

YMCA CAMP THUNDERBIRD



2012 Day Camp Parent Guide



YMCA CAMP THUNDERBIRD

Day Camp Program

YMCA MISSION

TO PUT CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE
THROUGH PROGRAMS THAT BUILD HEALTHY
SPIRIT, MIND AND BODY FOR ALL

WELCOME

The YMCA is the nation's leader in camping, offering outdoor programming for over 100 years. YMCA Camp Thunderbird serves children in day and resident camp programs each summer and we are excited to have your camper experience what we have to offer.

CAMP THUNDERBIRD

Camp Thunderbird is a place where campers have fun and parents find an environment that will help their children grow in spirit, mind, and body. Our activities are designed to provide campers with an exciting, safe, and enriching summer experience that is appropriate to their age, interests and abilities. Camp Thunderbird creates fun, challenging and memorable summers. It is a great place to be!

ADMISSIONS / ENROLLMENT/ WAIT LIST

Camp Thunderbird will not discriminate by race, color, sex, national origin, creed or special needs.

- A registration form must be completed for each camper to be enrolled in Camp Thunderbird Day Camp.
- **A Health Form must be completed for each camper to attend camp** which must include immunization dates or shot records. *The health form and camper confidential form must be filled out completely either by a parent or a physician. A camper may not stay at camp without a health form on file. Due May 1st.*
- Final camp payment must be made by the 15th of the month prior to the start of your child's camp session.
- Camp Thunderbird's Day Camp program fills all camper spots each session and will have a wait list for many sessions. If your camper is placed on a wait list due the session being full you will be advised by email. We will contact you by phone if we have openings and are able to move your camper off the wait list.
- The YMCA reserves the right to request withdrawal of a camper if one or more of the following conditions exist:
 1. The camper is not participating in or benefiting from the program.
 2. The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care for the camper.
 3. The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care to other enrolled campers due to the care needs or behavior of one camper.

CAMP LOCATION

CAMP THUNDERBIRD

Camp Thunderbird is located on a beautiful 100-acre site in Lake Wylie, SC just south of Charlotte, NC.

From Charlotte:

Travel south on I-77 toward Columbia/Rock Hill. Take exit 90 Carowinds Blvd. Turn right off the ramp, go through four traffic lights and at the fifth light turn left on Route 49 (Tryon St—York Rd).

Continue six miles crossing the Buster Boyd Bridge into Lake Wylie, SC. At the first light past the bridge, turn left. You will see the Thunderbird Barn on your right and the front gate on your left, just before the River Hills main gate. Welcome to Camp Thunderbird!

From Rock Hill:

Travel north on I-77 toward Charlotte. Take exit #90 Carowinds Blvd. Turn left off the ramp, go through five traffic lights and at the six light turn left on Route 49 (Tryon St—York Rd). Continue six miles crossing the Buster Boyd Bridge into Lake Wylie, SC. At the first light past the bridge, turn left. You will see the Thunderbird Barn on your right and the front gate on your left, just before the River Hills main gate. Welcome to Camp Thunderbird!

From Gastonia:

From I-85 South exit at New Hope Road (Hwy 279). Turn left at the top of the ramp onto New Hope Road. Follow Hwy #279 New Hope Rd through Gastonia until the road dead ends at Hwy 274. Turn left onto Hwy 274. At the next stoplight (Bi-Lo on left) turn left onto Hwy 49. At the 3rd stoplight turn right. You will see the Thunderbird barn on your right and the front gate on your left, just before the River Hills main gate. Welcome to Camp Thunderbird!

WHAT TO EXPECT

Going off to summer camp is a very exciting experience for campers and parents. It's very natural for everyone to be anxious about the first day of camp and meeting new friends. Hopefully, the following information will familiarize everyone with camp procedures and minimize "first-day" anxiety. Camp Thunderbird has well-trained staff that are focused on meeting the needs of individual campers and are committed to serving as excellent role models.

SUGGESTIONS FROM "EXPERIENCED" PARENTS

- Dress for the weather. **The camp day will continue rain or shine.**
- Campers are very active during camp. Therefore, have your camper wear "play clothes" that can become dirty.
- Send or purchase a lunch, swimsuit, towel and a (frozen) water bottle every day. An inexpensive backpack is useful for campers to keep personal items together.
- Label all items with camper's name including: swimsuits, towels, water bottles, lunch boxes and backpacks.
- There are more activities at camp than your child could participate in during a one week session. If your camper did not do all the activities he/she wanted, encourage him or her to look forward to another session.

