

# PARENT HANDBOOK



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## CAMP HAZEN YMCA

204 West Main St.

Chester, CT 06412

camphazenyumca.org

## CAMP HAZEN YMCA OVERNIGHT CAMP—SUMMER 2025



## A MESSAGE FROM DENISE,

Thank you for choosing Camp Hazen YMCA for your child's summer camp experience. We are all looking forward to being outside and rebuilding connections with past friends and welcoming new ones.

As Executive Director of Camp Hazen YMCA, I know firsthand how truly transformational summer camp can be in a child's life. We believe that outdoor experiences provide a critical opportunity for kids to be themselves, learn more about the world around them, and grow in confidence and independence. We know that campers leave Hazen with memories that will last a lifetime.

This handbook is our traditional 'how to' guide and contains practical information to help prepare both you and your child for your session(s) at camp. While no two summers are exactly the same, we're hoping that this will help familiarize you with some of the procedures, schedules and traditions that we have at Camp. If you have any questions, please contact the camp office at (860) 526-9529.

Additional information can also be found on our website at [camphazenyumca.org](http://camphazenyumca.org). There is a lot of detailed, helpful information online, especially for new families.

To keep up to date with what's going on with us throughout the year you are welcome to find us on Facebook, by 'liking' Camp Hazen YMCA and sending a friend request to Edward Hazen.

Best Regards,



Denise Learned  
Executive Director/CEO

## WHAT'S NEXT?

### JANUARY 1ST

Deposits are now non-refundable

### MARCH 1ST

50% of remaining balance will be due

### MAY 1ST

Full balance due

Forms Due

- ⇒ Health History
- ⇒ Physical Exam
- ⇒ Authorized to pick up
- ⇒ Camper Information
- ⇒ Individual Care Plan
- ⇒ Cabin Request
- ⇒ Check Grade

Set up Store Account

### FOR CHECK IN

Packing List

Medication Authorizations signed by prescriber

Medications in original containers

### DURING CAMP

- 1st time families — *will receive a call from their child's Village Director by the first Wednesday.*
- Email — *You can make use of the one way email system via your [CampInTouch Account](#).*

### AFTER CAMP

Don't forget to save your spot for next summer. We'll hold it until September 1st.

### PRO TIP

As camp gets closer it's a great idea to talk about the upcoming experience as a family. Lots of bite sized conversations are better than one big sit down. Check out the section on 'Tips & Tricks'.

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## OUR PAST... YOUR FUTURE



### History

Since 1910, there had been talk of establishing a summer camp for boys from all across the state. The Senator Edward Hazen, a native of Haddam who had made his fortune in publishing, was the driving force behind the plan for such a camp. Unfortunately, the First World War interrupted these plans as the Y focused its efforts on supporting the troops in Europe. But with Armistice in November, 1918 attention could once again focus on the home front. This was one of those times when the will and the resources for such a project had come together at just the right time. The only difficulty, it seemed, was finding the right piece of land. A seven man committee met throughout 1919 trying to find the perfect spot—something on the edge of a forest, by a lake and easily accessible from all across the State. When the Committee next met on the evening of April 7th, Mr F.A. Stanley, the State YMCA Boys Work Secretary, was appointed Director of Camp Hazen. The price was set at \$7.50 per week and the summer set up in four, two-week sessions. In the very first advertising brochure, the new director, 'Pop' Stanley, explained his plan to perspective parents — *"When the books are laid aside and the long summer vacation begins for that boy of yours, what then? Here he lives in "the great out doors", rubs shoulders with the other fellow, learns the secret of the woods, imbibes the spirit of the campfire, learns the lessons of nature...experiences which send him back home thrilled for higher attainments in his own life and conduct."*

In the early years, traditions were formed that continue to this day. Campers still enjoy campfires, cabin chats, singing, camping out in the woods, and the revered Candlelight Ceremony.

It's hard to believe that over 100,000 campers and staff have spent their summers on the shores of Cedar Lake. So much has changed since our first summer of 1920, and yet—so much remains the same. Our facilities have grown and expanded; our activities and programs have changed and developed over time. Our campers and staff, once from just Connecticut, now come from throughout New England, the United States and from around the world. What remains the same is the nervous anticipation of going to camp—whether it be your first time or your 10th; that excitement you feel when you first pull in the entrance; the smile on your face when you see your friends, the sense of confidence you feel when you push beyond your comfort zone and try something you've never done before; that feeling of acceptance when you realize that this is a place where you can be yourself; that calm, peacefulness that you feel when looking out over Cedar Lake at yet another perfect sunset.

Hazen has a long history of strong leadership. Since 1999, Denise Learned has been Executive Director, following in the footsteps of Tim Milbern, Sue Edmonds, Russ Gormley, Howard Bunting, Archie Knowles, and Pop Stanley. Under their careful watch, the tradition and history of Camp Hazen has been passed from one generation to the next.

Today, we continue to build strong kids. With an exceptional summer camp program and a school group program that is unlike any other, Hazen remains committed to the growth and development of kids.

## THIS IS WHY:

### OUR PROMISE:

Your child is our #1 priority. Everything we do, every decision we make, has your child's safety and well-being in mind.

### OUR VALUES:

Our community is based on the YMCA pillars of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. We use these values in our cabin groups, at meals, and throughout the day.

### OUR MISSION:

Camp Hazen YMCA is committed to helping youth develop valuable life skills through camping experiences that build healthy bodies, open minds, and awakened spirits.

### OUR VISION:

To be a time and place in people's lives that they look back on and smile. We hope we are a place where people are always happy to arrive, and hesitant to leave.

### OUR CAUSE:

We believe that children should have a Hazen experience, regardless of their family's ability to pay. Camp Hazen YMCA has instituted a voluntary 4-tier pricing program for our Summer programs.

### OUR BELIEF:

Camp Hazen YMCA is an inclusive organization. Our doors are open to everyone, from across all dimensions of diversity, creating the opportunity to learn from each other. It is our belief that, in a diverse world, we are stronger when we are inclusive. We have a culture of acceptance, and we know that it is our differences that bring us closer together.

### OUR COMMITMENT:

We will continue to work for equity for all, by questioning our personal bias' & privilege and the part we play in systemic racism in our world, in order to make camp a safe(r) space for all our campers and staff.

### Philosophy

Camp Hazen YMCA has had over 100 years of creating experiences for campers to enjoy activities, appreciate the outdoors, learn about themselves and others, and grow as people. Our impact is measured by the thousands who have attended Hazen throughout the years, who know camp is so much more than the activities done and skills learned.

We believe that the community formed during a camp session allows your child to gain experiences that peers at home may not, and these positive experiences give your child the confidence to excel in so many other aspects of their lives. A camp experience will bolster children's socialization skills, provide opportunities for leadership development, and help them achieve their full potential.

# YEAR ROUND LEADERSHIP TEAM

## Denise Learned, Executive Director/CEO

Denise has dedicated her career to mission driven work. She started her career at Hazen as the Summer Camp Director. During the 90's she left camp to work as the Executive Director of the Shoreline Soup Kitchens, then returned to her current role as Executive Director/CEO of Camp Hazen YMCA in 1999. Denise is an active member of many professional networks and committees including the YMCA Independent Camp Group and the CT Alliance of YMCA. She is also a Y Guardian of Child protection through the YMCA of USA.

## Kath Davies, Camp Director

Kath joined the Professional Team right out of University. She is well known in the Camping Community serving on the Board of Directors of the CT Camping Associations, a member of the Youth Camp Safety Advisory Committee for the CT Office of Early Childhood and on a committee for the YMCA Camp Cabinet for YMCA of the USA.

Kath will hold a New Parent Orientation in advance of our first session this summer. This call is designed for parents that are new to our Overnight Camp Program. It will cover commonly asked questions by new parents, as well as give detailed information about our program for this summer. If you have specific topics that you'd like to be covered, please feel free to email in advance.

## **PROGRAM DEPARTMENT:**

Alex Learned, Assistant Camp Director  
Nicky Fauteux, Sr. Program Director  
Jake Fernandes, Program Director  
Juan Rios, Program Director

## **SUPPORT:**

Laurie Bouchard, Office Manager  
Sarah Menzel, Business Manager  
Calley Mowring, Development  
Alex Welch, Food Service Director  
Mike Learned, Maintenance Director  
Dan Feltus, Asst. Maintenance Director  
Mark Lowrey, Construction Manager

# SUMMER STAFF

Each session, we host 248 overnight campers entering grades three through ten. Our *4:1 camper to staff ratio* provides individual attention and quality instruction and supervision in all aspects of camp life. Our Staff is comprised of young adults from throughout the world.

All staff are chosen based on their desire and ability to act as positive role models, their maturity, their commitment to children's growth, and a love of the camp community. All our cabin counselors are high school graduates. Most have completed at least one year of college or have been an Assistant Counselor with us last summer. All our Assistant Counselors are long-time Hazen campers and have completed our LEAdership Program the previous summer. In addition, Hazen works with industry leading international staffing agencies to hire counselors and support staff from around the world to expose campers to other cultures and provide them with an international point of view.

A thorough background check is conducted on each staff member. This includes a search of the Judicial Department for convictions matching the prospective employees name and date of birth, the state child abuse registry and the National Sex Offender Registry.

There are at least two staff living in each cabin with eight campers. Our oldest campers live with one staff member and four/five other campers in platform tents. Each of our five villages is led by a Village Director. Village Directors are the primary contact for parents while children are at camp. Our Village Director team have several years of camp experience and have demonstrated a superior level of maturity and skill working with children.

# STAFF TRAINING

Through mandatory pre-camp training, staff are trained to provide a safe and encouraging environment. By the time your camper arrives, our staff are well prepared to help them have a safe, fun, and memorable summer.

## Soft Skills

- During our intensive week of Orientation before the campers arrive, we make certain that our staff are being taught the best ways to ensure that they are ready to advocate for each individual camper.
- Staff learn to identify the social and emotional needs of campers, as well as the physical.
- Our orientation covers Camp Philosophy, Camper Management, Behavior Management, Child Protection, Village Life, and Lesson Plans, and more.

## Hard Skills

- Our staff are also fully trained in our Policies & Procedures on Camper Safety, Water Safety, and Emergency Protocols.
- Our Waterfront and Adventure staff come for an extra week of certifications and skills training, including American Red Cross Lifeguarding and American Red Cross CPR.





# THE PARENT EXPERIENCE

## BEFORE CAMP

### SAFETY

Safety is always a top priority at Camp Hazen YMCA. In fact, our first two rules at Hazen are 1. Have fun and 2. Be safe! We are focused on children's safety, both physically and emotionally, while they are with us at camp. It's important for your child to know who the trusted adults at camp are if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable. We encourage you to talk to your child and explain that they should feel comfortable coming to their counselors with anything that is bothering them, just like they would to you at home. Their Village Director is also someone that they can come to with questions while they are at camp.

In addition to being a licensed youth camp through the State of Connecticut, Camp Hazen YMCA is considered a Pioneer in Camping with the American Camp Association for its long history of dedication to youth development. The American Camp Association (ACA) is the leading authority for summer camps and youth development. They work to preserve, promote, and improve the camp experience. Camp Hazen YMCA is an accredited member of the ACA, and as part of our membership, Hazen must adhere to strict guidelines which includes the successful completion of both on-site visits and paperwork reviews.

While our staff will make every reasonable effort to minimize known risks associated with each activity, all hazards cannot be foreseen. By participating in our programs, campers and their parents knowingly and willingly assume all risks associated with participation in a summer camp program. Campers and their parents should fully understand that even after reasonable precautions have been taken, occasional accidents do happen.



