equipment, toys and games properly so that other campers can enjoy them. We will care for the property of the YMCA, of other campers and of the YMCA staff.

___ Respect – When asked to do or not to do something, a camper needs to follow directions first time given. This is for the safety of all campers. Please speak to staff & other campers with respect.

___ Play – Campers are asked not to engage in any horseplay with each other or with a counselor. No one will be allowed to hit, push, or display any type of aggressive behavior. We will use words to settle our differences. We keep our hands and feet to ourselves. It is important to treat others in the same manner in which we wish to be treated.

___ Responsibility – All campers need to remain with their group and within eyesight of their counselor. This applies here on the YMCA grounds and on off-site fieldtrips. At all times we want campers to be safe. The following will occur if this contract is violated:

If an incident occurs where a camper conducts himself/herself in a manner that jeopardizes their safety, the safety of others, or is not in accordance with the mission of the YMCA and the camp, the following steps will be taken:

1. First Violation – a staff member will address and document the issue directly with the child and discuss with parent when they arrive that day.
2. Second Violation – a staff member will address and document the issue directly with the child. The child will lose a portion of time in activity for the day such as swimming, or playtime. Parents will be contacted during the day or at the end of the camp depending on the time and severity of the incident. Parents must sign the character contract counseling report at the time of pick-up.
3. Third Violation – a staff member will address and document the issue directly with the child. Further disciplinary action, consistent with the violated action, will be discussed with the parent upon picking up the child. Parents must sign the character contract counseling report at the time of pick-up.
4. Fourth Violation—a staff member will address and document the issue directly with the child. Parents will be contacted immediately to pick up child from camp. The child will be suspended from camp for a week. Parents must sign the character contract counseling report at the time of pick-up.
5. Fifth Violation—Child will be dismissed from camp for the remainder of the summer. Any child causing severe harm to another child or staff member will be dismissed from the camp immediately. The following guidelines have been read and discussed.

Camper’s Signature _____

Date _____

Parent’s Signature _____

Date _____

BRING TO CAMP

GYM SHOES (no sandals or flip flops)

Backpack for carrying all gear

Water Bottle (No glass bottles allowed)

Swimsuit, Towel, Swim Cap (for hair longer than 4'') – Every Wednesday

Sunscreen and bug repellent - Lotion

Comfortable clothing and shoes

Positive Attitude!

Please label all articles of clothing and backpack.

DON'T BRING TO CAMP

Money (unless specified)

Trading cards of any kind

Jewelry, Game boy and electronic toys

Radios/iPod/Cell Phone/PS, DS game consoles

Unnecessary toys/ sports equipment etc.

Inappropriate behavior, language, clothing, etc.

All toys, cell phones electronics brought to the YMCA will be stored in the Summer Camp Director's office. All items will be returned at the end of the day to the parents. If you need to speak with your child, please call the YMCA at 773.235.2525 and we will make every effort to locate your child

The following forms must be signed and returned as soon as possible to the camp director. Your child will not be allowed to attend camp if the correct forms are not on file prior to their first day of camp.

- Copy of Health History Form with a doctor's signature
- Confidential Camper Form
- Camp Rules/Policies Sign Off
- Emergency Contact/Pick-Up form
- Release Authorization Form
- Registration Form
- Waiver
- Payment Form

The ABC's of Summer Camp at McCormick Tribune YMCA

Absentees: If your child will not be attending camp please leave a message for the Camp Director at 773-235-2525 before 8:00am. Refunds will not be given for missed camp days unless there is a serious illness and a doctor's note is provided.

Allergies: We are a peanut-free camp. It is your responsibility to let us know on the medical form if your child has any food or drug allergy along with your child's possible reaction should he/she come in contact with the allergen. Any medication such as an epipen or allergy medicine must be provided by the parent. All forms of medication must be the original container or bottle with pharmacy label with doctors directions.

