



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Welcome to SMapY Camp!

You and your child are in for a Summer to Discover!

Throughout the summer, your child will be engaged in many different activities which will help create lasting friendships, foster independence, develop social skills and instill our core values of Caring, Respect, Honesty, and Responsibility - all while having a fun and exciting day!

Below you will find a variety of items to hopefully make the first days of camp easier for everyone - the children, the staff and you!

Getting ready for the first day of Camp!

Talk with your children about Camp. Having pleasant, positive conversations about what will happen at camp, as well as going over the daily schedule/theme for the week and talking about friends that they will see while at camp before camp begins will also help your child feel more comfortable and will hopefully excite them for camp!

Be sure to leave plenty of time on the first day to get ready and to eat breakfast. Your child may become upset when you drop them off. We have found from experience that it is best for you to have a routine with your child for drop off. Tell your child that you will be back to pick them up - or tell them who will be picking them up that day. Our staff will gently help your child get involved in an activity and the tears will soon disappear.

Having a routine and knowing what to expect allows your child to have less anxiety about his/her camp day, and starts your day off right too!

LIST OF ITEMS THAT YOUR CHILD WILL NEED FOR CAMP

- **BACKPACK** – filled with-
 - Lunch (see below)
 - Labeled water bottle (water fountain available at camp site for re-fills)
 - Swimsuit, bathing cap (caps only for boys and girls who have hair shoulder length or longer). To speed up the changing process we would like for all campers to wear their bathing suit under their camp clothes when they come to camp in the morning. Camp routine includes changing clothes for swimming, so it is important that your child be dressed in clothing that he/she can easily change in and out of.
 - Underwear spare (in case of an accident)
 - Plastic bag to put their wet bathing suits in
 - Towel
 - Sunscreen
- **LUNCH:** Please pack your child's lunch in a lunch box or disposable bag with their name on it (especially on trip days). This will limit lost lunch boxes. Upon arrival at the camp site campers will put their lunch bag/box in their group's lunch box container. They will retrieve their lunch at lunch-time. We do this to secure the campers' lunches from hungry squirrels. Pack only **non-**

spoilable food and drink (a good idea is to use an ice pack or frozen water/juice box to keep it cold). There is no refrigeration available at the campsite. Do not send gum or candy. We are trying to teach responsible environmental behavior to the campers. We will recycle at camp so please try to use lunch items that can come home or be re-cycled.

- **SNEAKERS:** Your child will be moving all day long- walking between activities, playing sports, running, jumping and generally having lots of fun! For their safety, they need to have sneakers to be able to participate in all of these activities. Dressy shoes, open toed shoes, sandals and flip flops will NOT be permitted.
- **HAT**

LOST AND FOUND:

- **CLOTHING & POSSESSIONS:** Clearly label with your child's full name ALL clothing and possessions that your child brings to camp.
- "Found" items that have campers' names on them are usually returned the same day or the next day. All items without a name on them will be looked over by all campers as they walk past the Lost/Found items after our Morning Round Up. Every Friday, all items not claimed after Morning Round Up are taken to the Lost and Found box at the Program Center at the YMCA on Jefferson Ave. Additionally, items lost at the JCC pool may be in the JCC Lost and Found. Go to their security desk to check the items in their Lost & Found. We must leave lost items found there because we do not want to take an item possibly belonging to a JCC camper.

CAMP T-SHIRT:

- Campers will be given their camp T-shirt their first day at camp. The first shirt cost is included in the camp fee. Additional shirts can be purchased at the YMCA office for \$6.00.
- **On trip days campers are required to wear their YMCA camp T-shirt.**

WHERE DO I TAKE MY CHILD IN THE MORNING?

- **CAMPSITE LOCATION:** The campsite for SOMapY camp is Maplecrest Park, located at the intersection of Springfield Avenue and Tuscan Road and Oakland Road in Maplewood. This park is in the Maplewood Township park system. It offers 3 ball fields, 3 tennis courts, a playground, picnic tables, shelter and bathrooms. We welcome the opening of the newly refurbished and modernized shelter house. You may choose to drop off your camper at Maplecrest Park in the morning (note that this location is not available in the afternoon). If you are dropping your camper off at the campsite, they may not be dropped off there prior to 9:00AM and when doing so you must take your child directly to the Camp Director and sign them in. Otherwise, your child will be bussed to the campsite in the morning from their bus stop location or from Y Morning Care if that is chosen. See below for bussing information.
- **MORNING BEFORE CAMP CARE DROP OFF-** If your child is registered for Before Camp Care drop off your child and sign them in at the YMCA Gym, 13 Jefferson Ave., Maplewood between 7:00 - 8:15am. If dropping off between 8:15-8:30am, take your child directly to the YMCA bus stop to put them on the bus.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW IF MY CHILD USES DAILY BUSSING?

SOMAPY BUSSING: Your patience during the first couple of days of each camp session will be appreciated as bus delays are expected while the children (and parents) learn the new routine. At other times, due to traffic delays and other unforeseen reasons, buses are sometimes late. If a bus

is late, wait a few minutes past the scheduled pick up/drop off time. After that, if a bus is very late, call the YMCA office (973-762-4145- suggestion: put this number in your cell phone directory now so that you'll have it ready in case you need it) to see if a delay has been reported. Your understanding in this regard is appreciated.