### CHILD PROTECTION

Camp Hazen YMCA was recently selected for a pilot program to participate in an accreditation process with Praesidium, a leader in the field of child protection, that uses decades of data and methodology practices to determine root-cause contributors in cases of organizational abuse. This accreditation process helps organizations sustain the highest standards in child abuse prevention. This will publicly demonstrate our commitment to safety and adherence to the highest standards in abuse prevention.

At the end of this guide you'll find a section that contains useful and vital information you can use to keep your child safe.

- Teach Your Children About Their Bodies
- Physical Boundary Violations
- Emotional Boundary Violations
- Behavioral Boundary Violations
- How to Recognize Warning Signs in Your Child
- Responding to Inappropriate Behavior or Touch Your Child Reports or sexual abuse
- How to support a loved one who has experienced abuse or exploitation.

In keeping with the regulations for youth camps in the State of Connecticut, here is a link to the Department of Children and Families Safe Sports Policy—Child Abuse Prevention:

[Checkout info from the DCF on Child Abuse Prevention](#)

# THE PARENT EXPERIENCE

## BEFORE CAMP

### CABIN ASSIGNMENTS

Each cabin group is a family with eight campers and 2 or 3 staff who ensure that everyone is respected and involved. Staff guide campers through cabin clean-up, meals, and decision-making regarding activities. Evenings are spent with the cabin group, or village of cabins, in a variety of fun games, campfires, and all-camp events. At the end of each day, campers enjoy one of the great traditions of Hazen; a counselor-led “cabin chat” that covers daily reflections, personal values, and future dreams.

HAZEN’S FIVE VILLAGES GIVE CAMPERS A SENSE OF BELONGING. Cabins are assigned based on gender identity, grade, and cabin mate requests. We also take in to account new/returner, age, home town and additional needs.

#### Cabin Requests

We believe that camp is a great place for kids to meet new people. We understand that many campers come to camp with a friend from home, and it's important for us to consider the dynamics of the entire cabin group. We do hold preference for first-time camper cabin-mate requests over returning campers, as we understand a child's initial experience can be easier when joined by a familiar face. Cabin-mate requests are limited to one per camper, and priority is given to first time campers. We try our hardest to honor these requests, but we are unable to guarantee a cabin-mate. Requests must be for campers of the same grade and must be mutual to be considered. Due to the community aspect of Oak, we do not take tent request for 10<sup>th</sup> graders.

You can make a request using the 'Bunk Request' form on CampInTouch. If you have a special situation or concern, PLEASE call us ahead of time.

**Request must be made each year—please don't assume we remember yours from last summer!**

#### Cabin Preference

As we move forward and continue to strive to make camp a safe space for all children, please take some time to talk to your child about the kind of cabin they would be most comfortable in this coming summer. Families can rank their preference in type of cabin from Girls+, Boys+ and All Gender.

We offer the housing options as outlined below:

Boys+ Cabin: Boys regardless of sex assigned at birth as well as transgender and non-binary campers who feel they belong in this space.

Girls+ Cabin: Girls regardless of sex assigned at birth as well as transgender and non-binary campers who feel they belong in this space.

All-Gender Cabin: Housing for all. This includes campers whose identity may or may not fall into the male-female binary, including allies who would be interested in living in an all-gender space. Generally speaking the age gap in these cabins is slightly larger than the “+” cabins - 2-3 grades, compared to 1-2.

Cabin Preferences can be made on the application form, and also on the 'Camper Information Form' on CampInTouch. If you do not list a preference for cabin type, it will be assumed that you would like your child to be in a cabin that aligns with the gender identity you stated on your camper application.

Take a look at more details on our Gender Inclusive Policies on page 21.

### BALANCE & REFUND POLICY

50% of your balance of camp fees is due by March 1st. The remaining balance is due by May 1st. These will be automatically charged to your default credit card on file.

To set up an automatic payment plan, please call the Camp Office.

If final payment is not received by the due date, your registration may be cancelled, and your deposit forfeited. VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover or e-check may be used to charge your balance.

Camp Hazen YMCA will refund program fees for cancellations made 30 days prior to the start of the session (less deposit). No refund is made for late arrivals or early departures or in cases of homesickness, withdrawal, dismissal, or sickness.



# THE PARENT EXPERIENCE

## FORMS - NEED TO BE SUBMITTED ONLINE BY MAY 1<sup>ST</sup>.

To begin, log in to your CampInTouch account, then click on Forms & Documents

### FORMS & DOCUMENTS FOR EACH CAMPER

#### 1. Health History

- This form must be completed *annually*, by a parent or legal guardian.
- The last page is an Authorization, Release, and Indemnity Waiver.

#### 2. Physical Exam & Immunization Record

- The physical examination form must be current within 36 months of your campers last day in camp.
- Please upload a copy of your child's most recent physical exam and immunization record. You may use the form we provide online, a copy of your school physical, or your states health exam form.
- In the event your child has not received immunizations, as per the State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, you must provide us with an Immunization Waiver. There are two acceptable forms of documentation for this waiver, please contact the office for details.

#### 3. Individual Care Plan

- The State of Connecticut states an individual plan of care is necessary when a child has a special health care need or disability and it is necessary that special care be taken or provided while the child is at the youth camp.

#### 4. Camper Information for the Counselor

- This is for BOTH you and your camper to complete. This information is essential to help your child meet any specific goals you or they may have and to ensure a positive experience for all campers. This includes your Type of Cabin preference.

#### 5. Medication Authorization Form **Bring to Check In with Medication**

- This form must be completed for a camper to receive any medications (prescription or over-the counter) brought from home.
- This form must be signed by both a parent/guardian AND a prescribing health care professional, even for over-the-counter medications like vitamins.
- You must complete one form for each medication brought to camp and the information on this form must match the label on the medication.
- Please review this form carefully before coming to camp. We are unable to dispense medications to campers without this properly completed form.
- The medications must be in the original containers and properly labelled. This includes epi-pens and inhalers -- often the label is on the box and parents don't realize they MUST bring that box with the label, as mandated by both the State of Connecticut and the American Camp Association.

#### 6. Additional Medical Paperwork

- Use this space to upload any additional medical documents, for example, a letter from a therapist, a management plan for diabetes or asthma, or other medical/emotional conditions or concerns.

#### 7. Camper Photo

- Use this link to upload or update your camper's photo!

#### 8. Financial Assistance

- We believe that every child deserves a camp experience, regardless of their family's ability to pay. Please complete this form if you would like to apply for our Financial Assistance Program. Call us anytime on (860) 526-9529.

### FORMS & DOCUMENTS FOR YOUR FAMILY

#### 1. Authorized to pick up

- Please list all adults, including parents, that are authorized to pick up your child from camp.

## BEFORE CAMP

### CAMP STORE ACCOUNT

Campers do not need cash while at camp and should not bring any. The Camp Store is open each day and campers can buy sweatshirts, T-shirts, stamps, souvenirs, toiletries, flashlights, and more. There is no food or candy sold in the store.

Store accounts should be established prior to May 1st on your CampInTouch account. Login and click on "View Accounts" to put money into your child's store account. We recommend \$75 per session, per camper, regardless of the session length, as the price of the items do not change. Unspent Camp Store money may be donated to Camp Hazen YMCA's Campership Fund, or you may request a refund. Balances of less than \$10.00 will automatically be donated. Please consider donating remaining store balances and check off this option on your camper's check-in card on check-in day.

Please note: refund checks expire 30 days after the date of issuance. Expired checks will automatically be considered a contribution to our Campership Fund.





# THE PARENT EXPERIENCE

## Packing Guidelines

We recommend packing in large duffle bags that can fold and store easily under the campers' bunks. There is only a 9-inch clearance under the bunks where all luggage needs to be stored.

## T-shirts for All Camp Days

Shirts can be brought from home, or you can buy a white Hazen shirt for around \$13 in the camp store. Sessions A,B & D require white shirts.

## Unplugged experience — No Wi-Fi = better connection

To help children develop independence, and to maintain a safe environment, Camp Hazen maintain a 'No Cell Phone' policy. Not only are cell phones disruptive to a child's camp experience, but they are also expensive and can easily get lost or stolen. We want our campers to experience living in a natural environment and reconnect with friends and nature. We also believe that not having instant access to a cellphone promotes independence and personal problem solving, as campers are compelled to find solutions on their own or ask one of our fully trained staff for help. We request that you communicate this policy to your child before their arrival at camp and encourage letter writing as their means of contact so that there are no surprises upon arrival.

Talk about the experiences ahead and about your expectations, including setting realistic goals about how often they can expect to hear from you and

## WHAT NOT TO BRING

We are completely unplugged, which means...No Electronics. Period.

Campers should **NOT** bring any of the following items:

- Cash
- Any electronic device (iPods, electronic games, e-readers, electric fans, computers, cell phones)
- Food
- Pets
- Fireworks
- Water guns
- Vehicles

- Tobacco products
- Drugs OR drug paraphernalia
- Alcohol
- Weapons of any type

If a camper brings any of these items to camp, the item will be confiscated and either sent home or held until the end of the session. Campers found in possession of weapons, drugs, alcohol or drug paraphernalia may be immediately be dismissed from camp.

## PLEASE CAREFULLY LABEL ALL ITEMS.

Pack together with your camper. This allows your camper to know where everything is and to develop a sense of responsibility. This is also a good time to talk about the experiences ahead and build the excitement. It's also a good time to talk about personal responsibility, living in a community setting and your expectations about their interactions with others.

There is a lost and found at camp, encourage your child to check it out if they have lost something. Camp Hazen YMCA is NOT responsible for any items that are lost or stolen.

We have the ability to do laundry if an accident requires it, but there is no regular laundry done during the session.



Thousands of dollars worth of clothing gets donated each summer because there wasn't a name on it! Labeling clothing will at least increase your chance of it coming home!

## BEFORE CAMP

This packing list is for a 2 week session- please adjust accordingly for a 1 week session.

### CLOTHING

- 8-12 t-shirts
- 1 White T-shirt (*Tye Dying/All Camp Day Event*)
- 1-2 long sleeved shirts
- 6-8 pairs of shorts
- 2-3 pairs of long pants/jeans
- 1-2 sweatshirts
- 2-3 swimsuits
- Swim shirt/rash guard
- 1-2 pairs of pajamas
- 13-15 pairs of underwear
- 13-15 pairs of socks
- Raincoat or poncho
- 1- 2 pairs of sneakers (*required for some activities*)
- 1- 2 pairs of flip flops, crocs or sandals
- Dress Clothes for Final Banquet (*totally optional*)
- Face Masks (*optional*)

### GEAR

- 1 twin size fitted & flat sheet
- 1 blanket or comforter
- 1 sleeping bag
- 1 pillow & pillowcase
- 2 bath towels + 2 beach towels
- 1 laundry bag
- 1-2 water bottles
- Sunscreen
- 1 flashlight with extra batteries
- Day backpack
- Insect repellent (non-aerosol)
- Toiletries (soap, shampoo, hairbrush, toothpaste, toothbrush, etc...)
- Container to carry toiletries to shower

### OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Reading material - paper/printed books only
- Deck of cards
- Stationery & pre-addressed stamped envelopes or postcards
- Skateboard/in-line skates/ protective pads & helmet
- Other program equipment: tennis racket, softball glove, etc..
- skates - all other program equipment is available at camp



### TIPS & TRICKS

Sending your child to camp for the first time is a major milestone for most families, one that is often marked with excitement, anticipation and perhaps even some anxiety. Though camp is certainly about making friends and having fun, it is also about being on your own and being part of a community. One of the most important things you, as a parent, can do to help prepare your child for both of these aspects of camp is to talk with your child about it before they go. In fact, it may be better to have several brief talks rather than one long conversation, as children often absorb more when there is less to think about at one time. Children usually do better with this sort of conversation if it is part of a more general discussion, either at the dinner table or while riding in the car doing errands.