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Authorization-pick up form: For the safety of the campers you will need to fill out and turn in an authorized pick up form. This states who is and is not allowed to pick your child up from camp. Your child will not be released to anyone not on the list without your written consent.

Babysitting: YMCA camp staff is not permitted to baby-sit for families involved in our YMCA programs while they are employees of the YMCA.

Bathing Suits: Males must wear swim shorts or trunks with a lining. Speedo suits for males are not allowed. Females must wear a one piece bathing suit. If inappropriate swim wear is worn at camp the camper will: not swim. Bathing caps may required to be worn by any camper and counselor with hair longer than 4''.

Behavior Policies: You will find a copy of the **Character Contract** in the parent pack. The character contract is often used in behavior management for our camp. If your child's behavior becomes seriously inappropriate your child may be dismissed - without a refund – from camp. This is at the discretion of the Unit Leader and Summer Camp Director. In this event the parent or guardian of the camper will be called and is responsible for picking up or sending an authorized pick up person as soon as possible. Behaviors that will result in immediate dismissal may include and are not limited to physical altercations that cause injury, bullying, refusal to cooperate with camp staff in attempting to maintain safety and order in the group or program activity, inappropriate clothing, stealing, possession of drugs, alcohol, firearms pornographic material or cigarettes, gang related activity and destruction of property.

NO REFUND OR CREDIT WILL BE ISSUES FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE DISMISSED FROM CAMP FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.

Camp T-shirt: Each camper will receive **one** t-shirt during their second week of camp. **This shirt must be worn on all field trips.** There will be an additional t-shirts cost of \$10.00 for an extra/new shirt. If t-shirt is lost or the child forgets their shirt on field trip day they will need to purchase one.

Camper Dress: Please write campers name on articles that are brought/worn to camp. **Socks and Gym shoes are required. NO sandals or flip-flops allowed.** Children will be engaging in activities such as running and hiking throughout the day. Dress accordingly. Clothing of campers should not be inappropriate in any way. Inappropriate dress includes and is not limited to the following: short shorts, clothing promoting alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, or are gang related, t-shirts that are sexually aggressive or explicit, clothing that does not appropriately cover the body (midriffs are not allowed to show). Disciplinary action may be taken including but not limited to camper changing or parent being called to pick up camper.

Cash Handling Procedures: Camp fees will solely be collected by the Membership Services Desk. Director, Team Leader and Counselors will refer parents to the Front Desk for payment of fees. Summer Camp Director and or Business Manager will inform parents of their balance and any past due amounts verbally and by written form.

Cellular Phones: **Campers are not allowed to bring their CELL phone to camp.** Cell phone use is only allowed (by Parents and members) in main areas (i.e. not in locker rooms). The cell phone policy is posted throughout the YMCA. If you need to contact your camper you may call the office phone number at 773 235-2525.

Character Development: Healthy Kids Camp at the McCormick Tribune YMCA has a focus on Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility as the four core values of the YMCA. We will work to develop these qualities with your camper throughout the summer. Please address and encourage these values at home. On Fridays, your child will receive a CHARACTER COUNTS REPORT CARD with the values stated and comments from their counselor on how their behavior is with respect to those areas. This is meant as a tool to acknowledge and support character development. Also see the Character Contact information included in the parent pack.

Chronic Health Condition: **Any chronic health condition must** be documented by a licensed health physician on the health history form provided for you by the camp. You will also need to meet with the Summer Camp Director to review necessary information. Any medication necessary for this health condition must be given to the summer camp director in its original container with physician's instructions for dosage on the label. The parent must fill out a separate form that gives permission to a staff member, who is 21 years or older, to give the medication to their child. We are a PEANUT FREE camp!

Counselors: We have a great staff! Our counselors are carefully selected and trained up to 40 hours before the beginning of summer. They are subject to a background and reference check. They are trained in CPR/First Aid, child abuse prevention, bloodborne pathogens, emergency procedures, behavior management, camp activities and other related areas. All of our counselors are college students, 18 years of age or older. Unit Leaders are generally 21 years of age or older. If at any time you have a question or concern about our staff please address it with the summer camp director, Rosa Nodal via phone or email.

