

YMCA Camp Sloper

PARENT HANDBOOK



YMCA Camp Sloper Outdoor Center
Program Center of the
Southington-Cheshire Community YMCAs



YMCA Camp Sloper: 860-621-8194
Southington Y: 860-628-5597 • Cheshire Y: 203-272-3150
Website: www.YMCACampSloper.org

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Thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Sloper

A letter from the director



Mark Pooler
Camp Director

Let me start by saying thank you for entrusting your family's most prized possession, your children, with us at YMCA Camp Sloper. As a father of two, I understand the concerns of today's parents and the great responsibility that goes along with caring for children and teens at a day camp program. Rest assured however, you have made a great choice! YMCA Camp Sloper has a proud past and wonderful reputation of providing a high quality day camp program focusing on children and teens for more than 60 years.

In December of 1949 Cornelia Sloper Neal left 143 acres of farm land located at 1000 East Street to the YMCA in hopes of a YMCA day camp being developed in memory of her family. The following excerpt is taken directly from the Last Will and Testament of Cornelia Sloper Neal: "It is my will, that said farm with pond of water thereon, shall be developed for and used as a campsite, and for water sports, and for promoting similar outdoor health and recreational activities for the largest number possible of young men and women, members of the Young Men's Christian Association...under competent and efficient supervisions as part of the work of the Young Men's Christian Association..."

YMCA Camp Sloper is about youth development, healthy living and social responsibility! We teach children life-long lessons about building friendships and socialization with peers, staying active and the importance of exercise, appreciation for nature, and enjoyment of the outdoors. Our stepping stone program promotes new challenges and personal growth each summer. We do that by providing 150+ positive role models who guide, teach, support and lead campers through fun, innovative and exciting camp programs and activities. Our 143-acre property is full of state of the art facilities and program areas designed and built for campers of all ages.

If at any time you have concerns or questions about the programs, staff or facilities, please feel free to address these issues with the appropriate staff person or myself. We welcome your constructive criticism, new ideas and suggestions for improvement. Please take some time to read through the following pages with your camper(s). This handbook will help you and your child better understand the programs, philosophies and policies. Thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Sloper, we look forward to meeting or exceeding you expectations for a day camp program. I hope your family enjoys the fun, adventure and tradition as much as I have in my 20 years of involvement here at YMCA Camp Sloper. For more information on our programs and services, visit our website at www.ymcacampsloper.org.

Slopefully Yours,
Mark Pooler
Camp Director

■ YMCA MISSION

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

■ YMCA CAMP SLOPER CREDO

Welcome to YMCA Camp Sloper. Here, new experiences are introduced and lasting memories are never forgotten. We reach out to the child in everyone and build character in the leaders of tomorrow. We change lives, build smiles and provide an environment for people to grow. Welcome to YMCA Camp Sloper; love it, share it and preserve it for the next generation.

■ YMCA CAMP SLOPER STAFF PHILOSOPHY

Be FUN, have FUN, give FUN, everyday!

■ CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

The YMCA Camp Sloper program promotes four character development values in all of our programs. During training, the staff is introduced to these values and asked to accept and demonstrate them throughout the summer. Each value is assigned a color that helps the staff and campers in the character value education process. The values are as follows:

CARING (Red)

- Help others
- Be sensitive of others feelings

HONESTY (Blue)

- Tell the truth
- Make sure my actions match my values

FUN (Orange)

- Smile and laugh
- Have a great time; enjoy life

RESPECT (Yellow)

- Treat others as I would have them treat me
- Value the worth of every person, and myself

RESPONSIBILITY (Green)

- Do what ought to be done
- Be accountable for my behavior

■ GOALS OF THE DAY CAMP PROGRAM

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- Instill the YMCA Mission and YMCA Character Values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.
- Provide opportunities to increase self-confidence.
- Provide positive role models who lead by example.
- Create and develop long-lasting friendships.

FOR HEALTHY LIVING

- Lead activities and programs that promote exercise and staying active.
- Develop a connection and enjoyment for being outdoors.
- Provide direction for making healthy choices.

FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Strengthen social skills by teaching patience, cooperation and teamwork.
- Develop an appreciation and respect for the environment.
- Offer opportunities to develop and improve leadership skills.