DAILY PROGRAM

The **Younger Camp** program (ages 5 - 8) is broken into two groups, ages 5 & 6 and ages 7 & 8. Activities are progressively structured to challenge each child according to their age. Campers stay with their group's counselor throughout the entire day. The program is planned to give children an introduction to a wide variety of camp activities, along with providing them the opportunity for creative expression.

Campers (ages 9 - 12) participate in the **Older Camp** program. This program is designed to create challenges and encourage development of personal goals. The program ensures that each child will be allowed to choose from a variety of fun and motivating activities.

DAY CAMP SCHEDULE

7:30-8:30	Camper Drop-off
8:30-9:00	Morning Assembly and Devotion
9:00-11:15	Land Activities Rotation* Archery, Arts & Crafts, Group Games, Challenge Course (ages 7 - 12), Sports, Nature, Riflery, and Group Electives
11:30-12:00	Lunch (Parents Provide Lunch or Purchase on a weekly basis)
12:15-2:30	Water Activities Rotation* Banana Boat, Water Toys, Water Slide, Canoe and Kayaking, Sailing (9-12 yr olds), Free Swim
2:45-3:30	Story Time (ages 5 & 6) Canteen (Ages 7 - 12)
3:15-4:15	Group Electives (ages 7 - 12)
3:30-4:15	Canteen (ages 5 & 6)
4:30-5:00	Closing Ceremony and Devotion
5:00-6:00	Afternoon Camper Pick- up

* Each camper group will participate in two land activities each morning and one water activity, plus free swim, each afternoon.

BEFORE CAMP BEGINS

CAMP FEES PAID: PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

June Camp Sessions	(1, 2A, 2B, and 3A)	Balance due May 15 th
July Camp Sessions	(3B, 4A, 4B, and 5A)	Balance due June 15 th
August Camp Sessions	(5B, and 6A)	Balance due July 15 th

Refund and Cancellation Policy for Day Camp:

- The \$50 deposit is non-refundable.
- The BALANCE of a session can be refunded if cancellation occurs 2 weeks prior to the start of the session to be cancelled.
- The "Responsible Party" will be accountable for the BALANCE of their session if they do not follow the cancellation timeline stated above.
- All changes and cancellations must be IN WRITING either through US Mail, Fax 980-235-7025 Attn: Day Camp Registrar, or email campthunderbirdregistrar@ymcacharlotte.org.

FORMS THAT MUST BE COMPLETED:

The following forms are enclosed and must be completed and mailed to YMCA Camp Thunderbird. To ensure a child's continued participation at camp, all forms must be received by **May 1st**, or at the time of registration.

- **Health History Form** –To ensure good health and ability to enter into normal camp activities, parents must **complete the health history form, have it signed by a medical doctor, and returned to Camp Thunderbird by May 1st**. The doctor's signature verifies that he/she has examined your child within the past year. A camper may not attend camp without a completed health form.
- **Camper Confidential Form**— A camper confidential form must be completed by camper and parent. This form is designed to help your child's counselor know your child and his/her needs better.
- **Optional Charges** – Camp merchandise, camper overnights, and lunch are available for purchase prior to camp.
 - **Overnights** (Sessions 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A) cost is \$50. Campers may attend overnights that are on the closing day of the session they are attending.
 - **Camp Merchandise** - Forms will be available to you late in the spring. Your child will also be given a form on opening day of the session they attend camp. Please return the form with your payment. Forms will not be processed without payment. Your child's merchandise will be sent home with them midway through the session.
 - **Lunch** - We will provide a nutritious lunch for your child for \$35 per week. Must sign up and pay for lunch at least one week prior to session attending.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

- Arrival – Please bring your children to camp between 7:30am and 8:30am. Opening Ceremony begins promptly at 8:30am.
- Parents will need to provide the code word they put on the registration form to pick up their child.
- Each camper is signed IN and OUT daily by parent/guardian or their designee.
- Window stickers will be given to parents on the first day of camp.
- Parents will be responsible for providing the correct identification when signing out their camper. To ensure the camper's safety, YMCA Camp Thunderbird reserves the right not to release a camper to "unauthorized" individuals.
- Parents who wish to pick up their camper early may do so at the camp office. The camp property is very large; please send a note with your child in the morning or call 30 minutes ahead, so we may arrange to have your camper waiting for you. Otherwise, please be prepared to wait at least 20 – 30 minutes in order to gather your camper and their belongings for departure. Normal daily pick-up time is between 5:00-6:00 PM.