Dangerous Weapons: Campers who bring to camp any item designed to cause bodily harm or any item not "designed" to cause bodily harm that is deemed potentially harmful will first have it confiscated and then the parents/guardians will be contacted. Bringing such items to camp may result in campers being sent home early or suspended. All types of knives and dangerous items **MUST** be kept off camp property. Once an item is confiscated by the Camp Director, it will not be returned the camper. Items will only be returned upon request to the parent or guardian.

Drop Off and Pick Up: The Drop off and pick up area is generally at the front desk, the funjunction room or in the gym. Early Care is from 7:00a.m. to 9:00a.m. It is included in your camp fee and may be used at anytime. **Your child must be in camp by 9:00a.m.** in order for the groups to take attendance properly and begin the day's activities. Charges may be implemented for late drop off at the discretion of the director. Post-Care is from 4:00p.m. until 6:00p.m. You may pick up your camper anytime after 4:00p.m. If you need to pick your child up before 4:00 pm please bring a note or call the Director. **If you have not picked up your camper by 6:05pm you will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute you are late, per child.** **YOU MUST PARK YOUR CAR IN AN APPROPRIATE SPOT AND ESCORT YOUR CAMPER TO AND FROM THE SIGN IN TABLE. YOU MUST SIGN IN AND SIGN OUT YOUR CAMPER ON THE APPROPRIATE SHEET.** If you need to pick up or drop off your child at a different location for any reason speak with the director in advance to make arrangements.

E-Mail: Please provide your e-mail address for possible communication with the summer camp director. You may e-mail Rosa Nodal at rnodal@ymcachicago.org or Katie at kschultz@ymcachicago.org.

Family Night Camps: This year we will have a Family Night Camps at the end of the summer camp. This is a time for you and your family to enjoy a fun night from 5:30p.m.-8:00pm. We will have a cookout, arts and crafts, family games and activities. We'll even teach you a few camp songs! Save this date: Friday, August 9th.

Field Trips: Field Trips are every Tuesday-REMEMBER TO HAVE YOUR CAMPER WEAR THEIR CAMP T-SHIRT! You will receive a field trip list prior to the start of camp. Most field trips are included in the weekly cost of camp. Please do not send money with your camper to any field trips unless notified by the Summer Camp Director. Please be on time on field trip days and try not to schedule any dentist or doctor appointment for Tuesdays. **If you miss the bus you may have to find other child care options for the day and your money will not be refunded. On field trips days please arrive no later than 9:00 am.** Please note: Field trips list may change due to weather or other circumstances.

2012 Field Trip Schedule

Week	Dates	Field Trip
Week 1	06/12/2012	Indian Boundary Park, Skokie
Week 2	06/19/2012	Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago
Week 3	06/26/2012	Monkey Island, Melrose Park
Week 4	07/03/2012	Millennium Park
Week 5	07/10/2012	Mystic Waters Water Park
Week 6	07/17/2012	Museum of Science & Industry
Week 7	07/24/2012 - 07/19/2012	Movies / Great America - Older group only
Week 8	07/31/2012	Nature Museum /Forest Preserve
Week 9	08/07/2012	Rainbow Falls
Week 10	08/14/2012	Enchanted Castle
Week 11	08/21/2012	Bowling

Fighting: The YMCA does not tolerate campers who harm other campers or campers who harm counselors. This includes and is not limited to degrading, demeaning, threatening other campers or staff OR physically harming another child or staff person. Any camper or group of campers found to be harassing, making fun of, or intimidation another camper will be subject to disciplinary actions including sent home or suspended from camp.