■ OUTCOMES OF THE DAY CAMP PROGRAM

- Campers will treat all members of the camp community with the YMCA Character Values..
- Counselors will provide friendship building opportunities and facilitate activities that improve self-confidence.
- Campers will spend more of their time being active and outdoors.
- Counselors will model positive behaviors like patience, cooperation and teamwork and encourage campers to make healthy decisions.
- Campers will have an opportunity to be a leader, both within their group and the greater camp community.
- Campers will become more aware of the value of nature and their role in keeping camp clean.

■ THE DAY CAMP PROGRAM

Our day camp program is broken down into two program areas: the East Coast for younger campers entering grades Pre-K through 5, and the West Coast for older campers entering grades 6 through 10. Each coast has specifically trained staff members, activities and facilities designed to meet the needs of that particular age group. We feel this is an important and effective way to best serve the large variety of age groups and interests of campers who attend YMCA Camp Sloper throughout the summer.

■ TRADITIONAL CAMPS

Traditional Camps are those programs that offer a well-rounded camping experience. Campers enrolled in Traditional Camps will be exposed to all the activities that YMCA Camp Sloper has to offer as well as special highlights offered for each of the different age groups. As campers graduate to the next age group, more activities, choices and special events are offered, which is why we refer to it as a “stepping stone” program. These camps are recommended for first-time campers and children interested in all areas of camp.

■ SPECIALTY CAMPS

Specialty Camps are designed for campers with a specific interest. The camper spends the majority of the day focusing on the desired area of interest with the afternoon Free Activity period left open to choose some of the Traditional Camp activities. Please see the current camp brochure for a detailed description of specialty camps being offered this year.

EAST COAST PROGRAMS:

Our East Coast camp program is geared for children entering grades Pre-K through 5. Close and caring attention is given to campers while a variety of age appropriate activities are provided for each of the different programs. Please see the current camp brochure for a detailed description of the following East Coast programs:

Wanderers	Adventure Camp	Earth Camp	Musical Theater Camp
Sloperians	Art Camp	Fishing Camp	Rocket Science Camp
Explorers	Building Block Camp	Fort Building Camp	Sports Camp
Pioneers	Cheer & Dance Camp	Hiking Camp	
	Circus Camp	Horseback Camp	

WEST COAST PROGRAMS:

Our West Coast camp program allows pre-teens and teens to be themselves in a fun and safe environment. Programs for children entering grades 6-10 are carefully designed to keep up with the changing interests of this energized age group. Campers on the West Coast get to enjoy all of the facilities and activities that our “stepping stone” program offers. Please see the current camp brochure for a detailed description of the following West Coast programs:

Rangers	Cross Country Camp	High Adventure Camp	Photography Camp
Trailblazers	Fishing Camp	Horseback Camp	Rock Climbing Camp
Art Camp	Fort Building Camp	Junior Lifeguard Camp	Sports Camp
BMX Camp	Glee Camp	Media Arts Camp	Skate Camp
Carpentry Camp	Golf Camp	Musical Theater Camp	Wilderness Camp

■ COUNSELOR-IN-TRAINING (CIT) PROGRAM

Our future leaders, Counselors-In-Training, spend four weeks (both Session 1 and Session 2) training and working with campers. They develop leadership skills, personal values, teambuilding and communication skills along the way. This is a great program to fulfill volunteer hours for church or other community organizations. Candidates must fill out a CIT application and will be interviewed by the CIT Director. CITs may be invited back for Session 3 and/or Session 4. (CIT must receive an invitation letter before re-registering for Session 3 and/or Session 4). Applications are available at the Cheshire and Southington Community YMCAs and online at ymcacampsloper.org.

■ OUR FACILITY

We are blessed with 143 acres of woods, fields and streams ideal for a rewarding camp experience. Included on our property is a 19-acre pond with two waterfronts for swimming and boating. We have a nurse’s station and camp office, changing rooms and bathrooms, arts and crafts cabin, the Rossini Program Building, 10 pavilions and the Pirate’s Point Tower. There are trails to explore, sports fields, two basketball courts, 33’ climbing tower, both high and low ropes courses, skate park, 80’ superslide, playscape, slip-n-slide, amphitheater, East Coast iceberg, West Coast water park, BMX park and much more. We are a non-smoking, drug- and alcohol-free facility.