LATE PICK-UP

- Staff are scheduled until 6:00 p.m. However, staff will not leave a camper unattended.
- \$1.00 per minute will be charged per camper for every minute that a camper remains after 6:00 p.m. Payment is expected upon pick-up.
- Chronic late pick-up may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

RETURNED CHECK CHARGE

There will be a \$35 charge for any check returned to YMCA Camp Thunderbird. After two returned checks, we will accept only money orders. Outstanding balances resulting from uncollected returned checks must be rectified before the child may enroll or attend any YMCA of Greater Charlotte program.

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP

LUNCH

Pack a nutritious lunch for your camper, including a drink. Camp does not have refrigeration for lunches. Please do not send milk or mayonnaise based products. A small cooler with the camper's name works best for packing lunches and drinks. A (frozen) water bottle is recommended. **Please note:** Water fountains are located throughout camp.

Purchase Lunch Option – We will provide a nutritious lunch for your child for \$35 per week. Camper's must sign up and pay for lunch at least one week prior to the session they are attending.

SNACK / CANTEEN

The Camp Canteen will be open every afternoon for campers. Soft drinks, bottled water, chips, pretzels, and candy are snack options for campers. Campers are limited to one snack item and one drink per day at the canteen.

Camper's special dietary and food allergy needs will be met when necessary. Please be sure to note these on your camper's health form and confidential form to help your child's counselor and the Health Center staff know your child's special needs.

CLOTHING

Please send appropriate clothing with your child, taking into consideration the weather forecast and the camp activities. On rainy days, campers will need a poncho or rain coat. We encourage you to have your camper wear play clothes to camp as your camper will be participating in outdoor activities and may get dirty. **For safety reasons, sandals are not permitted at camp; please be sure your child wears sneakers and socks to camp daily not sandals or crocs. (Please refer to swimwear guidelines below.)**

SUNSCREEN

To help prevent sunburn, it is required that parents apply sunscreen prior to arriving at camp. In addition, parents should provide campers with sunscreen to keep with them throughout the day. Staff will aid children in applying sunscreen before water activities and as needed throughout the day.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Camp is a natural setting to retreat from the amenities of electronic technology and get more in touch with peers. Toys, radios, iPods / mp3 players, electronic games, cellular phones, beepers and walk-mans do not fit into this setting. Counselors will give any of the above items to directors if they are brought to camp. They will be returned to campers parents during evening pick-up. Please leave these items at home. In addition, please leave firearms, fireworks, knives, matches, lighters, tobacco products, expensive items, illegal drugs, money, and trading cards at home. Canned repellent is not allowed at camp. Insect repellent must be in the form of lotion or wipes. Aerosol cans become a safety hazard around other children and the campfire. **Please do not send money to camp.**

Please Note: Please examine your camper's selection of clothing which might carry offensive slogans or symbols. In a large camp community, these items can result in discord between campers. Our goal is to create a community where all persons feel welcome and accepted.

Swimwear Guidelines: Swimwear should provide complete coverage, fasten securely and be designed for active wear. Two piece suits are allowed if they have one tie, accompanied by another fastener. No triangle bikini tops and bottoms that tie are allowed.

Swim Bands: Your child will be given a swim band that they wear as a necklace at the pool. This is a safety procedure that helps staff distinguish between swimmers and non swimmers. Please be sure your child wears their swim band to camp every day.

LOST AND FOUND

We will make every effort to return lost and found items while your camper is in camp. Please mark all items with a permanent marker or laundry label with your child's first and last name for easy identification. Lost and Found will be kept for two weeks after your child's camp session and then will be donated to a local charity. If you discover something is missing, please check lost and found immediately. Camp Thunderbird is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged clothing or equipment.