### CONVERSATIONS STARTERS...

The following are some sample topics for discussion that will help prepare your child emotionally for their big adventure at camp:

**Friends:** "Camp is about making new friends. If you are shy about meeting new kids, then learn to get to know others by being a good listener. Ask questions. Share what you have. Join in. Remember that not everyone in your group has to be your best friend. As long as you treat others with respect and they do the same with you, then you will have a few good friends at camp and that is fine. Of course, if you have more, that's great!"

**Activities:** "There are many exciting things to do at camp, many of which you may never have tried before. You may not like all the activities or you may be better at some than others. That's normal. I do, however, expect you to try. The more you put into camp, the more you will get out of it."

**Respect:** "No matter how you feel about anyone else, I expect you to treat people with respect. It is OK to sometimes have angry feelings.....it is not OK to do angry things. If you are having trouble with another camper, you can always talk to your counselor, your Village Director, Ben, Jake, or Nicky - the Program Directors, Alex, the Senior Program Director, or Kath - the Camp Director."

**Getting help:** "Everyone has good days and bad days. If you are having a problem, your counselor is there to help you! You don't have to wait to tell us if you are upset about something. After all, if your counselor doesn't know what might be troubling you, they can't help you. Be honest and ask for what you need. If your counselor doesn't seem to be concerned or doesn't help you, then you can go to your Village Director, or Kath, Alex, Jake, or Nicky."

**Self-image:** A great thing to remind your first-time camper about is what their strong points are. I would focus not just on what they do well, but their positive qualities as well, such as what makes them a good friend or the type of person other kids would want to know. Helping children to identify their strengths can help them when they are having a set back - one of the inevitable growing pains all children have from time to time.

Talking with your child about these kinds of issues is a great way to support them as they get ready to take this important step on the road to independence.

### MISSING HOME

Missing home is a natural feeling, and the counselors are there to help. There are many things you can do to help your child be successful at camp. During the session, write cheerful, positive letters, asking lots of questions about activities and new friends. Express confidence in your child's ability to succeed. Be assured that our staff is well trained to identify and help campers who are missing home. If you receive a letter from your child expressing homesickness, please feel free to contact the camp office. However, please understand that letters sent early in a camp session may relay strong feelings of missing home during this transitional period. Your camper's Village Director will contact you if a camper is really struggling with missing home and discuss ways to improve the situation. (Please do NOT tell your child that you will pick them up or that you will call them if they miss home, as this does not set them up for success).



# THE PARENT EXPERIENCE

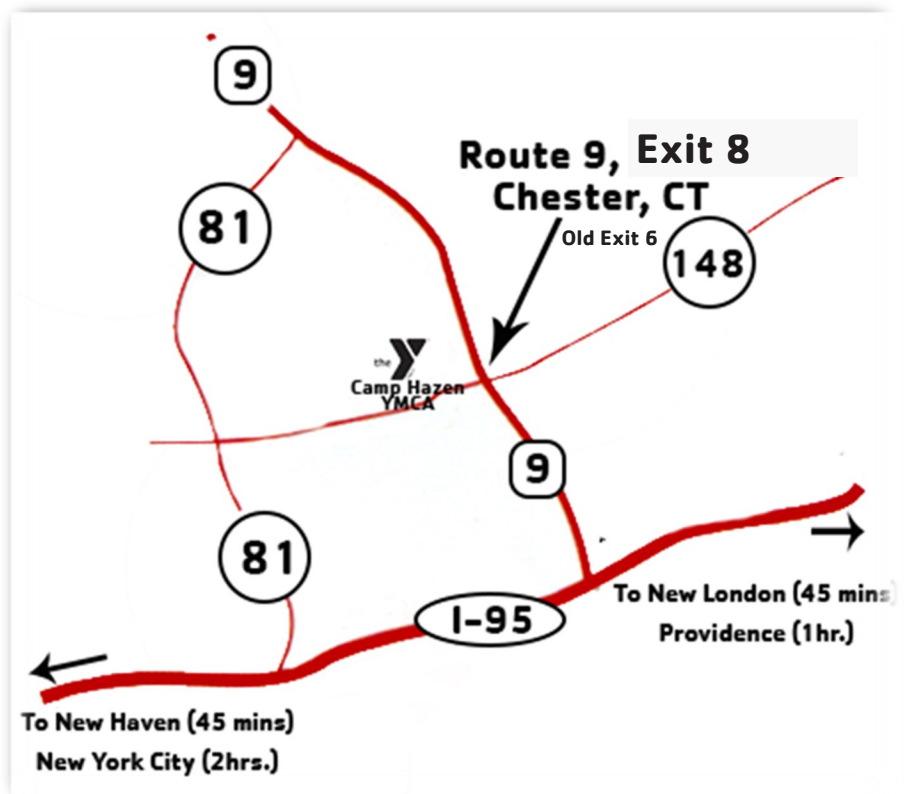
CHECK IN DAY

## DIRECTIONS TO CAMP HAZEN

205 West Main Street  
Chester, CT 06412

**From the North:** Take Route 9 South to Exit 8. Turn right at the bottom of the ramp onto Route 148W. Parking for Camp Hazen is 1.5 miles on the left. Please follow the guidance of our signs and parking attendants.

**From the South:** Take I-95 to Route 9 North (Exit 69). Follow Route 9 to Exit 8. Turn left at the end of the ramp onto Route 148W. Parking for Camp Hazen is 1.5 miles on the left. Please follow the guidance of our signs and parking attendants.



Check in is on a Sunday afternoon. In an effort to minimize wait times, we run a staggered check-in for each session. You'll be emailed a time between 2-4pm for your child's check in.

- Have your child eat lunch before arriving.
- Please leave pets at home.
- A limited Camp Store will be open at Check-In with t-shirts, sweatshirts & water bottles.

## CHECK-IN DAY PROCEDURES:

- Upon arrival at camp, you will be directed to a parking area and staff will assist you with unloading luggage. Luggage will be brought to a central location in your child's village.
- Proceed to the Check-In tables at the Pavilion across the street, sign a check-in card
- Check in Medication with our Camp nurses.
- Food Service Director is available for questions.
- Stop at Camp Store Tent to buy a sweatshirt & t-shirt.
- Proceed to your camper's cabin to meet their Village Director and Counselors and to help your camper get settled.
- Say good-bye. Experience has shown us the transition from home to camp is eased by short good-byes that allow your child to jump right into camp life. If you want to stay to get more information or speak to a staff member, please feel free to do so, but allow your camper to join their group while you have your conversation.

## MEDICATIONS

All medications must be checked in with the camp nurse. No medications can be kept in the cabins, including over-the-counter medication and vitamins. Have your Medication Authorization Form prepared.

If you are bringing any medications from home (prescription or over the counter, including vitamins & topical ointments), you must have a completed medication authorization form for EACH medication. This form MUST be signed by BOTH a parent/guardian AND the authorized prescriber.

**ALL MEDICATION MUST BE IN THEIR ORIGINAL CONTAINER, WITH A LABEL THAT MATCHES THE MEDICATION**

# THE CAMPER EXPERIENCE

## CHECK IN DAY

### Check In - Moving into cabins

Our counselors will be ready to meet you at your cabin and welcome you to your home for the session. We will help you settle in and unpack, and you can begin to meet the other campers in your cabin as they arrive.

**Camp tour**—Once all the campers in your cabin have arrived, your counselors will take you on a tour of camp to show you the important places you'll need to know for the session! You'll find out where your skills classes will be held and learn about important emergency procedures during the tour as well.

**Health Lodge Visit**—On your tour you'll also stop by the Health Lodge to learn where you will go to take medications and what to do if you aren't feeling

**Swim Evaluation**— After the tour, if you're entering 6th- 8th grade, a swim evaluation is conducted to determine your comfort in the lake. Our goal is to make the swim evaluation as fun and comfortable as possible, while determining an accurate level of swimming ability. For our two-week sessions, a swimmer that qualifies as a "Flying Fish" level (in accordance with YMCA Swim Program ) will not participate in swim lessons. As we believe that swim safety and skills are important, swim lessons are mandatory for all campers that are below the "Flying Fish" level. Our youngest and oldest campers will take their swim evaluation on the Monday, as part of your first Water Sports class.



**Program Preferences**—For those that didn't have a chance to complete their program preferences ahead of time now is a great time to do it.

**Dinner**—Dinner is the first time on check-in day that we are all able to come together as a camp! It's always exciting to see the whole session of campers together in the dining hall enjoying their first meal.

**Med Call**—If you take medications at dinner time, you'll head over to the Health Lodge. If you take medication at bedtime, it will be brought to your cabin later.

2pm-4pm

4pm-6pm

6pm

7:00pm

7:30pm

8:45pm

9pm-10pm

9:15-10:30pm

Check In

Camp Tour

Dinner

Summer Summit

Cabin Activity

Cabin Chat

Flashlight Time

Lights out

**Summer Summit**—Summer Summit is a daily meeting that you will have with your village. On the first day, it is an opportunity to go over the community norms and guidelines for the session and meet the other people in your village!



### Flashlight Time/Bedtime

Bedtime ranges from 9:15pm-10:30pm depending on the age groups and includes flashlight time

**Cabin Activity**—Our first evening activity is called Cabin Unity Night! You will participate in a bonding activity with your cabin-mates and counselors and start to get to know each other a little better.

**Cabin Chat**—We end every night at Camp Hazen YMCA with a cabin chat. This is an opportunity for your cabin to sit and talk about everything from values and goals for camp, to favorite hobbies and funny jokes!





### CAMP LIFE

You live in a cabin with 7 other campers and 2 staff. This is your home base for the session and where best friends are made. You'll do activities with all the other campers in your age group based on your program preferences.

Your cabin is part of a village. Each village has a community feel to it and gives you a sense of belonging to a larger community within the camp.

### SCHEDULE OF THE DAY

7:30 am	Reveille
8:00 am	Waiter's Bell
	All Camp Assembly & Med Call
8:15 am	Breakfast
8:45 am	Cabin Clean-Up & Cabin time
9:40 am – 10:55 am	Skill Class 1
11:00 am - 12:15 am	Skill Class 2
12:15 pm	Waiter's Bell
12:30 pm	Lunch
	Mail Delivery + Package Pick up
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm	Siesta
2:20 pm - 3:35 pm	Skill Class 3
3:40 pm - 4:55pm	Skill Class 4
4:45 pm- 5:40pm	Beach Party
	Dickinson's General Store Open
5:45 pm	Summer Summit - Village Meeting
	Waiter's Bell
	Med Call
6:00 pm	Dinner
7:00 pm	Med Call
	Evening Program
8:30 pm	Showers
	Cabin Chat
9:30 pm	Taps



### VILLAGES & AGE GROUPS

Our camp is divided into 5 living groups or "Villages" that help to make every camper's experience age appropriate:

- Juniper & Maple - younger campers (grades 3 - 7)
- Spruce & Tamarack - older campers (grades 7 - 9)
- Oak - (tent village) teenage campers (grades 9 - 10)

### SKILL CLASSES

Each week you will participate in 4 daily skill classes. You will have the choice of activities from each of our four program areas: Water Sports, Land Sports, Outdoor Pursuits and Creative Arts. For campers in 6th grade and up, your cabin group will also participate in Quest, a program for the cabin to do team building and discovery activities together. Hazen offers approximately 30 skill classes each summer. Campers rotate between activities with others in their age group and each camper has a custom schedule.

In addition to the instructional activities, the schedule includes Cabin Activities, Village Activities and All-Camp Activities. Camp Hazen YMCA also offers a block of "Beach Party" time each day for you to participate in your favorite activities (swimming, skate park, sports, etc.) and to socialize with other campers and staff. We believe this schedule offers everyone a variety of opportunities to make new friends and learn from a wide range of peers.