■ DAILY SCHEDULE

TIME	TRADITIONAL CAMPS	SPECIALTY CAMPS
6:30-9:00 AM	Before Camp Program	Before Camp Program
9:00 AM	Morning Announcements	Morning Announcements
9:30 AM	First Activity Period	Specialty Camp Activities
10:30 AM	Second Activity Period	Specialty Camp Activities
11:30 AM	Lunch	Lunch
12:00 PM	Third Activity Period	Activity Period/Special Events
1:00 PM	LOGS - Camp Spirit Time	LOGS - Camp Spirit Time
1:30 PM	Free Activity Period	Free Activity Period
2:30 PM	Meet With Counselor	Meet With Counselor
3:00 PM	Parent Pickup	Parent Pickup
3:15 PM	Buses Depart	Buses Depart
3:00-5:30 PM	After Camp Program	After Camp Program

ACTIVITY PERIODS FOR TRADITIONAL CAMPS INCLUDE:

*Activity Periods: Activity periods for Traditional Camps will be one of the following three activities:

1. Swimming – East Coast campers will be taught swim instruction by the counselors while West Coast campers will have a choice of free swim, water park or organized games.
2. Unit Period – The entire unit of campers will gather for an activity organized and planned by the Unit Director.
3. Rotating Activity Period – Counselors will lead their campers to one of the following activities per day. Some activities have minimum age requirements: Arts & Crafts, Archery, Boating, Field Games, Hiking, High Ropes (grades 6 and up), Playscape, Ropes, Superslide, Slip-n-Slide, and Tower (grades 4 and up).

■ WANDERERS DAILY SCHEDULE

TIME	WANDERERS PROGRAM
9:00 AM	Drop off at the Red Barn/Center Play upon arrival
9:30 AM	Circle Time (weather, song, get ready for the day)
10:00 AM	1st Activity Period: Group Games
10:15 AM	Snack
10:30 AM	2nd Activity Period: Arts and Crafts
11:00 AM	Story Time
11:30 PM	Lunch and changing for swimming
12:15 PM	Swimming
12:45 PM	Playscape
1:00 PM	Departure

*All campers MUST be potty trained to be enrolled in this program.

■ FREE ACTIVITY

Free activity occurs after L.O.G.S (Lots of Great Stuff), our camp-wide assembly. At this time, campers have the opportunity to select their own activities. They can choose from the following: arts & crafts, nature, swimming, climbing tower, high ropes, field games, hiking, court games, superslide, playscape, jewelry, painting, volleyball, music, coloring, low ropes, boating and slip-n-slide. Some of these activities listed above may have age restrictions for safety purposes.

■ FAMILY NIGHT

Family Nights are held once a session. At this time all East Coast campers have the opportunity to share the joys of camp with their family and friends. (West Coast campers are welcome to attend). The Family Night program begins at 6 PM and may consist of an evening of songs and skits or some other form of entertainment.

FAMILY NIGHTS 2012

SESSION 1 – TUESDAY, JULY 10
SESSION 2 – TUESDAY, JULY 24

SESSION 3 – TUESDAY, AUGUST 7
SESSION 4 – TUESDAY, AUGUST 21

■ OVERNIGHTS

Overnights are an important and exciting tradition at YMCA Camp Sloper. A parent-child overnight option is offered for ALL our campers on the Saturday between the first and second week of a session in which they are enrolled. You will still have the same fun, adventure and tradition, just with a family focus. The new format will consist of parents and campers sleeping over together, and participating in some evening activities run by the camp staff.

SCHEDULE:

4-5PM – Arrival, check in and campsite set-up	9-10PM – Night time activities with families
5-6PM – Dinner with your child or family	10-10:30PM – Bedtime preparations
6-6:30PM – Clean-up	10:30PM – Lights out
6:30PM – Opening ceremonies at the amphitheater	7-8AM – Wake up and breakfast
7-8PM – Evening activity with families	8-9AM – Campsite clean-up
8-9PM – Night time hike around Sloper Pond	9AM – Departure

Parent-Child Overnight Dates: Session 1 - Saturday, July 7; Session 2 - Saturday, July 21; Session 3 - Saturday, August 4; Session 4 - Saturday, August 18

How do we participate? The Parent-Child Overnights will be open to all campers, Wanderers through Trailblazers, enrolled in that session of camp. It will be your decision if your child is old enough and ready for an overnight experience. All campers will go home with a registration form that will need to be completed and brought back to camp by the Thursday before the overnight. A detailed packet that outlines the rules and expectations for the night will also be provided. There will be no additional fee for this overnight program!