- **Bus Schedules:** You should receive a bus schedule by email on the Friday before the start of a 3 week session. The bus will start and end its day at the YMCA with stops at select locations (mostly schools and churches) in Maplewood, South Orange, Millburn and West Orange. Select a bus stop location by using the **Bus Stop List**. You can also find the **Bus Stop List** on that Friday in the SOMapY tab on the website or request one from the bus counselor or camp director. Be sure to enter that bus stop choice on the Camper Information form before you turn it in.
- **AM Pick-Up:** bus pick ups start at 8:30AM at the YMCA bus stop on West Parker Avenue (The YMCA bus stop is in the Columbia High School student parking lot on West Parker Ave. between the YMCA and the RR tracks) and then proceeds to the other bus stops on its schedule. Bus counselors are instructed to not leave a bus stop prior to its designated time if all campers designated for that stop have not yet arrived. Once the designated time has been reached the bus will not wait for no-shows.
- **PM Drop-Off:** The camp day ends at 3:30pm. Bus drop offs start around 3:45pm. The bus is due at the final stop at the YMCA bus stop on West Parker Avenue (see above for location) between 4:10 and 4:15pm. **Please be sure to sign out your camper when picking them up at the bus stop or at PM Extended Care.** Campers will not be allowed to be taken if the person picking them up has not been authorized. Bus Counselors may require showing an ID if they are unsure of a person's identity. Please inform the Bus Counselor ahead of time by completing an **Alternate Pick-Up Form**, if you wish to add anyone to be authorized for pick up. If there is no one at the bus stop to pick up your child, and if they do not have a walk home waiver, the bus counselor will keep the camper on the bus and take them back to the YMCA office. Bus counselors will not hold the bus past its designated drop off time nor will they allow a camper to walk home alone if they have no walk home waiver.
- **Missed Bus:**
 - AM:** If your camper misses the bus in the morning, you may bring him/her directly to the campsite. Campers may not be dropped off at the campsite prior to 9:00am, if dropping them off at the Camp site, you will need to take your child directly to the camp director and sign them in.
 - PM:** In the event you are late and miss picking up your child at their bus stop, you should go to the final bus stop on the bus schedule (which is the YMCA bus stop) to pick them up. If they are not picked up at the final YMCA bus stop, your child will be taken to the YMCA office where you may pick them up. When unclaimed campers are brought back to the YMCA, the office staff will start making phone calls to contact the camper's parents to see why they have not been picked up. If the parents cannot be reached then we will start calling emergency contacts. Late fee charges may apply.

WHERE DO I PICK UP MY CHILD IN THE AFTERNOON?

The camp day ends at 3:30pm at the JCC pool in West Orange (on some trip days the camp will not end there). All campers are bussed back to either your chosen PM bus stop or, if chosen, to the Y After Camp Care program at the Y on Jefferson Ave. See above for the bussing PM Drop Off information or below for After Camp Care information.

- **AFTERNOON AFTER CAMP CARE PICK UP-** Go to the YMCA Program Center, 13 Jefferson Ave., Maplewood between 4:15 - 7:00PM to get your child and sign them out. If you are late picking up your child we will continue to care for them. However, there will be a charge if your child is picked up after 7:00pm. The charge is \$15 if picked up after 7:00PM and \$30 if picked up after 7:30PM. After 8:00PM we are required to notify DYFS. They will decide how to proceed. If you see that you will be late picking up your child, please call the After Care direct phone line at 973-762-3658. Put this phone number in your cell phone directory now so that you'll have it ready just in case.
- **Please drive slowly and cautiously when driving in the YMCA parking lot.**

WHAT IF IT'S RAINING?

RAINY DAY: If the day begins with rain, the buses will do their regular pick-ups and then deliver the campers to our rainy day site instead of going to Maplecrest Park. On rainy days Maplecrest Park becomes a bus pick up location so parents who normally drop off their children at Maplecrest Park should wait with their campers in front of the park near the intersection of Courter Ave. and Oakland Terrace until the bus arrives which should be between 8:55-9:00AM.

The SOMapY rainy day site is **Marshall Elementary School, 262 Grove Rd., South Orange** (the rainy day site may change at the discretion of the school board). Many special rainy day activities are in store for those unexpected days. If it clears up completely, we may return back to the campsite later. When it rains at the campsite after camp starts, then we will call the busses to take the camp to the rain site for the remainder of the day.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD BE DOING AT CAMP?

ACTIVITIES: Activities include swimming, arts and crafts, nature, field sports, games, music/dance, and science. Certain full or half-days will be set aside for trips and special events. To build excitement and camp spirit, many special events will be held that are based on weekly themes. Trips will add variety and enhance our emphasis on nature and creativity with visits to nearby attractions, parks and museums. Entertainers or educational programs will also be brought to camp to enhance the camper's experience. Prior to the start of each session you will receive a general schedule of activities for that session. Refer to it every morning before camp to see if anything special is needed for that day. Check your camper's backpack daily for any updates to the schedule. If you have provided us with your email address, be sure to check that daily for any changes or updates.