### TRADITIONAL TWO-WEEK PROGRAM:

Our two-week program is designed for campers to have the choice to specialize in specific activities from the program areas each week. They also have the option to choose a "Sampler Class" from a program area if they prefer.

Closer to the summer, we will email camper parents a program booklet and further instructions on how to complete a preference sheet in your CampInTouch Account. The booklet will describe all the activities available for each age group and campers will be assigned to activities based on their preferences. We encourage families to talk together about their program choices, but hope each camper will be able to make their own choices.

### ONE WEEK SAMPLER CAMP PROGRAM:

We call it Sampler Camp because it gives kids a "sample" of what Hazen has to offer. In each program area, we have bundled together multiple activities. Campers can choose which bundle they would like in each program area, such as Water Sports and Land Sports. You'll select your program classes on the first day of camp.

### MEALS

Campers eat meals family-style with their cabin group in Bunting Dining Hall. Each camper takes a turn to be the representative for the table. Our two-week cycle menu is nutritionally balanced and designed to appeal to most appetites. Fresh fruit, salad are always available, in addition to a daily vegetarian selection for those that require it. We are very used to having campers that are 'picky eaters', we will work with them to try a 'no-thank-you-helping' but we will also make sure everyone gets something to eat! Our Food Service Staff are able to accommodate vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, and dairy free substitution in our meals. We do not prepare any meals with peanuts or tree-nuts. If your child has specific needs, please contact us ahead of time.



# THE CAMPER EXPERIENCE

## LIFE AT CAMP

### CAMP CULTURE

As a close-knit community, Camp Hazen YMCA expects each camper to respect themselves and others at camp, as well as the facilities and natural surroundings. Staff will work with campers to help them assimilate to the camp community. Our Village Directors will contact you if we need any advice on handling a particular situation with your child. If it comes to the point where a camper is placed on a written “behavior contract” to help address recurring inappropriate behaviors, you would certainly be notified. The terms of the “contract” will be made very clear to both the camper and parent.

All members of the Camp Hazen community, including campers and staff, are expected to behave responsibly and appropriately at all times. Coming to camp means coming to a place of support, inclusion, and safety. Here, we teach to respect those around us and build others up in a place of diversity.



### HAZEN TRADITIONS

**Opening Campfire** – The second night of each session hosts a lively and fun campfire. You’ll learn classic camp songs and enjoy an evening together with the entire camp!

**Cheers** – Singing and cheers are a huge part of Hazen culture. Each village has their own unique cheer, and love to see who can sing loudest in the dining hall. Your Village Director and cabin counselors will teach you all the important cheers in your first few days at camp.

**All Camp Days** – Each two-week session, the entire camp is split into teams to participate in friendly competition. Team loyalty is fierce, as campers return to the same team every year.

**Closing Campfire** - We end each session at Hazen with a closing campfire. It’s similar to opening campfire and is a great way to spend our last night together at camp.

**Honor camper** - One camper in each village is recognized at the end of the session as Honor Camper. This is someone who best embodied the pillars of Camp Hazen YMCA: respect, caring, honesty, responsibility, and unity.

**Candle Lighting Ceremony** – After our closing campfire, we gather in our Robert Montgomery Alumni Chapel for a candle lighting ceremony. Here, we listen to speeches from staff on the importance of Healthy Bodies, Open Minds, and Awakened Spirits.

**Patches** – Campers are given an alumni patch each summer at the end of their session with the number of years that they’ve attended camp.

**Milestones: Legacies, Lifers, Legends, Legacies & Luminaries**- We recognize four different milestones at our candle lighting ceremony. Legacies are campers whose parents or grandparents have attend camp before them. Lifers are campers who have been coming to camp for five summers, and this is when you receive your Hazen watch! Legends have been coming to Hazen for ten years. Luminaries have been coming to Hazen for 20 years!



## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative justice is an approach to behavior coaching that focuses on growth, accountability, healing, and communication. We use Restorative Justice techniques to help our community communicate openly within a supported environment. In these conversations, we work through conflicts and create goal-oriented solutions that support the growth of everyone involved. This practice allows a person to take accountability for their actions and repair any damage that their action may have caused within their community. We want everyone to be involved in the healing, including the person who caused the damage.

### HOW IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IMPLEMENTED AT HAZEN?

When a conflict arises, our counselors will communicate with the campers involved to understand and address the needs of the group. Once all of the campers feel ready to discuss the conflict together, our staff will facilitate a productive conversation by providing open-ended questions and creating healthy boundaries. All campers will have the opportunity to share their experience and listen to the experiences of others; then they will work together to create a plan for moving forward as a community. We use restorative practices to help our campers take responsibility and initiative; however, our counselors still work one-on-one with campers to address positive behavior. We do not tolerate any behavior that will harm oneself, others, or the surrounding environment.

## BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Our approach is designed to help children develop self-awareness and assume responsibility for their actions. Clear and consistent, age-appropriate rules and limits are established at camp.

On the first evening at camp, each village has their first Summer Summit (Village Meeting) to meet the staff and the Village Director will go over our Camper Guidelines. Later, each cabin will establish their own community norms that are consented to by consensus.

As with all communities, we are bound to encounter conflict, here are some techniques our staff are trained in when dealing with these situations:

- Redirecting campers
- Reinforcing positive behavior
- Encouraging campers to talk about their feelings
- Role modeling how to speak and interact with campers in a positive manner
- Conversationally addressing conflict intentionally, respecting the autonomy and agency of those involved
- Implementing breaks when appropriate

Any behavior modifications, or conflict approach measures used will relate to each child's specific actions and will be handled in a timely fashion. No physical punishment, humiliation, scare tactics, or controlling measures shall be allowed. Methods associated with food deprivation or extended isolation are not permitted. All behavior coaching measures intend to support the camper with healing any harm done and strengthening their positive connections with others.

### BEHAVIORS THAT DAMAGE THE CAMPERS' COMMUNITY ARE DEFINED AS:

- Likely to, or does, result in harm — physical, mental, or emotional — to themselves or others;
- Likely to, or does, result in damage to one another's personal belongings and/or surrounding space;
- Involves any physically escalated interaction with campers and/or staff;
- Camper is not open to feedback or willing to work towards improvement
- Or involves bullying, teasing, emotional taunting of others, or hate speech\*,

It may be necessary to separate the child from the group until their actions have been appropriately addressed.

\*Hate Speech - We take incidents of hate speech or harassment very seriously and such behavior will not be accepted. In incidents of hate speech or harassment we will support the affected campers in healing from harm done, we will educate those who are demonstrating hate speech or harassment, and create a plan for moving forward that prioritizes the safety of the individual harmed and the community.

### CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT:

By coming to camp:

- I will be a positive member of the camp community and I will be respectful and follow the directions of camp staff, and will ask questions when I am unclear.
- I will keep my hands to myself and not touch anyone else in a way that makes them feel unsafe or crosses their personal boundaries.
- I will not harm myself, or others, physically, emotionally or verbally, and if I am concerned about someone else, I'll find a camp staff member for help.
- I will not walk away from the camp property or wander away from my group without agreement from a staff member.
- I will not touch or use other people's belongings without their permission.
- I will follow the packing list and not bring items to camp that I shouldn't; such as a phone or weapons of any kind.
- I will not bring any alcohol, nicotine, drugs, including cannabis, or vapes to camp. I will not use any of these items if another camper has brought with them.
- I will treat camp property with respect. I understand that graffiti is not allowed and I will be responsible for removing it or my family will be financially responsible for any damage that I intentionally cause at camp.

### PHOTOS

We upload a selection of photos a few times each week to show a snapshot of life at Camp. You can view these photos by clicking on the "email your camper and view photos" link on your CampInTouch. Log into your account and click the "View Photos" Link.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook - Send a friend request to 'Edward Hazen' or "like" Camp Hazen YMCA Instagram - Follow us at camphazenyumca

### VISITS

Parents, relatives and friends are invited to visit camp at check-in and check-out times. There are no visiting days during the camp session. Visits can be disruptive, as campers are very involved with their activities and new friends. If you are concerned about your child, please call the camp office to speak to their Village Director. If you have not had the opportunity to see camp and would like a family tour before camp begins, please call the office.

### SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS

Camp Hazen is an independent YMCA. We focus on caring, honesty, respect and responsibility through sensitive and mature leadership. We live in a community that holds a system of values and a positive atmosphere, rather than an emphasis on a particular religious faith.

### BIRTHDAYS

We love celebrating birthdays at Hazen! Each camper who has a birthday during camp will celebrate with our special Hazen birthday song and a cake for their cabin at lunch that day.

## FIRST TIME CAMPER CALLS

New camper parents will receive a phone call from your child's Village Director by the end of the day Wednesday of the first week to let you know how your camper is doing at Hazen.

You are always welcome to call the camp office to discuss your camper's experience. Your child's Village Director will be your point of contact. Please remember that our Village Directors do not spend long periods of time in the office, as they are out around camp interacting with the children. They check messages throughout the day and will call you back in a reasonable time. We will notify you should any urgent situations arise with your camper.

If at any time you become concerned about your child or have an important message that needs to be relayed, please call the camp office and we will get you in touch with your child's Village Director or the Camp Director.

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

### Mail

We encourage you to write cheerful, positive letters from home. Consider writing a letter three days ahead of opening day so your child has a letter during the first mail call. Please do not panic if you don't hear from your camper immediately after arrival, as many campers are too busy having fun at camp to write home. We recommend sending your camper to camp with pre-addressed, stamped envelopes or postcards. First class stamps can be purchased at the Camp Store. Mail should be addressed as follows:

**Camper's Name - Cabin #\_\_**

**Camp Hazen YMCA**

**204 West Main Street**

**Chester, CT 06412**

If you are sending mail ahead of your child's check in day and don't have their cabin number you can still send the letter without it. We will make sure it gets to your child.

### Packages

You are welcome to send one package per week. We ask your full cooperation in NOT sending food items. Food attracts many animals to the cabins, especially squirrels who chew through the screens to get to food. In addition, we have many campers with SEVERE food allergies and if food from home is shared, it could result in a life-threatening situation for a child. All campers open packages in front of a staff member. If food is sent, it will be disposed of. There are many non-food items that can be sent in care packages, suggestions include comic books, books, cards, and games.

### E-Mail

You may send emails to your child while they are at camp, using the email service through your CampInTouch Account. Emails received by 10am are printed each day and distributed with mail. (Emails received after 10am are distributed the following day).

Parents may purchase 'CampStamps' through your CampInTouch Account. If you are on financial assistance, please contact the office and we would be happy to work with you for payment. Campers will only be able to reply to your emails via letter or postcard.

### CAMPER CARE

Our counselors are completely focused on ensuring the social and emotional well-being of all of their campers. They take nightly notes to discuss with their Village Directors on the progress and growth of each camper, as well as their health and overall experience. Our Village Directors will always keep you up to date on any issues your camper is experiencing.

Our number one goal at Hazen is to make sure that every camper is having the best experience they can have. We understand that some campers need a little extra support during their time with us, our staff is well trained in many common camper scenarios and know how to make sure each child is participating in camp in a way that is right for them. We believe that summer camp is a unique experience for children to improve their mental and physical health, as well as develop in ways that are not frequently emphasized in a school environment. We request that parents and guardians give us as much information as possible on their camper's health forms so that we can best serve your child's needs while they are at camp.

### HEALTH & WELLNESS

We are very lucky to have such a robust and qualified team of health care professionals on camp, we also ensure that our counselors are trained to monitor the personal hygiene and cleanliness of our campers each day. Cabins have scheduled time every morning to clean their space and organize their belongings, as well as a dedicated shower time each day. Staff also often remind campers to wash their hands, and we have hand sanitizer at specific entrances to buildings.

As campers spend the majority of their time outside at camp, campers are responsible to bring their own protective clothing, sunscreen & water bottle. Hazen Staff will remind campers to apply sunscreen & carry their water bottle regularly throughout the day.