■ WEST COAST TEEN NIGHTS

We understand the need and desire for teens to socialize with their peers in a safe, supervised setting, without their parents. That is why we will be offering Teen Nights for campers enrolled in the Rangers, Trailblazers and all West Coast Specialty Camps on the second Wednesday of each session. This will provide the same great fun as the old overnight format, but with the comfort of sleeping in your own bed!

FORMAT: Campers go home on the bus and return that evening at 7PM; teen night activities will begin promptly at 7:30PM. Campers should eat dinner at home before returning to camp. All campers will need to be picked up no later than 10PM. Campers will be given a permission slip in advance that outlines the rules and expectations as well as other important details.

SCHEDULE: Session 1 - Wednesday, July 11; Session 2 - Wednesday, July 25; Session 3 - Wednesday, August 8; Session 4 - Wednesday, August 22.

■ FIELD TRIPS

Only Trailblazers and CITs go on field trips. Field trips are optional, but greatly encouraged. Depending on the program, trips may include a day at the beach, visiting other YMCA camps, playing mini-golf, etc. Parents will receive a permission slip listing the trip destination, items needed (if any) and any additional fees. Unfortunately, your camper will not be able to attend a trip if the permission slip has not been signed and returned to the counselor. Campers who do not attend the field trip have the option to stay at camp and participate in the scheduled activities.

■ SLOPER STAFF

YMCA Camp Sloper is committed to training and developing an outstanding group of directors and counselors that are dedicated to providing each camper with the best possible day camp experience. We believe the success of our program lies in the quality of our staff. We have spent a great deal of time recruiting, interviewing and selecting our camp staff members. Our primary goal is to secure and train high quality staff for our day camp program.

Our day camp is unique because we have many staff members who work during the school year with our Child Care, Youth Programs and Teen Programs at both the Southington and Cheshire YMCAs. They bring a great deal of knowledge and experience working with children.

In mid-June, our staff participates in an in-depth training program that covers areas such as program goals, emergency procedures, group work skills and program planning. Our camp staff brings a multitude of experiences and backgrounds. Above all else, our staff has one thing in common – a love for children! YMCA Camp Sloper also provides a unique experience for campers by employing international camp counselors each year.

■ OUTSIDE CARE POLICY

So many campers and parents are impressed by our counselors that they want them to do childcare when camp is over. It is the policy of the Southington-Cheshire Community YMCAs that staff who meet program participants and members under the age of 18 in a YMCA program may not provide outside care services to that participant. All employees sign this policy upon hire. If there is a pre-existing relationship, the employee must obtain an "Unsanctioned Child Care Waiver" from camp or the Human Resources Department. The waiver must be fully completed acknowledging that the staff person is not working in their capacity as a YMCA employee and that the parent or guardian will NOT hold the YMCA liable for any actions of the YMCA employee while performing outside care.

■ SAFETY/HEALTH

The safety of our campers is of the utmost importance to the staff at YMCA Camp Sloper. Please pay special attention to the following sections that will help keep your camper safe while at YMCA Camp Sloper.

■ STAFF RATIOS/SUPERVISION

YMCA Camp Sloper has a camper-to-counselor ratio that may range from 5:1 to 12:1. We strive for a maximum of a 10:1 camper-to-counselor ratio and smaller group sizes with our younger campers. In accordance with the ACA Standards, at least 80 percent of our staff are 18 years of age or older and staff members under the age of 18 will not supervise anyone within two years of their age.

■ WATERFRONT

Our waterfront programs are a major highlight of a camper's day. We have two waterfronts, one on each coast. The West Coast Waterfront is for grades 6 and up and the East Coast Waterfront is for grades Pre-K through 5. We strongly believe in providing a fun and safe atmosphere at our waterfronts. Campers will be encouraged to swim everyday. Campers choosing not to swim will need to remain on the beach while the rest of the group participates in the swim instruction and/or games.

Our camp swimming instruction program is different from the YMCA's structured lessons. Swim instruction is given daily for all campers registered in traditional camps. Campers who receive instruction at the YMCA pool will notice some differences in the names of levels and the skills taught. Camp swim instruction is geared more toward fun with some instructional time provided.

