



NEW FRIENDS CONFIDENCE AND GREAT ROLE MODELS

**PARENT HANDBOOK
DISCOVERY CAMP**

■ OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of Discovery Camp is to provide all campers a sustained, creative, fun, enriching and educational experience in an outdoor environment. Our efforts work towards the development of the whole person, with a focus on the Y threefold philosophy of spirit, mind and body, and development of the Ys core values of Honesty, Respect, Caring and Responsibility.

■ PROGRAM HOURS

Monday – Friday from 9am to 4pm. Both half and full day programs are held at nearby Osborn School rain or shine! Campers are not allowed on school property before 8:45 am unless they are enrolled in Extended Care. **Under no circumstances are children to be on school property before 7:30 am**

Osborn School

10 Osborn Road
Rye, NY

→ Located at the corner of Boston Post Road

■ EXTENDED CARE

AM Extended Care is held directly on-site at the Osborn School. PM Extended participants are bused at 4:15 pm from Osborn to the Rye YMCA, where they must be picked up by 6:30 p.m. Parents may register for extended day programs prior to each session. Campers will be supervised during these program hours.

In the afternoon they will have a choice of swimming, game room, teen lounge, the gym or small activities in our child care room. They will be provided with a snack each day.

AM 7:30 - Camp

PM Camp - 6:30 p.m.

■ PARENT ORIENTATIONS

For new and currently registered participants, parents will have an opportunity to meet some of the staff and receive information related to camp. The Open House will give parents a chance to meet their counselors, see the camp and ask our camp leadership any questions you may have.

Parent Nights

Thursday, May 12th, 7pm at the Rye Y

Wednesday, June 1st, 7pm at the Rye Library

*Please plan to make these events parents only.

Camp Open House

Friday, June 24th between 4 and 5:30pm at the Osborn School

■ PARENT DROP OFF & PICKUP

For your convenience, please observe the designated traffic patterns and the instructions of camp staff. There is limited parking available and we do work hard to make sure the line moves smoothly so please keep your questions brief during these times. However please don't hesitate to contact us via email during the day.

DROP OFF – 8:30am to 9am

PICKUP – 3:45pm to 4:15pm

- **DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CAMPER TO GET OUT ON THEIR OWN.**
- Please stay in your car. Your child will be taken out of the car by Camp Staff.
- If you have children to be dropped off at both driveways, use the Osborn Road driveway for your convenience.
- AM Extended Care drop-off for all campers is at the Upper Camp dropoff

LOWER CAMP → Explorer's Camp (4 & 5 year olds) and the Pioneers (K-1 group) should be dropped off using the Osborn Road Driveway. If you choose to park and walk with your camper please make sure you check in/out with their group's leader before departing.

UPPER CAMP → Trailblazers (2-3 grade) and Pathfinders (4-5 grade), Adventure, Sports & Specialty Camps groups should be dropped off using the Boston Post Road driveway.

Late Arrivals- after 9:00 am

Any child arriving after the camp day has begun (9:00am) **MUST** report to the Camp Office first in order to be marked correctly on the daily attendance sheet. After checking in a staff member will bring your camper to his or her group to start their day.

Late Pickup- after 4:15pm

If you are going to be later than 4:15pm and your child is not registered for Extended Care PM please do your best to inform the camp office. At 4:15pm all campers that have not been picked up will be transferred to the Extended Care PM bus and go to the Rye YMCA. There they will be checked in with Extended Care and you will need to pick them up at the Y as soon as possible. If late pickup occurs consistently, you will be charged for Extended Care.

Early Dismissal

If you need to pick up your child early, please inform your child's Unit Leader, Village Chief or Camp Directors in writing as early as possible indicating the pick up time. Please report to the Camp Office to sign your child out.

■ PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGN OUT

Only the indicated "Parents" on the registration form and those listed under "Emergency Contacts and Pickup Authorizations" will be allowed to pickup your camper. Absolutely no exceptions. We maintain a strict policy and will not release a child unless the Camp Directors speak with the authorizing parents directly. Notes will not suffice unless they are handed directly from authorized parents to camp staff.

- **Parent Pickup Cards**
 - Before the start of camp you will receive two "Parent Pickup Cards" which will have your camper's name on them.
 - Please place these in the window of your car when picking up your child. The card is the indication to our staff that this is the appropriate person to pick up your child.
 - You may only share these with people you have previously authorized on the list.
 - If someone arrives without a card they will need to present a positive photo ID. Your child will not be released if the name does not appear on our authorized list.
 - These cards should be kept in safe and secure space when not in use.
- Anyone picking up a camper must have positive photo identification with them and may be asked to present it at time of camper sign out and pickup.
- Please notify the Camp Director, Village Chief or Unit Leader in writing if the camper is to be picked up early.