MEDICATIONS/ HEALTH CENTER

Health Center

The health center is staffed and open for urgent medical situations. To ensure good health and ability to enter into normal camp activities, the enclosed health history form must be completed by parents and returned to Camp Thunderbird by May 1st. Accident insurance is not included in the camp fee. Camp is not responsible for eye glasses that are lost or broken at camp. Routine scrapes and cuts will be treated by our staff. General medications and first aid supplies are provided at no cost to campers. In the case of a serious illness or accident involving your child, the camp will contact you directly. In the event you cannot be reached, your authorization signature on your child's health form allows us to secure prompt treatment. If you can not be reached in the event of an emergency, medical cost outside of our Health Center will be billed to the camper's parents at the end of the session.

Medications

Campers check-in all medicines with nurses upon arrival to camp. *No medications are allowed to stay with campers (with the exception of inhalers for some asthmatics and epi-pens).* Camper medications are dispensed by registered nurses. South Carolina state law stipulates that only medications prescribed by your health care provider may be dispensed at camp. This includes but is not limited to: any maintenance medications, behavioral disorder medications, antibiotics, herbal/homeopathic medicines, vitamins, ear/eye drops, inhalers, and epinephrine ("epi") pens. All medicines must be in their original container noting RX number, campers name, physician's name, and dosage. We recommend that you only bring the amount needed for the duration of camp plus 1 extra dose. The Camp Health Center stocks a variety of over the counter medications (OTC). However, if your child requires a specific OTC on a daily basis, you must provide the medication in the original and unopened container and it must be noted by your physician on the health form as a necessary daily medication. At the end of the session leftover prescription medications can be picked up at the Health Center. All unclaimed medications will be thrown away. All prescription medications and/or hospital care during camp is billed to parents at the close of the camp session.

Behavioral Medications

We want your camper to be successful at camp. While we think of camp as being a relaxing and fun time, it's important to remember that campers are learning new skills, having lots of new social interactions, needing to concentrate on instructions from counselors and having fun in all their activities. In keeping with The American

Academy of Pediatrics and The American Camping Association joint policy statement; we are requiring all campers who normally take psychotropic medicines and are in long term psychotropic therapy to not have elective interruption of their medicines while at camp. ("Med Holiday")

Camper Ear Drops

Otitis Externa or swimmers ear is a common condition seen at camp due to the amount of time the campers spend in the water. In order to decrease the risk of infection camp provides ear drops daily after all water activities. These drops are a mixture of rubbing alcohol and white vinegar. The purpose of the drops is to dry the camper's ear canal and create an uncomfortable environment for bacteria to grow. Please inform the camp if your camper has ear tubes by making a note on the health form.

HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

As an ACA Accredited Camp, we are required to screen all campers for good health prior to admission. We request that no campers come to camp ill or with any contagious condition. Your camper needs to be fever free for 24 hours and off medication. We reserve the right to send your camper home for illness. If you have any questions regarding the health of your child prior to camp, please feel free to contact the Head Nurse 803-831-9203.

DISCIPLINE

Camp rules are designed to enhance the happiness and safety of all campers. Directors will contact parents to let them know if there is an on-going behavior problem. Children who do not demonstrate appropriate behavior, in the judgment of the directors, will be sent home from camp. Early dismissal from camp will not warrant the refund of fees. Each camper has an opportunity to earn "rewards" throughout their stay at camp. This system works as an incentive rather than a disciplinary measure. It is based on the theory of logical consequence. Positive behavior results in "rewards" received; negative behavior results in a "reminder" given. This system promotes a positive environment and encourages personal responsibility.

General Camp Rules

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Caring: | Keep your hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.
Keep rocks and other objects on the ground. |
| Honesty: | Tell the truth
Do not steal |
| Respect: | Use appropriate language, not profanity
Respect your counselor and fellow campers
Take care of equipment, property and your environment
Treat others like you would want to be treated |
| Responsibility: | Stay with your group at all times
Keep up with your belongings |

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT DAMAGES

Parents are financially responsible for intentional damage to all equipment and facilities caused by their camper.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

Personal responsibility and group cooperation are important elements of the camp experience. Mature, caring counselors work with campers on the importance of caring for one's personal belongings, assisting in daily camp clean-up, and pitching in on general camp tasks known as "shared responsibilities". We strive to imprint these characteristics on each child so they will carry over to his/her home and school.