On the first day of each session, all campers will be given a swim test. This procedure allows the waterfront staff to decide whether campers are shallow or deep end swimmers. It also allows us to place campers into a swimming group appropriate to their ability.

The "buddy system" is used during Free Activity swimming. Each swimmer is paired with another camper. "Buddy Checks" are conducted every 6-8 minutes to be sure all swimmers are accounted for.

The swimmer-to-lifeguard ratio is 25:1 with additional counselors assisting in the supervision. Swim group swimmer-to-counselor ratio is 10:1. The YMCA certifies all of our waterfront staff. All waterfront staff hold current Lifeguard, First Aid and CPR certifications.

■ RAINY DAYS/EXTREMELY HOT DAYS

We do operate on rainy days. Most rainy day activities take place inside different buildings and under pavilions. However, campers should be prepared with the proper rain gear for transitions to and from program areas. PLEASE SEND CAMPERS WITH A RAINCOAT, EXTRA CLOTHING AND PROPER FOOTWEAR.

We also operate on extremely hot days. On these days we make sure campers have ample opportunity to get drinks and be in the shade. Please send campers to camp with a water bottle or an extra beverage for lunch. Sunscreen should be applied by the parents before the campers arrive. We encourage swimming as a Free Activity choice on hot days.

■ FIRST AID

All directors on the leadership staff at YMCA Camp Sloper are certified in First Aid and CPR. YMCA Camp Sloper also employs the services of a Camp Nurse during regular camp hours of 8:30 AM-3:30 PM. No nurse is available on overnights. The Camp Nurse is stationed in the Camp Office located at the McLeod Family Pavilion. In the event of an emergency or illness, the Camp Nurse will notify parents/guardians.

Unless otherwise notified, any camper that requires further medical attention will be transported to the Hospital of Central Connecticut, Bradley campus. In addition, a doctor is on call and supervises our medical and emergency procedures.

■ FIRST AID NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

All campers who receive first aid will have their injuries recorded in the First Aid Log Book by the Camp Nurse or appropriate staff person. Our Camp Nurse sees many campers each day for sunscreen, band-aids and minor first aid treatments. The Camp Nurse will call parents to notify them of mild injuries at his/her professional discretion and all serious injuries that occur at camp.

■ ILLNESS/COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Campers must be healthy, injury-free and well enough to fully participate. If your child becomes ill at camp, we require that they be promptly picked up and transported home or to a medical facility. Any child who has a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting, must be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to camp. Any child with a communicable disease must remain out of camp for the prescribed isolation period designated by the physician for that particular situation. Please keep sick campers home so that germs and illnesses will not spread to other campers and staff.

■ EMERGENCIES

We devote a lot of time and attention to our emergency procedures during our staff training in June. We have specific procedures for a "lost camper at the waterfront" and "lost camper not at waterfront," as well as fire, severe weather and medical emergencies. We practice these procedures during staff training and throughout the summer so that campers and staff will be prepared in the event of an emergency.

■ SUNSCREEN/INSECT REPELLENT

We recommend that campers wear sunscreen everyday. Campers should apply sunscreen or bug Repellent before coming to camp each morning. Campers that need to reapply during the day can keep sunscreen lotion and/or bug lotion (NO sprays) in their backpacks if they can reapply the lotion themselves. If a young camper requires adult assistance when reapplying, a permission form will need to be completed. The form is enclosed in the parent packet and is also available online at ymcacampsloper.org or at the camp office. Please bring the form and lotion to the Camp Nurse, or Unit Director, who will assist or supervise a staff member in reapplying the lotion during the day. YMCA Camp Sloper staff will only apply lotion to body parts that are not covered by a bathing suit.

■ WHAT TO BRING

Campers should bring a backpack to and from camp each day. Please keep in mind that backpacks will be carried around all day with the campers. Campers need to bring a bagged lunch, a drink, a towel and a water bottle. Drinks will not be provided but will be sold at the Sloper Store and vending machines. Lunches will be collected each morning and refrigerated until lunchtime. Our dress code for campers is the same as it is for the camp staff. Campers on the West Coast must wear one-piece bathing suits. East Coast campers are strongly encouraged to wear one-piece suits. All campers need to wear sneakers or close-toed shoes at all times. Sandals or open-toed shoes are prohibited for safety reasons. Campers are encouraged to wear a hat on sunny days. All items should be marked with the camper's name on them.