- **SOMAPY Camp will have three different types of activities:**

Camper Group: These are activities in which their camper group engages together. They provide the opportunity to make peer friendships, get along with others and contribute to an in-group feeling. Games, sports, and arts and crafts, are examples of camper group activities.

All Camp: All Camp programs provide for development of spirit, a sense of unity and pride, as well as a chance for groups and individuals to display their talents. Carnivals, Camp Olympics, songfests, and field trips are examples of All Camp programs.

Individual (Club Time): Club time emphasizes the uniqueness and special interests of each camper. Campers will be able to choose activities such as sports, art, lanyards, etc., based on each camper's own interests and desires.

- **Specialist Led Activities:**

Many of the camper group activities will be led by activity specialists. The counselors of your child's camper group will take their group at assigned times to these specialists. The specialists will guide the campers, with the assistance of their counselors, through a variety of activities in that specialty area. Specialists planned on for this summer (subject to change) include: games, arts and crafts, science, music/dance, sports, karate, and tennis.

- **Games:** All of the games are designed to be challenging, fun, and safe. The various activities will encourage good sportsmanship, teamwork, positive attitudes, and lots of spirit and enthusiasm. Many of the games will be integrated into the weekly themes of camp. On hot days, games are played in the shade and/or water themed games are implemented to keep the campers cool.
- **Arts and Crafts:** Many unique and fun arts and crafts activities will be offered to the campers. Jewelry making, book cover designs and frame decorating are examples of possible projects. Many arts and crafts activities will also be tied into the weekly themes.
- **Science:** The science specialist will make science fun with many unusual science projects that will challenge your campers mind.
- **Music/Dance:** The musical and dance talents of your camper will be stimulated and developed by these specialists through a variety of creative, challenging and fun activities.

- **Sports Clinics:**

Campers could be participating in one of four mini-sports clinics. Each clinic will emphasize skills from basic through intermediate levels of instruction. Many of the skills are put to use in fun lead-up games. Competition will be de-emphasized, and good effort will be recognized allowing each camper to achieve his or her best and have fun.

FIVE SPORTS to be offered this summer (subject to change) are: Soccer, Baseball, Basketball, Karate and Tennis. Each of the five sports will not be offered every session. Information as to which sports are being offered for a session will be communicated to parents during the week prior to the start of each camp session.

- **SOCCER:** No special equipment needed by camper. Soccer balls and goals will be provided by the camp.
- **TENNIS:** No special equipment needed by camper. Rackets, balls and other equipment will be provided by the camp.
- **BASEBALL:** No special equipment needed by camper. The camp will have gloves, and the rest of the necessary baseball equipment. Campers may bring their own glove if they wish (be sure it's labeled with their name).
- **BASKETBALL:** No special equipment needed by camper. The camp will provide basketballs and goals.
- **KARATE:** No special equipment needed by camper.

- **SWIMMING:**

Swimming, including lessons and free swim, will take place Monday through Friday afternoons (except on some trip days) at the JCC MetroWest, 760 Northfield Ave., West Orange. This is an indoor swimming facility; therefore, swimming will take place on rainy days when lightning is not present. **Bathing caps must be worn by boys and girls who have hair shoulder length or longer** (swim caps can be purchased at local sporting goods stores or department stores). Your long haired child may be denied use of the pool if they have no bathing cap

Our philosophy is for children to learn to enjoy the water and to work toward swimming proficiency. Campers swimming ability will be tested the first day of camp and he/she will be placed in the appropriate level swim class. Learn to swim classes follow the guidelines of the YMCA Progressive Swim Program allowing campers to progress at their own pace through

different levels of swim proficiency. Upon demonstrating required swimming skills, campers may be re-tested at the end of a session and advanced to a higher swim level. Water playtime is also included after each swim lesson.

Our camp follows the pool safety regulations mandated by the State of New Jersey requiring the proper number of qualified lifeguards on duty in ratio to the number of swimmers. To add an extra layer of safety, our camp will also have all group counselors dressed to swim and they will be either in the water with the campers or on the deck acting as a lookout.

COMMUNICATION

During the summer we will be communicating with you through weekly emails. This will be our main source of communication with you so please let us know if there are any changes in your contact information.

Please feel free to approach your child's counselors at any time with questions or concerns. Our staff will be working very hard to make every child happy. Please understand that drop off time may not be a convenient time to have a lengthy discussion about your child, as the counselor has a lot going on during this time. If you feel that you need to have a longer conversation with the counselor- ask them to call you during the afternoon when they have a chance.

PEANUT SAFE FACILITY

Remember that we are a PEANUT SAFE FACILITY. Please make sure your child comes to camp without any nuts, nut products or peanut butter items.

Please don't hesitate to call us with any further questions or comments you may have now or in the future about camp. We are always open to your suggestions and ideas.

Yours in Camping,

**Coach Dave Berry,
SOMapY Camp Director, dberry@metroymcas.org or (973) 762-4145 x 117
and
Coach Love, Asst. SOMapY Camp Director**