Financial Assistance: Financial assistance is available through Action for Children. Please contact AFC at 773 823-1100 or visit them at the or central/west location; 1340 S. Damen Ave. 3rd floor. Office hours are from 8:30 am – 3:00 pm Monday-Thursday. Friday is by appointment only. They do have a 24 hour drop box. Please see the front desk for an application. Keep in mind; the application and eligibility process make take 10 or more days for approval. Parents **MUST** be approved before your child attends...No Exceptions.

Groups and Ratios: Children are grouped in units based on their age. The ratios standards of the ACA are as follows: 3 to 5 year old groups have a 1:6 ratio, 6 to 8 year old groups have a 1:8 ratio, and 9 to 14 year old groups have a 1:10 ratio. If you are interested in having your child's friend, relative, etc in the same group please mention it to the Unit Leader. **WE CAN NOT GUARANTEE** their placement in the same group; however, we will attempt to honor your request.

Our groups are as follows:

- Group 1: Ages 4 – 5
- Group 2: Ages 6 – 8
- Group 3: Ages 9 – 10
- Group 4: Ages 11 – 14

We try to accommodate parents when it comes to siblings being together but parents must remember that children are put into groups by age so that they can socialize with kids their own age and staff can better serve their them.

We spend a lot of time and effort into planning different games, activities, crafts and field trips to interest all types of children. To make sure that your child in **GROUP 1** has the best possible summer we ask that you send with them the following:

- Small blankets, towels or a yoga mat and a pillow to use for nap/quiet time
- Extra pair of socks
 - Separate for nap time
- Extra clothes for any accidents
- Extra underwear
- Water bottles
- Hats
- Sunscreen
 - Please apply before they come to the YMCA
- Gym Shoes – **No sandals**

Please contact Rosa Nodal if you have any comments, concerns or questions regarding this list. This summer is about your child and we want to ensure they have the time of their life.

Healthy Kids Camp: The YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago developed several minimum requirements for our camps to be a Healthy Kids Camp. McCormick Tribune YMCA Summer Camps are Healthy Kids Camps. This means that your child will be offered at least one structured YMCA health class activity. They will also have a health related workshop and daily integration of healthy activities, games, education etc. We have scheduled a fitness session every day so please have your child wear gym shoes.

Illness/Injury: Parents will be notified if their child has not been feeling well for a period of time. Moderate injuries will be communicated to parents once proper first aid procedures have been followed. If the illness or injury occurs late in the day and is moderate you may be notified at the end of the day. In case of severe injury parent will be contacted immediately.

Library Time: Our Summer Camp participates in the Chicago Public Library's Summer Reading Program. Campers and counselors will go every Thursday to the North Pulaski Library and / or the Humboldt Park Library. Campers are encouraged to bring their library card. If they do not have one, we will have an application available for sign up.

Lost and Found: We will have a lost and found area at the front and in the youth center however, please label your child's clothing and articles. Towels, sweatshirts, jackets, swim goggles, and water bottles are some of the most common lost items. The YMCA is NOT responsible for any lost or stolen items.

Meals: The McCormick Tribune YMCA will receive cold meals from the Greater Food Depository. All meals include a healthy balance of fresh veggies and fresh fruits. Breakfast, lunch and a healthy snack will be provided each day. Menus will be made available by the GFD. This program begins June 18, 2012. **Campers are allowed to bring their own lunch, provided that they are a healthy lunch. Please so do not pack unhealthy chips, candy or soda. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU SEND YOUR CHILD TO CAMP WITH A REFILLABLE WATER BOTTLE.** They will be engaging in high levels of activity throughout the day. Campers will be allowed to purchase water or Gatorade from the vending machines.

Medication/ Medical Form: All campers must have a physical exam form completed. You must provide us with the appropriate completed medical form including proof of immunization and permission to treat in case of emergency. Dental forms are not necessary. **YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND CAMP UNLESS THESE FORMS ARE COMPLETE.** We will accept a school copy of the medical as long as it is current. If your child needs to take medication for any reason you will need to fill out a brief description on the medication form telling us when and how to administer the medication. All prescription drugs must be in the original bottle with the child's name, name of drug, correct dosage, and instructions from the doctor on how/when to administer. Medication of any kind **MUST** be held by the staff. We store all medication in a locked box or in a unit leader's first aid kit when necessary. All medication is administered by staff 21 years of age or older.