■ WHAT TO KEEP AT HOME

We believe that certain items are best left at home to maximize your camper's outdoor experience. Campers may not bring cell phones, pagers, walkmans, game boys, trading cards, jewelry, matches or knives. YMCA Camp Sloper is a drug and alcohol free facility. Any camper found with drugs and/or alcohol in their possession will be immediately suspended from the program. We are also interested in keeping a clean, healthy image at our camp. Clothing with messages referring to drugs, alcohol or sex are not permitted. Matches, lighters, knives, guns, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, illegal substances, weapons and all other items deemed hazardous by YMCA staff are prohibited at YMCA Camp Sloper. If any of these items are found, they will be confiscated immediately and the camper will be disciplined appropriately. Please keep all household pets and animals out of camp and/or camp-related field trips. YMCA Camp Sloper is not responsible for any personal belongings (i.e., sports equipment, camping gear) that are brought into camp.

■ MEMBERSHIP

Campers are not required to have a YMCA membership to attend summer camp at YMCA Camp Sloper. Campers pay program member rates unless they are full members of the Southington-Cheshire Community YMCAs. Full Members of the Southington or Cheshire YMCAs are entitled to the discounted rate on camp program fees.

■ **CAMP IMPROVEMENT FEE**

YMCA Camp Sloper requires a one-time camp improvement fee of \$20 per child, to be paid annually at the time of registration. One hundred percent of this annual fee is invested into the camp for specific program improvements. The 2012 camp improvement fee is earmarked to help build the new Rossini Program Building, a 2,400 square foot enclosed building and new docks at the East Coast waterfront.

■ **REGISTRATION**

YMCA Camp Sloper open registration BEGINS FEBRUARY 4. Participants may register for camp at the Southington Community YMCA, the Cheshire Community YMCA or online at YMCACampSloper.org. A completed registration form with a non-refundable \$50 deposit for each session and a \$20 Camp Improvement Fee may be mailed to the Southington Community YMCA, 29 High Street Southington, CT 06489. Please request a bus schedule prior to mailing in your registration. All camp forms, including bus schedules, and online registration are available at YMCA-CampSloper.org.

TO REGISTER:

- Membership is no longer required to attend summer camp at YMCA Camp Sloper. Campers pay program member rates unless they are full members of the Southington-Cheshire Community YMCAs. Full Members of the Southington or Cheshire YMCAs are entitled to the discounted rate on camp program fees.
- Fill out and sign a registration form for EACH CHILD.
- Pay the non-refundable deposit of \$50 for EACH CHILD, EACH SESSION.
- A YMCA Camp Sloper Health Assessment Form must be provided each year.
- Pay a \$20 camp improvement fee. This is an annual, one-time fee per child paid at the time of registration.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES: The following registration deadlines have been put in place so that Sloper staff can plan accordingly for your child's camp experience:

On-line Registration: On-line registration will close two weeks prior to the session start.

In-Person Registration: Registration for each session will close the Friday before that session starts, at the close of the YMCA building.

SPLIT SESSIONS: The best day camp experience at YMCA Camp Sloper is a full 2-week session, as it takes that long for campers to build relationships in a group and experience all the activities we have to offer. We do recognize that family vacations or other commitments mean that this is not always possible. For that reason we do allow campers to attend only one week of a two week session, but they must register for a traditional camp, not a speciality camp because of their high demand and limited capacity. Please note there is a \$25.00 split session fee added to the cost of the half session of camp rate.

CHANGES: To make a change to your child's registration, please follow these instructions:

BEFORE A SESSION BEGINS: Changes can be made by contacting either the Southington or Cheshire Community YMCAs or camp directly at 860-621-8194. The deadline for changes to your child's camp registration is the Friday before the session starts, at the close of the YMCA building.

CURRENT SESSION: Changes pertaining to bus transportation or pickup of your child should be put in writing and sent in with your child to be given to their counselor. Do not rely on verbal communication with the bus monitors or with your child. Other types of changes to the current session, or unexpected, last-minute changes may be phoned in to the camp office at 860-621-8194.