■ CAMP COMMUNICATIONS

Weekly Camp Updates

Each week the Camp Director will send an update for the camp program that reviews the weekly schedule, reminders, upcoming events, the camp trips and special guests. You are more than welcome to respond to the emails and to clarify any concerns you may have. Please be sure we have your email correct on the registration form as that is our only link.

Camp Blog – <http://ryeymccamp.blogspot.com/>

You can find the link for the camp blog in our weekly updates and on our website. The blog has camp video, session photos, important communications and a whole lot more. Check it frequently to get the best picture of what's happening at camp.

Camp Website – www.ryeycamp.org

The camp website holds all our forms, calendars, handbooks, and other important information to prepare for camp each year.

"My First Camp"

This packet will help new parents prepare their campers (and themselves) for their first camp experience. We share tips and best practices to make you and your camper feel as comfortable as possible on the first day.

Camp Photos

Once camp begins you will find a post on our website that shares our external photo gallery of camp. Here you can pick photos, purchase ones you look or copy them for your own.

Friday Camper Notes

Each Friday you get a note from your group leader that will share how your camper's week has been. The first Friday will be a quick list of the activities your camper has done and how they are doing in swim lessons. The second Friday of each session you will get a handwritten letter giving you a little more detail. Our goal is to keep you connected to the camp experience.

Camper Journals

If you are finding that you would like more contact with our staff, you are more than welcome to start what we call a "camper journal." A simple memo book will do. You can write notes, suggestions and reminders in the book, pass it along to our staff and they will share it with their group. They can then respond to you and maintain a continuing dialogue.

■ ABSENCES

If your child is sick or unable to attend the program, please contact the Y office before 9:00 am. Days missed are not refundable. By enrolling, you are reserving the time, space, staffing and provisions for your child whether your child attends or not.

■ PARENT VISITS

Camp gives kids the opportunity to explore new skills, meet new kids and just have fun in a welcoming environment. Through our many combined years of camping, we find that campers do best when they are allowed to conquer these challenges on their own; however we certainly understand when parents want to check in on their camper's well being.

Parent visits are permitted by appointment only and for short durations. Please call the Camp Director to set up a date and time. For your child's protection, a Visitor's Pass must be obtained at the Camp Office. Please note that for safety reasons, we ask that swim lessons be observed from the Pool Lobby only.

■ ALL-CAMP PHOTO DAY

A professional photographer visits the Rye Y Summer Day Camp during Session 2. If your child is registered for Session II; you will automatically receive an order form for the photo packages. If your child is not attending Session II, and would like to join us for Photo Day, please notify the Camp Director.

■ CAMPER HEALTH & SAFETY

First Aid

All Camp first aid is performed by a staff member who is certified to provide appropriate care. Campers who receive first aid will have their injuries recorded in the First Aid Log Book by the Office Manager or appropriate staff person. Our Office Manager will call parents to inform them of minor injuries at his/her discretion. Experience has shown that the most frequent care is for scrapes and bruises which result from improper clothing and footwear.

Any camper who requires further medical attention will be transported to the White Plains Hospital. Parents will be immediately notified in the event of emergency medical care. The Ys consulting physician and health advisor is Dr. Robert Leviton (not on site).

Sunscreen/Insect Repellant

The Rye YMCA does not provide sunscreen and bug repellant for your child (Our staff will help the Explorers apply spray sunscreen style). We will teach your child how to apply the products you send along. We suggest that you apply any sunscreen or bug repellant in the morning before camp begins, and then remind your child to re-apply the same after using the swimming pool. Camp Staff will also remind the children, and we will allow time for this important camp safety element.

Storage and Administration of Medication

ANY prescribed medication and over-the-counter drug MUST be accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form. Prescribed and over-the-counter (OVT) medication for campers must be kept in original containers bearing the pharmacy label or OVT box. All medications prescribed for campers will be kept in locked storage and will be self-administered by camper, witnessed and documented by the Office Manager or other appropriate staff. Medication prescribed for campers and brought from home shall only be administered if it is from the original container, and there is written permission from the parent/guardian which includes the name of the camper, day(s) and time(s) to be administered, dose to be administered, name of medication, and signature of parent/guardian. Campers will not be allowed to carry their own medication. Inhalers and epi-pens may stay with your camper upon request. **The parent and the Camp Office Manger or designee must complete the Medication Consent Form and Medication Checklist.** All forms will be kept on file.