PARENT COMMUNICATION & EVALUATIONS

- **Open House** - All campers and their families are invited to visit camp during our Open House from 1-4 pm on March 25. Tour days are March 11 and April 15.
- **Group Assignments** - Available on www.campthunderbird.org by 8 pm on the Friday before your session begins. Your user name and password required to view group assignments will be emailed to you before camp begins.
- **First Day Notes** – Given to all parents as they drop their children off the first day.
- **Picture Postcard** – You will receive a picture of your campers group with a hand written note from their counselor after camp. Included will be an evaluation form for you to tell us how camp can be improved.
- We appreciate your immediate comments and feedback about our staff and programs. If you see or hear of a problem with any part of our program or staff, please contact the Camp Director at 704-716-4100 so immediate corrections can be made. Our Camp Directors and Head Counselors are available at any time to answer your questions or concerns.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

Security

Camp Thunderbird is under the jurisdiction of the River Hills Security and the York County Sheriff. Rivers Hills is camp's neighboring community whose guard gate is adjacent to the Camp's front entrance. The River Hills Security Force is comprised of over twenty licensed police officers, 6 patrol cars, and a rescue squad. Every 3 hours, a patrol car patrols camps roads and keeps the camp gate closed each night from midnight until 6:00 AM.

All Camp Staff must wear photo ID's at all times while on duty. All Camp Staff are interviewed, reference checked, drug tested (pre and random), and background checked prior to working with children. All visitors are required to check into the office to receive a visitor badge. Visitors on site without badge will be escorted off site and possibly face prosecution.

Catawba Nuclear Station

In the event of an emergency at The Catawba Nuclear Station the following actions would be put in place:

- Duke Energy notifies state and county officials of emergency.
- Sirens would sound (fire, police, and rescue units on patrol may sound sirens as well)
- Should the sirens sound, Camp Staff will listen to radio/TV for information regarding the type of emergency and course of action.
- Camp Thunderbird participants gathered and accounted for inside dining hall.
- In the event of an evacuation warning, Camp Thunderbird participants would be transferred from Camp Thunderbird to Herring Ridge YMCA (*A camp operated by Camp Thunderbird which consists of cabins, dining hall, and recreational activities.*) near Lenoir, NC.
- All camp buses, vans, and staff cars, would gather at the dining hall and all participants will be loaded into these vehicles.
- Vehicles would travel caravan style to:
SC 49 South, go straight through light at Bi-Lo onto Hwy 557, turn right at next light onto Ridge Road, turn right onto 321 North towards Hickory, turn right onto Hwy 18 towards Lenoir, travel 12 miles and Herring Ridge is on the right.
- Once at Herring Ridge – All participants would gather for roll call and instructions.
- The Camp Staff will practice this drill two times per year.

Lock Down

In the event of a threat, Camp Thunderbird participants would be gathered inside the dining hall and be accounted for. The camp gates would be closed. All Dining Hall tables would be pushed against windows around the perimeter of the room. The camp staff will practice this drill 2 times per year

Severe Weather

Camp Thunderbird is connected to the National Weather Service through NAXRAD radar computer system, radio alerts, and warning siren on the edge of the camp property. Text messaging of all warnings and alerts are provided in real time to Thunderbird Director Cell Phones and triggers the warning horn to be sounded. Should the warning sound, all participants will be moved to one of the following shelters (depending on their location):

Basement of the Office

Bathrooms of Cabins 23-35 or 1-10

Shower Houses

Participants and Staff would remain in the shelter until the warning has passed.

**** In the event of evacuation, a message will be placed on the camp voice mail. Once all the campers have reached Herring Ridge/ Camp Harrison, Parents/Guardians will be contacted. Please do not attempt to pick up your child at camp.***

BUSINESS OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY – FRIDAY 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

SATURDAY – CLOSED

SUNDAY – CLOSED

(after hours contact Health Center)

CONTACT NAMES AND NUMBERS

MAIN OFFICE	704-716-4100
FAX LINE	704-716-4101
HEALTH CENTER	803-831-9203

campthunderbird.org