Prior to arrival we strongly recommend you check your child for head lice and treat as needed.

#### Ticks & Lyme Disease

Campers spend most of their time outside at camp. Many of our program areas are wooded and we expect that children will come in contact with ticks. Each child showers daily, which should wash off any tick that has not yet imbedded. It is also an opportunity for them to check themselves for ticks. Staff are trained to encourage campers to check themselves for ticks. For privacy reasons, counselors do not check campers for ticks. You will be notified of any reported tick bite or rash that appears during your child's stay at camp if the nurse is concerned. **You should discuss with your camper** the need to check themselves regularly for ticks during their stay at camp and after any outdoor activity and encourage them to see the nurse if they ever have any medical concern.





# THE PARENT EXPERIENCE

## HEALTH LODGE



The health and safety of our campers is our number one priority. To be a licensed youth camp in the state of Connecticut we are required to have a registered nurse (RN) on site. We have two or three RNs on camp per session.

In case of illness or accident, our RN's work under Standing Orders from Dr Nicholas Condulis, MD, from Wildwood Pediatrics in Essex.

Our Health Lodge is stocked with a number of over-the-counter medications which the nurses can administer also. These medications are listed on our Health History Form.

Any other medications a camper needs while at Hazen must be brought to camp in the original container and be accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form that is signed by both a parent/guardian and the prescriber. All medications, other than emergency medication such as Epi-Pens and asthma inhalers, must be kept in the Health Lodge.

Med Call is in the morning and evening of each day, at the same time as our All Camp Assemblies. Campers can see the nurse if something is bothering them after breakfast, after lunch, and before dinner.

In case of emergency, campers are taken to the camp physician at Wildwood Pediatrics, or the local emergency treatment facility, Shoreline Medical Center – Middlesex Hospital.

Parents will be contacted should there be an urgent medical concern, or in the following instances:

- Camper stays overnight in the Health Lodge
- Camper visits the nurse multiple times with the same complaint
- Campers require a medical visit to an outside provider, if parents aren't able to take child to their primary healthcare provider, we would use Wildwood Pediatrics in Essex, CT

If your camper requires a visit to an outside medical provider, the nurses will make every effort to contact you prior to leaving camp. In the event we are unable to contact you, the nurses will make the determination whether an outside medical visit is necessary.



## WATER TESTING

Cedar Lake is a spring-fed 68-acre lake. The many underground springs flowing into the lake contribute to low levels of bacteria and help to keep it cleaner than many other lakes in Connecticut. Both the Town of Chester and Camp Hazen YMCA conduct independent water tests to ensure that the lake is safe for recreational swimming.

## DURING CAMP

### CONCUSSION

Campers will participate in a variety of activities while at camp. As with all physical activities there is a chance that a child may receive a concussion. In the event that a child shows signs of a concussion they will be evaluated by a member of our healthcare staff and will be removed from activities until assessed by our camp doctor or medical facility, if it is deemed necessary. We are required by the State of Connecticut to provide you with the information on Concussions, please turn to the end of this booklet for details.

## INSURANCE

You, as the parent or guardian, are responsible for all medical costs incurred due to injury or illness while your child is at camp. In an effort to keep camp costs within reason, Camp Hazen YMCA does not provide health/accident insurance.

If there is a fee for any medical services, including prescriptions, and we have not received payment by the end of your child's Camp Session, we will charge the last credit card we have on file.

If you have any questions with regards to health care at camp, please feel free to call Kath Davies, our Camp Director.

### TARGET 289

Through Target 289, Camp Hazen YMCA's Annual Giving Campaign, our goal is to provide financial assistance to 289 children who could not afford to attend Hazen otherwise. As a non-for-profit youth servicing organization, we believe in teaching philanthropy. Your child will learn about Target 289 while at camp and have the opportunity to support it by donating \$0.50, \$1.00 or \$2.89 from their store account. If you choose to donate the remainder of your child's store account, rather than requesting a refund, it also goes to Target 289. If you want to recognize a specific staff member, you can donate to Target 289 in their name.

### TIPPING

If you would like to recognize a staff member for the job they have done, a contribution in their name may be made to Target 289. Our Staff know that it is against camp policy and the standards of the American Camp Association for staff members to accept tips.

### [Anonymous Feedback for Camp Hazen YMCA](#)



**Don't forget to save your spot for next summer!**

## CHECK OUT DAY PROCEDURES

- All one-week and two-week sessions end on a Friday at 2pm, with an option late check out of 6pm.
- We discourage early check-out, but if you need to arrange to pick up your camper early, we ask you to do so before 3:30 to avoid traffic congestion with our Day Camp pick up.
- Please make sure to bring a photo ID with you as this is required for camper pick-up.
- Each family will receive a "check-out packet" with a cabin photo, a sign-up card for next Summer, and a note from your camper's counselor.
- Each camper must be signed out before leaving camp.
- You can save your camper's spot for next summer when you're checking out!

### LUGGAGE

Your child's luggage will be in the same location at check-out as it was when you dropped them off, in alphabetical order and marked with their name on tags.

PLEASE....have your camper double check that you have picked up all their gear before departing Camp Hazen.

Don't forget to collect your camper's medications from the camp nurse.

### LOST AND FOUND

There will be a lost & found table set up beside the check-out tent. Please be sure to inspect the table for your camper's items.

Camp Hazen YMCA cannot be held responsible for articles left behind. All unclaimed articles will be donated to a charitable organization at the end of the summer.

If we are able to locate an item that was left behind, it is your responsibility to make arrangements to pick it up. Camp Hazen YMCA is unable to ship or deliver forgotten items.

### EVALUATIONS & SURVEYS & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Each session, campers are asked to complete surveys on their last day. In addition, we will e-mail you with the link to an on-line evaluation. We appreciate you taking the time to complete our evaluation as it helps us to determine what is working and what may need to be changed. Your positive comments as well as your constructive criticism are needed for the continued growth of our facilities and programs and in order for us to best meet the needs of all future Hazen families! If you would prefer to give feedback Anonymously, you can use the link/QR code to the left. All complaints will be reviewed by the Camp Director, so changes can be to the program or training made as appropriate. You are always welcome to reach out to Kath Davies, Camp Director or Denise Learned, Executive Director/CEO with specific concerns. We are available throughout the year. You can call us at (860) 526-9529, email us at [kdavies@camphazenyumca.org](mailto:kdavies@camphazenyumca.org) or [denise@camphazenyumca.org](mailto:denise@camphazenyumca.org) respectively or write to us at 204 West Main Street, Chester, CT 06412. We will respond to all communications in a timely manner and do our utmost to resolve any situation that may have arisen.

## CAMP INFO

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**MAILING Address: 205 West Main St. Chester, CT 06412**

**Website: [www.camphazenyumca.org](http://www.camphazenyumca.org)**

**Phone Number: 860-526-9529**

### KEEPING IN TOUCH

Our camp office is open throughout the year. Please feel free to contact us at any time at (860) 526-9529 or [office@camphazenyumca.org](mailto:office@camphazenyumca.org)

In order to protect your family's privacy, we do not distribute personal mailing addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses for campers or staff. Campers may obtain this information from other campers themselves if they wish to stay in touch.

We strive to help Hazen campers develop healthy, positive relationships at camp and hope that this will carry over to any communications outside of camp, including through the internet. However, as youth development professionals, we are very aware that many young people do engage in inappropriate communication online. For help in ensuring that your child is safe on-line, a great resource is [www.wiredsafety.org](http://www.wiredsafety.org).

We also ask our staff not to have contact with your children after camp. We utilize our Facebook page, as well as our Edward Hazen profile so friends of Hazen can interact in a public forum.

Camp staff are hired for the summer and we are not able to monitor their actions off-season. We recommend that you supervise your child's online activities just as you do other aspects of their life in your home. We need you to take full responsibility for any off-season contact your child has with friends and staff from Camp Hazen.

Please do not hesitate to contact the camp office if you have any concerns.



Camp Hazen YMCA aims to provide an inclusive and welcoming community to all our campers and staff. Our staff represent many gender identities, and we train all our staff in gender-inclusive practices.

Here are some of our practices at camp that are geared to creating an equitable & safe environment for all campers include:

- Gender-neutral public bathrooms
- Gender-inclusive cabin options
- No activities or classes are grouped based on gender.
- Private changing areas are available to all
- Each person may choose to share their pronouns as part of our introductions
- Staff are trained on creating safe(r) spaces for queer, trans\* and non-binary campers and staff

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

While we understand that for some families, topics of gender or sexuality may be uncomfortable or difficult, we believe that through learning from each other's experiences and stories we ultimately create a more empathetic and welcoming world. We understand you may have questions regarding our policies, and we are happy to talk to you about them. We will, however, not compromise on striving to create a safe space for all.

### How will staff be assigned to cabins?

All of our Staff at Hazen are hired because we believe they are strong positive role models for the youth we work with. Staff are asked upon hiring which cabins they would be comfortable leading and living in, Girls+, Boys+ or All gender, just as our campers are.

### How will campers be assigned to cabins?

Cabins are assigned based on gender identity, grade, and cabin mate requests. We also take into account new/returner, age, hometown and additional needs. By completing the Camper Information Form, you can rank your cabin preferences. For each type of cabin, you can select "This is my first preference", "I'm also ok with this type of cabin" or "Please don't put me in this type of cabin". To submit a Cabin Mate Request please complete the 'Bunk request form'.

To clarify, in our All-Gender Cabins, all campers are welcome, including anyone that is comfortable in this space. If you do not complete this form it will be assumed that your child would like to be in a cabin with campers of the gender identity as you have registered them as. The Cabin Request form also allows for one cabin mate request for first time campers. Please take the time to talk to your child about this preference before camp.

### Cabin Options:

- **Boys+ Cabin:** Boys regardless of sex assigned at birth as well as transgender and non-binary campers who feel they belong in this space.
- **Girls+ Cabin:** Girls regardless of sex assigned at birth as well as transgender and non-binary campers who feel they belong in this space.
- **All-Gender Cabin:** Housing for all. This includes campers whose identity may or may not fall into the male-female binary, including allies who would be interested in living in an all-gender space.

### Will you be asking campers and staff to share their pronouns during introductions?

Respecting people's identities and referring to them correctly, makes spaces like camp more inclusive. Many of our staff will share their own pronouns. This will set the tone and shows others that pronoun-sharing is normal and will be respected. Out of consideration for those who might be questioning or discovering their gender identity, it is up to the individual to choose if they would like to share their pronouns.

### If a camper asks to use a different name or set of pronouns will that information be shared with home?

One of the best things about camp is that it is a safe place for kids to have new experiences and to try new things. This may include trying a new activity or making a new friend or testing out new pronouns.

The safety of each child is always at the center of all decisions we make. We will always keep you informed if we are concerned about your child's well-being, however this may happen without disclosing exactly what your child has shared with us.

History has shown that 1 in 8 children have been evicted from their homes when they have shared their identity with their family. Therefore, it is important for us to have a consistent policy to protect all children. With that in mind we will only share this type of information with parents/guardian if the child gives us express permission to do so. The conversations that we have with children will be focused on giving them the confidence to be happy with who they are and ensuring they have trusted adults outside of camp with whom they can talk.

What we will do:

- Honor, support and validate the child
- Encourage them to share this new development in their life with an adult they trust outside of camp
- Make a plan with them for how they might share their news safely, and whom they could go to if something went wrong
- Contact the proper authorities if there is a concern that they are in danger of harm. Who may then contact the parents/guardians as they saw necessary
- Alert those at home that their child could benefit from a mental or physical health care provider without telling the exact details at the discretion of the child

### Will campers be allowed to switch cabins once they arrive at camp?

It is unusual for a camper to switch cabins once a session has begun. If a camper requests to do so, we would try to find out the reason and work on resolving the issue. If it is because they do not feel that the cabin is a safe space for them based on their gender identity, we would see if there were any accommodations we could make to change that, and only switch cabins if that is the best solution.