Medical Policy

The Y has a mandatory contagious disease policy. A sick child will be required to remain out of the program until a doctor's note states that the child is no longer contagious. This note must be sent or brought to the Camp Director to be kept on file. Parents will be contacted if, in the Camp Director's judgement, the camper should be sent home. Please do not send your child to camp if he/she is sick and/or running a fever.

Health History & Immunization Records

State law requires that we have on file a complete immunization record and medical health history for your child. We must have these before your child enters camp. **No child will be allowed to attend camp without a properly completed and signed health history and immunization record.**

■ WHAT TO WEAR

Parents should keep in mind that campers are in an outdoor environment all day long. Every day clothing required at camp: bathing suit, towel, sneakers, shorts, T-shirt. **Only sneakers (no sandals) will be allowed at camp.** On rainy/cool days, please have your child dress appropriately.

■ WHAT TO BRING

We recommend you send a labeled backpack with: Bathing suit, towel, lunch, full water bottle, sunscreen, snack and an extra shirt just in case. Each item MUST be marked with your child's name, which will aid in keeping track of them.

Lunch, Water Bottle & Snack

Please send your child to camp with a hearty and HEALTHY lunch and beverage each day. We prefer that you use a clear disposable bag or similar as lunches must fit into their group bins and into the refrigerator. Large lunch boxes and coolers will not fit and will have to stay in your child's bag. Please clearly mark your child's lunch and group. Please do not send candy or soda.

We also ask that you send a full water bottle each day so we can keep your child hydrated. We do not provide snack time during the day but you are welcome to send one. Please pack the snack separately from lunch.

■ WHAT TO LEAVE AT HOME

As we work to maintain a positive outdoor experience for our campers, it is important that certain items remain at home. This will also ensure that these items are not lost or stolen while at camp. The Rye YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Cell Phones, Personal Electronic Devices (iPods, DS), Pokemon cards (or similar) and radios are not permitted at camp and will be confiscated until the end of the day.

Discovery Camp also prohibits any weapons or representation of weapons, matches, lighters, drugs, alcohol, and other and illegal substances. Discovery Camp intends to maintain a clean and appropriate environment for our campers and staff. Please do not allow your campers to wear clothing with any references to alcohol, drugs, or any other explicit nature as they are not permitted.

■ CAMP ACTIVITIES

The Camp Director schedules the weekly activities. Activities include: arts & crafts, gym games, field games, group games, music, nature, sports, and swimming. Special Guests will provide added enrichment for all campers. Field trips are scheduled for Discovery camp each week. In the event of rain, camp remains in operation. We arrange an alternative trip schedule, and plan indoor activities in case of bad weather. Sports camp also remains in operation during inclement weather; proper shoes should be worn for indoor use. Please note that the Explorers do not go on field trips but rather have Special Guest programs brought to them at camp.

■ SWIMMING

Campers will be bused, round trip, between Osborn School and the Y for daily swim. During summer camp, we will teach the national Y SWIM LESSONS program to all Explorer, Pioneer and Trailblazer campers. The children will receive a 45 minute swim period consisting of a swim lesson Monday through Thursday and a 45 minute free swim on Friday. Pathfinders have free swim on a daily basis except for those who need instruction to become an independent swimmer. Those attending PM Extended Care may also have a recreational swim in the afternoon. Campers are bussed over daily to the Rye Y for their swim lessons.

The campers wear color-coded swim caps to differentiate swimming levels. Each camper will be provided a labeled swim cap at the beginning of the summer. We will keep their cap here at the Y. Please pack a bathing suit and towel each day.

Swim tests are given on the first day of each session and campers designated to a group according to their swim ability. Red swimmers are beginner swimmers and swim with a ratio of 1 counselor or swim instructor to three campers. Yellow is a more advanced beginner/intermediate class with a ratio of 1:6. Purple and blues are intermediate and advanced swimmers who also swim with a ratio of 1:6. With the help of camp counselors our aquatics staff provides swim instruction to the campers enthusiastically. We want every camper to have a great experience in the pool, learning new skills and improving their swimming everyday! We accomplish this while maintaining as our top priority. In order to ensure a safe experience, we have our campers swim one at a time with their counselors and swim instructors. While children wait for their turn we ask that they sit on the wall in order to maintain safety in the pool area. In addition to swim instructors we have from 2 to 5 lifeguards on deck watching over the. We have seen tremendous progress throughout our summers and are excited to continue this year

If you are interested in continuing swim lessons here at the Y in the fall you can request that your child be evaluated during their camp swim time. Please contact Vickie at <mailto:vickie@ryemca.org> or speak with their counselors during drop off.