Nap Time: Group 1 will be required to take an hour nap/quiet time. Parents need to bring a small blanket or yoga mat and a pillow. The other groups will have quiet time after lunch. The campers are encouraged to bring a book to read during this time.

Newsletters and Communication: Newsletters will be available periodically. Please read them to keep informed about camp issues and information. From time to time we may send out a flyer with additional information. The check in/ check out staff person will have the most recent communications that were sent home so you may check with them if you feel you have missed a flyer of newsletter.

Obscenity: Obscene, profane or vulgar language that is written, oral, or expressed by symbols will not be tolerated. Being respectful of campers and staff is expected. A violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Payments/ Refunds/ Transfers: Your completed registration form along with a \$25 deposit is required at the time of sign up for each week of camp you wish your child to participate in. Checks should be payable to the McCormick Tribune YMCA. Your balance of the fee per week is due by FRIDAY the

week prior to the session beginning. If fees are not paid in full prior to Monday, the start of the camp week your child will not be allowed to attend camp. DEPOSIT AND CAMP FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE. If you are interested in transferring a week you will need to let the director know 3 weeks in advance. The deposit is non-transferable. If a refund is issued for medical reasons it may take 6 to 8 weeks to be processed.

Sign In/ Sign Out: ALL campers MUST be signed in and out DAILY by a parent/ adult guardian or authorized person. All authorized persons are subject to be asked to show a photo ID at any time. If person wishing to pick up a camper is not on the authorized pick up list we will not release your child to them without written consent.

Sun Screen: Please put sunscreen on your child before sending them to camp. We also suggest that you send sunscreen to camp with your child. Your child will have frequent opportunities to apply sunscreen throughout the day and may ask another child in their age group to help them apply the lotion. McCormick Tribune YMCA Summer Camp discourages our staff from applying lotion/sunscreen on campers.

Suspension: If your child has broken rules or policies they are subject to suspension from camp. Refund will not be given for a child suspended from camp. The amount of time suspended will be at the discretion of the Summer Camp Director and Executive Director.

Swimming: Each age group has a scheduled swim time. If our field trip is to a water park your child will need to bring appropriate swim gear. Children are tested by the swim instructors to check their swim level. The determination of each child's level will be made by the aquatics staff. Each camper may have the opportunity to be retested. Our location is changing this year. This will be finalized by June 13th.

THINGS TO BRING: SWIMSUIT, TOWEL, SWIM CAP, CHANGE OF CLOTHES AND A PLASTIC BAG FOR WET CLOTHES. Swim goggles are optional. Please remember to label ALL items.

Schedules: Camp Counselors write daily lesson plans prior to the sessions. Activities may vary from day to day including but not limited to: sports, character development, arts and crafts, games, skits, songs, teambuilding, swimming and more. A sample schedule may be provided to you.

Search and Seizure: McCormick Tribune YMCA Day Camp staff reserve the right to search a staff or camper's property, either by themselves or with the aid of law enforcement officials, if the camp deems the search is necessary to maintain the integrity of the camp's environment and/or the protection of the other staff or campers. The person in question will be invited to be present for the search when feasible. Any items found in violation of the law or camp rules will be confiscated and may be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency. These searches may or may not include the use of specially trained dogs.

Vandalism: Campers involved in vandalism or malicious mischief either against camp property or against camper or staff member will be disciplined accordingly. Payment to repair any damage accrued as a result of the vandalism is the responsibility of the camper's parent/guardian. Violation of this policy may result in the camper's being suspended from camp.

Vending Machines: *CAMPERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BUY ANYTHING FROM THE SNACK VENDING MACHINES DURING CAMP HOURS. Only water or Gatorade.*