**If a camper changes their cabin during their session will that information be shared with parent/guardians?**

We encourage all families to have a meaningful conversation about the cabin options before attending camp, making it unlikely that there would be a need to switch cabins upon arrival. If a cabin switch does happen, the only reason this would not be shared with a parent/guardian is if the child believes that they would be unsafe at home because of it. If this were the case, we would ensure the child is given the resources that could help their situation.

**How will staff be trained in gender inclusive practices?**

All Hazen Staff participate in a week of staff orientation at the start of the summer. Our training includes learning and practicing to make all spaces welcoming and as safe as possible for all campers. We make use of lectures, seminars and role playing on how to respond to situations that could arise during a session. Throughout the summer we have small group meetings and full staff trainings to complement this training.

**How will each child's privacy be maintained?**

Any information shared with camp on the Health History, Physical Exam or Camper Information Forms is only shared on a need-to-know basis. Information is never shared with other campers, unless the child in question chooses to do so themselves.

**How will you be ensuring the safety of all campers in their cabins and bunks?**

Cabins are considered semi-private spaces that are for the campers and staff who reside there. Only Leadership staff are permitted inside cabins that are not their own. At Camp Hazen YMCA each child's bed is their own personal space. No one is allowed on anyone else's bed for any reason, even if they have permission from the owner.

At the start of each session, each cabin group works together to set their own set of guidelines to live together. These are based on the values of camp: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

**What about showers and bathrooms?**

All Cabins for our youngest campers have a private bathroom and changing stall in them. Five of these cabins also have a shower. All other cabins are located in villages with a centrally located shower house. Each shower house has individual private changing areas that are available to all campers. There are designated shower times for campers in the evening. Staff shower in the mornings or after the campers have finished at night. During shower time there are always two staff members present for supervision.

**Won't all-gender cabins encourage romantic relationships?**

No. Building strong healthy relationships is one of the huge benefits of a camp experience. While romantic relationships may develop while at camp, there are many ways we have always worked to ensure they are safe, healthy and minimally physical while at camp:

- Campers are closely supervised throughout the day.
- Cabin Staff are always in the cabin when the group is in there
- Attendance is taken multiple times during the day - at each class, meal and village meeting.
- Campers follow the 'rule of 3, so no one is ever alone with just one other person.
- Staff talk about consent with campers as part of everyday activities such as climbing, archery and swimming.
- Each camper's bed is a private space, and no one else is allowed on it or in it.
- Exclusive relationships are discouraged, as being at camp is about being part of a community.

Most often those who choose all gender cabins do so because they are going to camp with a sibling, family member or friend, they are a gender minority; not because they are looking for a romantic relationship.

**Won't creating gender inclusive spaces encourage more kids to change their gender?**

No. They will, however, provide a space for children to express themselves authentically and without harm.

**What if campers have questions or concerns about these practices before or during camp?**

During the summer campers can always go to their cabin staff or village director with any questions. Before the summer, we are always happy to talk to campers. They can call us anytime, shoot us an email or families may choose to attend one of our Open Houses.

**Isn't this a lot of work to accommodate a very small number of people?**

Our inclusive practices benefit everyone.

**Allowing my child to be housed with someone of the opposite gender is against my religious or cultural beliefs. Will this be taken into account when making cabin assignments?**

If you find that none of our cabin options meet the needs of your family, we regret to say that we may not be the camp for you. Please reach out to us so we might understand your situation and see how your child might feel comfortable at Hazen. If after our conversation, you determine that Camp Hazen YMCA is not the right camp for you, we will respect your decision.

**What resources do you have that we can share with our camper before the camp session?**

[Why are gender inclusive policies so important](#) - a video by Chris Rehs-Dupin from Transplaining. **Warning** - this video includes hard statistics and may be tough for younger campers or campers who are trans\*, non-binary, or queer to hear.

[The Trevor Project](#) has great resources, specifically for youth, about what gender identity is, exploring your own gender identity, and how to be an ally to trans\* and non-binary people all designed.

[This BuzzFeed list](#) has many books on gender for young children and your local library will likely have many of these and others so ask your librarian for their recommendations!

**Is your camp now only for LGBTQ campers?**

No, Camp Hazen YMCA is for any child that is looking for a fun and safe summer experience.

**Why is your camp taking a side on such a politically charged issue?**

We wish this was not a politically charged issue. Gender affirmation practices are proven to save lives of individuals that need them. We are dedicated to our mission of helping youth develop valuable life skills. Being able to live in a community setting that is welcoming and inclusive to all is one of those life skills.

**Kids get sent to camp to have fun, not to learn about these types of issues. How will Camp ensure this will not disrupt their camp experience?**

Growing in empathy and acceptance for others not only doesn't disrupt the camp experience, it makes it more fun for everyone involved. Most campers will not even notice gender inclusive practices. Many campers (regardless of gender) want a private place to change, and all campers deserve safety, privacy, respect for their body and belongings, and deserve a place to sleep at night where they feel safe and respected.

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ON PROTECTING CHILDREN

Even very young children can learn skills to help keep themselves safe from sexual abuse, but it is often up to parents/guardians to help them learn what they need to know. Here are some important things you can teach your child to stay safe. (Note: many of these tips may be applicable to parents/guardians of individuals with disabilities.)

## TEACH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT THEIR BODIES

**Names of all Parts of Their Bodies.** Talk to your child about the proper names for body parts, and use the proper name for private parts in that discussion. This will give your child the correct words to use when he/she needs to tell you anything about his/her body, like an injury or rash or other problem in that area.

**Rules About Appropriate Physical Touch.** Children understand the idea of rules. They know there are rules about hitting and biting, rules about playing nicely with others, and rules about being safe, like wearing seat belts. So, as you teach these rules, just add rules about appropriate physical touch. Say things like, "Never let other people touch your private parts," or "Never let anyone make you touch their private parts either."

**What to do if Someone Tries to Break the Rules.** Your children need to know what to do when someone breaks the rules about touching them. They need to know:

- **What to say** to someone who breaks the rules about touching,
- **To move away** from someone who is breaking the rules about touching, and
- **To tell you** or another adult if someone breaks the rules about touching.
- **Teach your child to say**, "No!" Or "No! Don't touch my private parts." Or "My body is private.
- You can't touch me there." Or "Leave me alone." Or simply "Don't do that." Teach your child to say this to other children as well as to adults. Practice saying phrases like these with your child.
- **Teach your child to move away** from anyone who is breaking the rules about touching. Tell your child that it's ok to get out of someone's lap or pull away from a hug, even if an adult tells or asks you to sit on their lap or hug them.
- **Teach your child to tell you** or another trusted adult, like a teacher or caregiver, if someone breaks the rules about touching them. Keep telling someone until they respond and does
- something about it.

## TIPS FOR PROTECTING

### HOW OFFENDERS OPERATE (APC) ACCESS, PRIVACY, CONTROL

#### HOW TO RECOGNIZE BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS:

##### PHYSICAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

- Tickling,
- Horseplay,
- Hugging,
- Massaging,
- Wrestling, and
- Going overboard with affection.

##### EMOTIONAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

- Making them feel overly important, cared about, understood,
- Spending too much time with them,
- Choosing favorites,
- Giving gifts, and
- Acting possessive.
- Sending excessive or inappropriate text messages,
- Pretending to be the consumer's friend on social networking sites like Facebook,
- Sharing personal information to make the consumer feel like they have a special
- relationship
- Promising extra coaching time, a college scholarship, a place on a national team, or
- even a spot on the Olympic Team!

##### BEHAVIORAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

Offenders manipulate kids into doing things they would not otherwise do, such as:

- Sneaking around by saying they will be in one place when they are in another,
- Keeping secrets with the offender,
- Looking at pornography, and
- Using drugs or alcohol.



## HOW TO RESPOND TO WARNING SIGNS

Follow these five steps:

1. Keep your eyes and ears open.
2. Talk with your child or loved one.
3. Then, ask them about your concerns.
4. If what you learn from your them or if what you've observed or overheard sounds like abuse, call Child Protective Services or local law enforcement.
5. If what you learn from them, or if what you've observed or overheard, sounds like a boundary violation, suspicious or inappropriate behavior, or a policy violation, then:
  - Share your concerns with the employee and/or with his supervisor and/or with the person in charge of your organization.
  - If you are unable to do this, you can share your concerns with a Director,

## HOW TO RECOGNIZE WARNING SIGNS IN YOUR CHILD

Now let's talk about what you can do if someone is breaking rules about touching your child. No one knows your child better than you. So, as parents/guardians, watch for warning signs, listen for warning signs, and follow up when you see or hear warning signs. If something is wrong, you may see a sudden change in your child's behavior, or you may hear unusual comments. If you see or hear these things, follow up. Find a relaxed time to talk one-on-one with your child.

## RESPONDING TO INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR OR TOUCH YOUR CHILD REPORTS

If your child tells you about inappropriate behavior or you witness it, such as someone who is too physical with him/her or who makes him/her uncomfortable, ask him/her to give you an example. If the interaction was inappropriate, but not actual abuse - talk with his/her teacher or caregiver. Specify your concern and check back with your child and with the teacher. Abuse can be very private and embarrassing, so keep in mind that your child may not say anything at all.

## HOW TO RESPOND IF YOUR CHILD TELLS YOU ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE

Your response plays a big role in how your child understands the abuse and how he/she recovers. You may find yourself in a situation where a person confides in you that he or she has been sexually abused by a teacher, family member, another consumer, a coach, or other trusted adult. If this happens, follow these four steps:

### STEP 1: LISTEN.

- Do your best to stay calm and let the person talk. Don't pry but you can ask a few questions that will help you understand what happened.

### STEP 2. REASSURE.

- The person may be scared, angry, confused and crying. You can reassure them with a few simple comments like:
  - "I know how hard this is to talk about." "You are very brave for bringing this out."
  - "Don't worry, you are doing the right thing by letting someone know." "This isn't your fault. You've done nothing wrong."
  - "I'm very sorry this has happened to you."

### STEP 3. PROTECT.

Make sure the person is safe. Do not let the accused person have any further contact with him or her and tell the victim-survivor you will do everything you can to keep him or her safe and/or supported. Let them know you must share what he or she has told you with others who can help.

### STEP 4. REPORT.

Write down as quickly as you can everything the person shared with you in as much detail as possible, using the person's actual words, not your own interpretation. To report concerns or suspected abuse, call your local police department.

It's up to us as adults to do all we can to prevent child sexual abuse. It's up to all of us, especially parents/guardians, to create safe environments for children. Teaching them about their bodies, recognizing warning signs, and responding to yours and your child concerns are important first steps.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS WHEN TALKING WITH CHILDREN

This information is designed to help you talk to your child in situations where there is a possibility that he or she might reveal information about inappropriate boundaries they have experienced with an adult or another consumer. It may be difficult to do but it's important to try to stay calm when you speak with your child. Your demeanor will communicate more than your words. Children can be traumatized by emotional, angry or accusatory reactions.

### THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT SENSITIVE SUBJECTS:

- Timing and atmosphere are very important. Choose a calm, unhurried, private time to talk with your child.
- Before beginning this type of conversation, be sure you're ready. Be calm, emotionally controlled and confident. You want to communicate to your child that you are open to discussing this topic and that you can handle whatever they need to tell you.
- If this is difficult for you to talk about, practice first with a friend, your spouse or in a mirror.
- Use simple, conversational language, gauged to your child's level of understanding.
- Do not make the talk scary or gloomy. Self-protection is an issue to discuss with children on a regular basis. Conversations such as this should be a positive learning experience for children so that they feel comfortable talking about their bodies. This also increases the chances that your child will seek your advice in the future. Remember, "If you can't talk about it, you can't protect it."
- If your child shares difficult information, stay calm. Do not say, "Why didn't you tell me?" Do let the child continue to talk. Say that you are proud that he or she found a way to get help. If you are at all agitated, it may be best to wait until you have a chance to contact a local resource to continue the discussion. Tell your child, "I'm really proud that you've shared this with me, and I think we should continue this discussion when we can get some extra help from a counselor who has helped other children with these things. How does that sound?"

### HOW TO BEGIN:

#### START THE CONVERSATION CASUALLY.

- "How was your day? Or "What did you do at school today?" or "It's nice to have a chance to sit and talk for a minute, isn't it?"

#### IDENTIFY THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN QUESTION.

- "How is everything going at camp?" "What is your favorite thing to do there?"; "What is your least favorite thing to do?"; "Has anyone made you feel uncomfortable?"
- "Remember that if anyone makes you feel uncomfortable you should tell mommy, daddy, a teacher or another grown up you trust."
- "You know it's very important that if anything like that happened to you that you tell me right away, right? That way I can make sure you are safe."

#### QUESTIONS IF YOU AND YOUR CHILD WANT TO CONTINUE TO TALK.

- "Tell me more, I'm listening."
- Your child may be uncomfortable so you will want to do what you can to put him or her at ease. Sitting close, using a calm voice tone, giving a hug or keeping your arm around him or her will help.
- You can also say something like, "Honey, you know I love you very much and I'm concerned that you might be upset about something. Can you tell me what you're thinking?"
- If your child stops talking or gets upset, continue comforting him or her.

#### IF YOUR CHILD DOES DISCLOSE THAT SOMETHING HAPPENED:

- "I'm really glad you told me about this. You did the right thing by telling me. I know you are upset but you know I am here for you. are here for you."

#### AFTER THE CONVERSATION:

- Write down notes about the conversation while it is fresh in your mind.

## HOW TO SUPPORT A LOVED ONE WHO HAS EXPERIENCED ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION

It can be hard to know what to do to help a friend, family member, or student who is a survivor of abuse or exploitation. Victims of abuse and/or exploitation may experience a range of emotional responses after an incident. Please read below for some helpful hints for parents/guardians or partners/friends of those who have experienced abuse and/or exploitation. Here's how you can help:

### WHAT TO SAY TO A SURVIVOR:

I'm sorry this happened to you  
 It wasn't your fault  
 Thank you for telling me  
 I'm always here if you want to talk  
 Can I do anything for you?

### WHAT PARENTS/GUARDIANS CAN DO:

The process of recovering from abuse and/or exploitation takes time. As a parent/guardian, your help during this process is essential. Survivors need a great deal of support and caring as they begin to address and survive a very frightening and sometimes violent experience.

Parents/guardians can help by:

- Listen and be available
- Believe and do not judge
- Recognize that recovery takes a long time
- Respect the decisions that the survivor makes
- Be gentle, sensitive, and respectful of the survivor's wishes for closeness and affection
- Find your own support

### WHAT NEVER TO SAY TO A SURVIVOR:

- It was your fault.
- You could have avoided it had you
- It's been so long! Get over it!
- You wanted it / You were asking for it.
- It's not that big of deal; it happens to lots of people.
- I don't believe you.

### WHAT FRIENDS AND PARTNERS CAN DO:

Friends and partners play a key role in both preventing abuse and exploitation from occurring as well as lending support to a survivor. They are often the first people in whom a survivor might confide. Here are a few things to keep in mind to support your friend.

- Believe your friend / partner. People rarely lie about sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, or harassment.
- Listen to your friend/partner and concentrate on understanding their feelings.
- Ask how you can help... and do it.
- Offer to accompany your friend/partner in seeking medical attention, counseling, or reporting to law enforcement.
- Help the friend/partner regain a sense of control by supporting her or him in making decisions about whom to tell and how to proceed.
- Remind your friend/ partner that sexual violence is NOT their fault!
- Offer shelter or companionship so that she/he doesn't have to be alone.
- Be available and supportive

*There's no "right way" to heal from trauma. Be there to listen, to care, and to help!*



## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR YMCA STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

- Staff and volunteers will always consider safety of campers and safety of themselves as a priority in all situations.
- Staff and volunteers will respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children and co-workers equally regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, economic level of the family, or disability.
- Staff and volunteers will act in a caring, honest, respectful, and responsible manner consistent with the mission of the YMCA.
- Staff and volunteers will exhibit the highest ethical best practices and personal integrity.
- Staff and volunteers will provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment.
- Staff and volunteers will not physically, sexually, or emotionally abuse or neglect a Children or adult.
- Staff and volunteers will share concerns about suspicious or inappropriate behavior with their supervisor or administrator.
- Staff and volunteers will report any suspected abuse or neglect of a Children to the state authorities.
- Staff and volunteers will accept their personal responsibility to protect Children and adults from all forms of abuse.

### **WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

#### **SUPERVISION OF CAMPERS (M16)**

- To protect YMCA staff, volunteers, and program members, at no time during a YMCA program may a staff person be alone with a single child where he or she cannot be observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should space themselves in such a way that other staff can see them.
- Staff shall never leave a child unsupervised. At least one staff member must be in each cabin after Cabin Chat
- Rest-room supervision: Staff will make sure the rest room is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff will stand in the doorway of the rest room while children are using the rest room. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff (not being alone with a child). If staff are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip or at other off-site location. Always send children in threes (known as the rule of three) and, whenever possible, with staff.
- Staff should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs— changing, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, and so on. When this is not feasible, staff should be positioned so that they are visible to others.
- Under no circumstances should staff release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA).
- Employees, volunteers, and children should not sit or lie on anyone’s bed or be in anyone else’s sleeping bag
- Employees and volunteers will not leave children alone during siesta/bedtime

#### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

- Staff must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism. Staff will have age- appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in predetermined situations (when necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), administered only in a prescribed manner, and must be documented in writing.
- Camp Hazen YMCA will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one child by another child. In addition, our organization will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, we will take steps needed to eliminate such behavior. Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying. This policy applies to all children, employees, and volunteers.
- Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:
  - Physical bullying: when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
  - Verbal bullying: when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.
  - Nonverbal or relational bullying: when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- Cyberbullying: the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:
  - Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images;
  - Posting sensitive, private information about another person;
  - Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad;
  - Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
- Hazing: an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person’s willingness to participate.
- Sexualized bullying: when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposures of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

**CHILD ABUSE**

- staff shall not abuse children in any way, including
- physical abuse—striking, spanking, shaking, slapping; hazing and so on;
- verbal abuse—humiliating, degrading, threatening; and so on;
- sexual abuse—touching or speaking inappropriately or showing inappropriate materials;
- mental abuse—shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel, and so on; or
- Neglect—withholding food, water, or basic care.
- No type of abuse will be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal or arrest.
- Staff will respect children’s rights to not be touched or looked at in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
- Children are never to be touched against their will (unless in the case of clear and present danger) or against their discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally.
- Staff must read Staff Manual and follow all precautions outlined in section on Child Abuse. Any allegation must be reported to a supervisor, director, or other authority.

**INTERACTIONS WITH CAMPERS**

- Staff and volunteers will adhere to uniform best practices of displaying affection as outlined by Camp Hazen YMCA.
- Staff and volunteers will adhere to uniform best practices of appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions as outlined by our organization.
- Staff and volunteers will not stare at or comment on children’s bodies.
- Staff and volunteers will not date or become romantically involved with children.
- Staff and volunteers will not have secrets with children and will only give gifts in accordance with organizational policies.
- Staff and volunteers will comply with our organization’s policies regarding interactions with children outside of our programs.
- Staff and volunteers will adhere to organizational policies regarding electronic communication and social media with children.
- At no time, and not for any reason, is there to be physical punishment of Campers. Any incidence of physical punishment of a Camper may result in dismissal. Physical punishment is not the same as physical restraint used to prevent a Camper from an action that may be harmful to him or herself or others.
- While the YMCA does not discriminate against an individual’s lifestyle, it does require that in the performance of their job they will abide by professional standard and conduct set forth by the YMCA. Discussion with campers regarding private staff/adult relationships, sexual education or imposing their own political views is prohibited. Parents will decide how children learn the ‘facts of life’, they do not expect camp staff to do this. Staff are expected to seek out the Camp Director, Leadership Staff or Camp Nurse if you have a sensitive situation with your camper(s).
- Staff members may be in a situation where they are informed of a camper’s disability or illness, and must respect camper confidentiality regarding any medical information and refrain from discussing medical situations with anyone other than Health Staff and necessary Camp Directors.

**PROFESSIONAL IMAGE**

**PERSONAL APPEARANCE & BEHAVIOR**

- Staff must appear clean, neat and appropriately attired. When building trust, it is the first impression is the one that counts and staff need to remember to be positive role models. The Executive Director will have the final say in any attire, tattoos, body piercing etc that he/she finds to be inappropriate
- Staff must wear performance style bathing suits and clothing that covers the body appropriately. Inappropriate attire while at camp includes excessively short shorts, revealing bathing suits, see-through clothing and t-shirts with inappropriate language or designs.
- Smoking/vaping and use of tobacco related products are prohibited at Camp.
- There will be no alcoholic beverages anywhere in summer camp buildings or on camp property. Possession of, use of, or being with persons possessing or using alcohol will mean automatic dismissal from camp. Staff members in camp will be expected to observe the Connecticut State laws regarding legal age for use of alcohol when they are out of camp on time off. No staff member will be allowed to come on to YMCA property from time off having had too much to drink. You are considered on duty anytime you are on camp property. Breaking the alcohol rules will lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from Camp Hazen YMCA.
- Use of any drugs not prescribed for medical reasons will not be permitted. Possession of, use of, or being with persons possessing or using marijuana for recreational use or other illicit drugs will lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from camp.
- All prescribed medication and over the counter medication, other than life saving emergency medication, for staff will be kept in the Health Lodge, not in cabins. - No weapons of any kind will be brought to camp.
- Staff and volunteers will not have sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography, on our organization’s property.

**PERSONAL INTERACTIONS**

- Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of children, parents and staff.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one’s personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children, parents, volunteers, or other staff is prohibited.
- Staff may not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, driving or riding in cars, and inviting children to their homes. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to prior administrator approval.
- Staff will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
- Staff should not give excessive gifts (e.g., TV, video games, jewelry) to youth.
- Staff are to understand there is a clear power difference between themselves and campers and are not to take advantage of this difference. Staff may not have any physically intimate or emotionally inappropriate relationship with program participants, including LEA’s.
- Staff are not to transport children in their own vehicles or allow youth participants old enough to drive to transport younger children in the program.

**ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT**

While these tools provide many benefits, they also present the potential for inappropriate behavior, increased access to vulnerable children, and privacy violations. Employees, volunteers, and children participating in Camp Hazen YMCA’s programs, events, and activities shall adhere to the following Social Media Code of Conduct:

**ONLINE PRESENCE:**

- You are expected to represent yourself and the YMCA positively and responsibly year-round. Inappropriate photos, comments, stories and questionable interactions that are viewable to campers, parents, alumni and administrators puts Camp’s reputation at risk and your employment at risk (including future references for other jobs). We expect you to continue professional boundaries with campers year-round.
- Be a positive role model by exhibiting professionalism in all interactions; portray an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity. Do not engage in behavior or comments that are, or could be construed by any observer to be, harsh, abusive, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Do not engage in personal attacks, sexually oriented conversations, or discussions about sexual activity.
- Employees and volunteers may not create web pages on behalf of Camp Hazen YMCA unless they have prior approval to do so and may not misrepresent their work with Camp Hazen YMCA or Camp Hazen YMCA itself.
- Rather than personally defend Camp Hazen YMCA’s reputation, employees and volunteers should notify their supervisor or an administrator of a negative comment or online representation or if any member of the media contacts them about any matter related to Camp Hazen YMCA.