■ PIZZA FRIDAYS

Each Friday we offer pizza for our campers. We charge \$2 a slice and you will need to place your order no later than Wednesday of each week. We ask for the early order so that we have time to count and create lists for each group and make sure we have enough pizza. We order over 500 slices so the early order is important. Please send in a small envelope with your campers name and group and # of slices. You will still need to provide a drink for lunch that day.

■ FIELD TRIPS

Pioneer, Trailblazer and Pathfinder full-day campers enjoy Field Trips once a week. Information is sent home on the first day of each session regarding anything the child may need to bring as well as other specific information. We contract with local commercial bus provider, Royal Coach. Campers **must** wear their Camp T-shirts on all off-site trips. One T-shirt per child will be provided by the Y on your child's first field trip. Campers failing to wear their camp T-shirts on field trip day will be given a new one and you will be charged accordingly. Campers do not swim on the day of their field trip.

If you choose not to send your camper, you must notify the Camp Directors in writing and hand it to him/her at least one day prior to the trip. This will allow us to properly plan an alternative day for your camper.

Please pack their lunch as usual. It will be stored in large coolers in each bus and will be brought to their picnic/lunch area during meal time.

■ TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Policy for bus trips to and from the Y as well as on field trips. Parents should review the following guidelines with their camper.

- Campers should remain a minimum of 5' from the road at all times and should not approach the bus until it comes to a complete stop and campers are instructed to load.
- Campers are to remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- All buses are equipped with seat belts, which are required for all staff and campers before the bus can move.
- Unloading is to be done safely under staff supervision.
- Reaching or leaning out of bus windows or doors is not allowed.
- Opening the **Emergency Exit Door**, except in an emergency or under the direction of a staff member, will not be tolerated.
- Disturbing other passengers is rude and will not be allowed.
- Disobeying the bus driver or a counselor may result in loss of transportation privileges.
- Throwing objects in or out of the bus is not allowed.
- Proper language and behavior is expected of all campers at all times.

■ STAFF

The Day Camp Staff at Discovery Camp is comprised of college, post-college and exceptional high school students. Each group of campers is assigned counselors and maintains an excellent staff ratio, meeting and exceeding the national standards.

Explorers	1 : 6
Pioneers	1 : 8
Trailblazers	1 : 8
Pathfinders	1 : 10

The success of our camp and the positive and fulfilling experience of our campers is largely reliant on our directors and counselors. That's why our full-time, dedicated and professional staff works year-round to recruit, secure and train the best possible staff to lead our camp. Our staff goes through a rigorous hiring process, including background and reference checks. We also run a lengthy staff training and development program, focusing on coping skills to anticipate every possible circumstance from emergencies to homesick campers. Leadership staff receive CPR and First Aid training. Many others are certified as lifeguards and activity specialists. Our staff strive to make every camper feel comfortable and welcome in our daily programs.

■ CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

Our Child Abuse Prevention Policy prohibits our counselors, staff and volunteers from babysitting or being alone with children they meet at Y programs. Please respect our policy by not asking our counselors to babysit. The policy was instituted to protect your child, the staff and the Y.

■ ENVIRONMENT

Please inform your child that taking care of the trees and outdoor areas surrounding the camp is essential to the protection of the environment. All garbage should be deposited in the designated bins located throughout the camp. Respect for the trees and property on the campsite is necessary to maintain a beautiful and protected environment.

■ PARENTAL ASSISTANCE

Your child's positive experience at camp is based on the assumption that you are our partners. We, as you do, take our jobs very seriously. We set high goals and strive to reach and maintain these goals throughout the summer. In order to do so, we need your assistance on the home front:

1. Please send your child to camp READY for camp each day.
2. Please make sure your child has a healthy lunch and is eating it every day.
3. Communicate problems and concerns that you may have. The Camp Director, your counselors and staff leadership will be best able to help if you keep them informed. The more we know the better your experience will be!

With your cooperation we will be able to meet the needs and safety of all our campers.

■ LICENSING AGENCY

The Rye YMCA receives its permit to operate a children's camp, as required by State law, from the New York State Department of Health. The camp is inspected twice yearly. Inspection reports are filed at the Westchester County Department of Health, 145 Huguenot Street, New Rochelle, New York, 10801.

In addition, since 1993, the Rye YMCA has voluntarily and successfully completed the accreditation program with the American Camping Association (ACA). ACA Accreditation verifies that a camp complies with up to 300 individual health, safety and program quality standards which go beyond Department of Health requirements. We have agreed to uphold a stringent code of camp and management practices recognized among professionals as basic to camp operations. This is the highest camp certification in the land. For more information: www.acacamps.org.

■ CAMPER BEHAVIOR POLICY

Our staff is trained and experienced with handling an assortment of behavior issues. This process is described below and we ask that you speak with your camper and discuss what the following means to them.

Progressive disciplinary steps in remedying negative behavior:

1. The camper will receive a verbal warning.
2. Camper will be removed from their group for an allotted amount of time or special privileges will be revoked.
3. If the concern continues the parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to take part in the disciplinary steps with the Camp Director.
4. Any continuation of negative behavior beyond this point is considered serious and will result in the camper's suspension or expulsion from Discovery Camp.

The following negative behaviors will not be tolerated. At the discretion of the counselor, he/she may choose to have the camper speak with the Camp Director as well.

- Disrespecting staff, other campers and camp property
- Any form of verbal or physical bullying
- Inappropriate name calling and foul language
- Not following directions
- Minor hitting, shoving or pushing
- Straying from the group
- Throwing objects (rocks, sticks, etc.)

The following serious negative behaviors will be immediately addressed by the Camp Director and at their discretion, may result in the immediate expulsion or suspension from Discovery Camp without reimbursement. Please understand that our goal is to provide a nurturing and positive experience for each of our campers. Those few campers who choose to create a negative experience for others are not tolerated.

- Aggressive physical contact (hitting, biting and shoving)
- Harassment, verbal threats or endangerment of other campers and staff
- Possession/use of illegal substances including but not limited to drugs, alcohol and tobacco as well as weapons or other hazardous items
- Destruction of camp property or stealing from others
- Leaving the camp property without notice
- Inappropriate contact or behavior with other campers

■ TERMINATION POLICY

The Rye YMCA reserves the right to suspend and/or dismiss a camper for the following reasons:

1. Overdue fee payment(s)
2. Inappropriate behavior
3. Chronic tardiness at pick-up time
4. Chronic failure to inform Rye YMCA of child's absence
5. Behaviors identified in the above disciplinary policy

■ REFUND POLICY

Any cancellation from time of registration to at least two (2) weeks prior to the session involved will result in full refund less a 25% processing fee. NO refunds will be given for cancellations within two (2) weeks prior to the session or after the session begins. Fees will not be refunded for absence, failure to attend during the term of enrollment, delayed attendance at camp or dismissal. We will provide partial refunds for campers who have missed five (5) or more days of one session due to illness. A doctor's note must be presented to receive a refund.

■ TAXES

For tax purposes, please keep all receipts. The YMCA will not be responsible for the written documentation beyond original receipts. **Our tax identification number is 13-1740515.**

■ **CAMP OBJECTIVES & GOALS**

Discovery Camp is proud to boast strong goals, determined outcomes and camp objectives that strive to make camp a memorable and lasting impression for every camper and staff member.

- **To encourage creative expressions and character development through programs which appeal to the camper's imagination.** Campers will actively participate in arts, special events, swim lessons, sports and more that are aimed at developing camper's creative potential. Opportunities to participate in problem-solving activities will be provided whenever possible.
- **To assist campers in improvement of existing skills and acquire new ones.** Campers will be given the opportunity to improve skill levels through participation in the YMCA progressive swim programs, field games, team building and many other activities. New skills will be introduced and developed in all programs when appropriate prerequisites have been mastered.
- **To foster awareness of fair play and sportsmanship through games and activities which promotes participation and team work.** Through active participation in sports skills, field games and other informal activities, campers will recognize the importance of group cooperation. Sportsmanship guidelines will be enforced, thereby supporting their development.
- **To encourage the YMCA's mission of healthy lifestyles through Activate America.** Through daily exercise and activities that require varied levels of movement, campers will learn to incorporate fitness in their own daily lives. Camp will model healthy eating habits and enable campers to bring these habits with them into their homes. We strive for not just a healthy body, but an entire healthy camper.
- **To build upon our campers' exciting "assets" as identified by the 40 Developmental Assets of Youth.** Camp will identify areas that we can further foster each of our campers own development assets, enabling them to grow into happier and healthier children and young adults as they progress in their own lives.

■ **CLOSING**

Finally, please remember that we are here working for you. We will do our best to meet the needs of every child, every day. We ask you to be aware of the broad scope of our job, the magnitude of our complete responsibility and the total vision of our camp. At its simplest, we will keep your child safe and happy, which we hope pleases you, and makes our job a pleasant one. We thank you for entrusting us with your child for summer camp.