**ONLINE INTERACTIONS:**

- Staff and volunteers are prohibited from communicating with children using personal social networks, including direct messaging through social media or gaming platforms, or sending text messages to children and/or replying to text messages from a child. If a child attempts to communicate with a staff member or volunteer via these methods, a Senior Leadership must be notified immediately.
- Personal social networking profiles and/or blogs of employees and volunteers shall be private and not shared with children. Employees and volunteers with profiles on social networking sites shall not request to be “friends” with or follow children or approve friend or follow requests from children, unless there is a prior connection outside of the camp.
- Employees and volunteers are prohibited from sending private messages to children and/or replying to private messages from a child. If a child attempts to privately communicate with an employee or volunteer electronically, the Camp Director or designee must be notified immediately.
- Employees and volunteers may not engage in electronic communication or social media contact with family members or friends of children.

**SHARING OF CAMPER INFORMATION ONLINE**

- Never reveal sensitive or confidential information, including identifiable details or photos of a child without written consent from their parent or legal guardian.
- Employees and volunteers may not post or share inappropriate photos or comments on photos of children.
- Employees and volunteers may not post or share on their personal social media accounts any photographs or videos of children participating in Camp Hazen YMCA’s programs.



**USE OF TECHNOLOGY:**

- Refrain from using personal or organization owned devices in restrooms, showerhouse, or other areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.
- Refrain from using cell phone cameras and/or any recording functions, on the cell phone or within apps, during programming unless permission is granted. If permission is granted, the camera or recording feature is only to be used as directed by the employee or volunteer only for that particular purpose
- Do not make pornography, in any form available to children participating in Camp Hazen YMCA’s programs, events, and activities or assist children in any way in gaining access to pornography.
- While on Camp Hazen’s YMCA network and or property staff and volunteers may not:
  - Access, send, receive, download, produce, or distribute any offensive, profane, threatening, pornographic, or sexually explicit material at any time, for any reason.
  - Access websites, newsgroups, or chat areas that contain material that is counter to Camp Hazen YMCA’s mission or that promote illegal acts.

Employees and volunteers must adhere to uniform standards of electronic communication and social media use as outlined in any applicable organizational policies and procedures.

**EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE POLICY**

Camp Hazen YMCA believes employees have valuable thoughts and insights to share regarding the workplace and our operations. Accordingly, Camp Hazen YMCA encourages employees to share opinions, suggestions, concerns, questions or grievances about our policies, personnel issues, and/or other workplace matters and Camp Hazen YMCA. In general, the best person initially to bring opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to is the employee’s direct supervisor. However, to the extent the concerns relate to their direct supervisor, or to the extent an employee believes their direct supervisor did not fully address a matter, employees may direct their opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to the next level of management or directly to the Camp Director of the Executive Director/CEO. To share a grievance anonymously, you can do so by adding \*67 prior to (860) 526 9529 or by dropping a note in the mail box by the office.

This Code of Conduct and associated policies and procedures shall be provided to parents/guardians of children. It shall also be available on Camp Hazen YMCA’s website for public view.

Staff are to report to a supervisor any other staff or volunteer who violates any of the policies listed in this Code of Conduct. Staff are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.

In signing this document, I agree to the following:

To watch for signs of stress in myself and others as a way of maintaining a safe environment for everyone at Camp Hazen YMCA

To ask for help if I do not understand a policy or feel I am in a situation that is uncomfortable or has the potential to become harmful.

Staff and volunteers will report concerns or complaints about other employees and volunteers, other adults, or Children to the Camp Director or designee.

Staff and volunteers will report allegations or incidents of abuse to the proper state authority. Please refer to the specific guidelines of your state regarding mandated reporting.

Staff and volunteers may not have engaged in or been accused or convicted of Children abuse, indecency with a child, or injury to a child.

To adhere to this Code of Conduct and understand that any violation of this Code puts campers, staff and myself at risk and may result in termination.

Please refer to Camp Hazen YMCA’s full Employee Handbook for full details of our policies.

## CHILD ABUSE REPORTING & RESPONSE PROCEDURES

All employees and volunteers must follow state specific mandatory reporting requirements. Our organization has zero tolerance for abuse. It is imperative that every employee or volunteer actively participates in the protection of children.

Employees and volunteers must be trained to be aware of and understand their legal and ethical obligation to recognize and report suspicions of mistreatment and abuse. Employees and volunteers will:

- be familiar with the symptoms of abuse and neglect, including physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse;
- be familiar with red-flag or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations;
- know and follow organization policies and procedures that protect against abuse;
- report suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities as required by state mandated reporter laws; and
- follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken.

In the event that employees or volunteers observe red-flag or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations by other employees or volunteers, it is their professional and personal responsibility to immediately report their observations in accordance with Camp Hazen YMCA's reporting procedures.

The following are examples of red-flag or inappropriate behaviors that all employees and volunteers are required to report:

- Any violation of Camp Hazen YMCA's abuse prevention policies
- Seeking unauthorized private time or one-on-one time with children
- Seeing or visiting with a child outside of scheduled programming
- Buying gifts for individual children
- Sending unauthorized electronic communications through text messaging, social media, online gaming, etc. in violation of Camp Hazen YMCA's electronic communication policy
- Making suggestive comments to children
- Showing favoritism towards a child or type of child
- Children disclosing that an employee or volunteer makes them feel uncomfortable

If employees or volunteers witness suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations from another employee or volunteer, the individual is instructed to do the following:

- Interrupt the behavior.
- Report the behavior to a supervisor, director, or other authority.
- If you are not comfortable making the report directly, make it anonymously
- If the report is about a supervisor or administrator, contact the next level of management.
- Complete an internal report but do not conduct an investigation.
- Keep reporting until the appropriate action is taken.

In the event that a supervisor or an administrator receives a report of suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations from an employee, volunteer, child, or parent/guardian, the supervisor is instructed to do the following:

- Report to the next level supervisor or administrator.
- Speak with the employee or volunteer who has been reported.
- Review the file of the employee or volunteer to determine if similar complaints were reported.
- Determine the appropriate response based on the report.
- \* Take into consideration factors such as:
  - \* Context of red-flag or inappropriate behavior or policy violation;
  - \* Severity of red-flag or inappropriate behavior or policy violation
  - \* History of red-flag or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations; and
  - \* Trainability of employee or volunteer.
- Document the report on the appropriate form.
- If at any point in gathering information about a report of red-flag or inappropriate behavior, a concern arises about possible abuse, contact the state authorities and file a report.
- If appropriate, notify parents/guardians.
- Advise the person who reported the behavior that the report is being taken seriously.

Based on the information gathered, the following may be required:

- Increase monitoring or supervision of the employee, volunteer, and/or program.
- If policy violations with child(s) are confirmed, the employee or volunteer must be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and prosecution. Disciplinary action will follow the Progressive Disciplinary Process outlined by Camp Hazen YMCA.
- If more information is needed, interview and/or survey other employees and volunteers or children.

In the State of Connecticut Youth Camp Directors are Mandated Reporters. As such are required by mandated reporting laws and must report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child—whether on or off organization property or whether perpetrated by employees, volunteers, or others—to state authorities. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. A person who mistakenly reports suspected abuse is immune from civil or criminal liability as long as the report was made in good faith and without malice.

To report to state authorities, employees and volunteers are required to report any suspected or known abuse of child perpetrated by employees or volunteers directly to leadership so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure

the safety of alleged victims and others who may be at risk. Reports of suspected or known abuse may be made confidentially to the following:

- Immediate supervisor
- Directors
- Administrators

**Additional guidelines for employee and volunteer response to incidents or allegations of abuse:**

- If you witness abuse, safely interrupt the behavior immediately.
- If abuse is disclosed to you, assure the individual disclosing that he or she was correct to tell you.
- Protect the alleged victim from intimidation, retribution, or further abuse to the extent possible.
- Immediately report the allegation or incident to the proper organization authorities (based on mandatory reporting requirements) and the designated authority.
- Be sure to document the incident, disclosure, or any circumstances causing your suspicion of abuse according to incident reporting and documentation requirements. State only the facts.
- It is not your job to investigate the incident, but it is your job to report the incident to your supervisor in a timely manner.
- Check back to make sure appropriate steps were taken. If not, report again to your supervisor or the designated organization authority.

**In the event of an accusation of child abuse, the Camp Hazen YMCA will take prompt and immediate action as follows:**

1. At the first report or allegation that child abuse has occurred, the staff person it has been reported to will notify a Village Director and the Camp Director, who will review the incident with Executive Director.
2. The Camp Director or Executive Director will see to the immediate safety and medical care of all persons at issue.
3. The Camp Director or Executive Director will gather information about the allegation. For example, who made the report, who was allegedly abused, who was the alleged abuser, what was the nature of the alleged abuse, where and when did the alleged abuse occur, etc. It is not our job to investigate the incident, but to collect the facts that can be reported.
4. Camp Hazen YMCA will make a report in accordance with relevant state or local child abuse reporting requirements and will cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal authority involved.
5. If the Executive Director is not immediately available, this review by the supervisor, cannot in any way deter the reporting of child abuse by mandated reporters.
6. Youth Camp Directors or Assistant Youth Camp Directors are mandated by law to report reasonable suspicion of abuse.
7. It is not our job, to prove that a child has been abused, only to report reasonable suspicion.
8. Failure to report by a mandated reporter makes that person subject to arrest and prosecution.
9. CT State Law states "All persons, institutions, or agencies reporting in good faith is immune from any liability, civil or criminal."
10. An oral report must be made to immediately (within 12 hours) to the Commissioner of DCF or his representative or the local police or state police.
11. A written report must follow within 48 hours to both DCF and the State Health Department.
12. The Department of Children and Families Hotline telephone number is 1-800-842-2288.
13. In the event the reported incident involves a volunteer or staff member, the Executive Director will immediately, without exception, suspend the volunteer or staff person from duties until an investigation is complete.
14. The Camp Director or Executive Director will see to it that any camper who is accused of child abuse is removed from the presence of the other campers to an isolated location and supervised by at least two staff at all times.
15. The parents or legal guardian of the child or children involved in the alleged incident will be promptly notified in accordance with the directions of the relevant state or local agency. If more than one set of parents is involved (e.g., child-on-child abuse), the YMCA's responsibility is to keep the names and contact information of those involved confidential.
16. The Executive Director will be the spokesperson for the camp and will follow the Camp Hazen YMCA crisis management procedure.
17. Whether the incident or alleged offense takes place on or off YMCA premises, it will be considered job related (because of the youth- involved nature of the YMCA).
18. Reinstatement of the program volunteer, employed staff person, or YMCA member will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the Executive Director.
19. All YMCA staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in the handling of this information and therefore should discuss the incident only with the executive director or his or her designate.

Camp Hazen YMCA takes every allegation of abuse or misconduct seriously and will fully cooperate with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse or misconduct. **(P12)** Employees and volunteers shall cooperate with any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by Camp Hazen YMCA or persons given investigative authority by Camp Hazen YMCA.

**Cooperation with investigations includes, but is not limited to:**

- Promptly acknowledging and responding to requests for information;
- Making oneself available for meetings with investigating officials;
- Providing full, accurate, and truthful information;
- Keeping confidential information learned or transmitted during the investigation, unless directed by legal authorities, and
- Preserving relevant information and documents.

An employee or volunteer's failure to cooperate with an investigation will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from Camp Hazen YMCA.

All full-time and part-time employees and program volunteers must read and sign this policy.