DISCOUNTS: Full and Family members of the Southington and Cheshire Community YMCAs are eligible for the following discounts for each camper registered:

- \$50 discount per session for those attending Sessions 1 through 4.
- \$25 discount for those attending Sloper Preview.
- \$15 discount per week for those attending Wanderers.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE: Complete payment must be made two weeks prior to the start of the session for which you are registered. A \$10 charge will be added for late payments. For payment plan options, please contact Lynn Palmieri at 860-426-9515. Our **CREDIT/DEBIT CARD SERVICE** enables us to charge your account automatically on the date that the camp session payment is due. This method is convenient and assures payments are accurate and on time. You can fill out the form at registration, or when it comes with your registration confirmation.

INDIVIDUAL PAYMENT PLANS: Families who need extended payment plans may contact Lynn Palmieri at 860-426-9515 or email lpalmieri@southington-cheshireymca.org.

■ PAYMENT SCHEDULE – 2012

SLOPER PREVIEW – PAYMENT DUE: JUNE 11

SESSION 1 – PAYMENT DUE: JUNE 18

SESSION 2 – PAYMENT DUE: JULY 2

SESSION 3 – PAYMENT DUE: JULY 16

SESSION 4 – PAYMENT DUE: JULY 30

A \$10 late fee will be assessed to all payments not received by the due date.

INDIVIDUAL PAYMENT PLANS: Families who need extended payment plans may contact Lynn Palmieri at 860-426-9515 or email lpalmieri@southington-cheshireymca.org.

■ REFUND POLICY

The \$50 deposit and \$20 camp improvement fee are NOT refundable. The staff will do the best they can to accommodate all situations and make your camper's day camp experience as enjoyable as possible. Please note that there are significant fixed costs relating to the operation of a day camp program. If a refund is given, the following policy will be followed:

- Pre-camp to Day One: Full refund (minus the deposit and camp improvement fee)
- Day Two – Day Five: 50 percent refund (minus the deposit and camp improvement fee)
- Day Six – Day Ten: No refunds can be given out at this time
- Refunds for medical reasons will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the Camp Director

■ TRANSFER POLICY

Camp payments and deposits may be transferred between camp sessions or camp programs, as well as any other programs within the Southington and Cheshire Community YMCAs. The Camp Improvement Fee, however, is non-transferrable and non-refundable.

■ CAMP MEDICAL FORMS

Per state of Connecticut youth camp regulations, a "Health Assessment Record" must be on file before your child can attend camp. The exam date on this form must be within 36 months of the camper's first day of camp. The form must be signed by both the parent and the physician and returned to camp two weeks prior to the camper's start at camp. NO CHILD WILL BE ADMITTED INTO CAMP WITHOUT A COMPLETED HEALTH ASSESSMENT ON FILE. A copy of a previously completed form is acceptable if the exam date is within 36 months, and if all information is up-to-date and accurate. Parents should complete the page 1 Parent Section if there have been any changes.

TRANSFERRING HEALTH ASSESSMENT RECORDS: Health Assessments may be transferred from another Southington-Cheshire YMCA program to camp, or from the 2011 camp year to the current year if the date of the exam is within 36 months of the camper's first day of camp. To have a Health Assessment transferred, complete a "Request to Transfer Health Assessment" form which is available at the YMCAs or on our website. If there have been any changes in your child's health since the exam date, you must complete a new Part I – Parent Section of the Health Assessment Record and forward it to camp. It is the parent's responsibility to be certain that we have the most up-to-date health information for the current camp season.

■ MEDICATION POLICY & FORMS

If your camper needs to take medication (either over-the-counter or prescription) during the camp day or an overnight, our Camp Nurse or certified personnel can dispense medication only if the following requirements are met:

- The medication is in its original container with the child's name on the prescription.
- A physician has filled out and signed an **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION FORM SPECIFICALLY FOR CAMP PERSONNEL**. This form must also be signed by the parent and must be on file in our Camp Office.
- The medication has not yet expired.
- All medication **MUST** be picked up by an adult within 1 week of the child's last day at camp or it will be discarded.

It is the parent's responsibility to provide all medications and authorizations for their child. If both of these are not provided, YMCA Camp Sloper cannot be held responsible for, or guarantee, the health/safety of your child while at camp.

ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE CAMP NURSE by the parent/guardian and can not be carried or dispensed by campers unless specific written permission from a physician and parent has been given to do so.

NOTE: There is no nurse on the grounds after 3:30 PM. Any medications needed after that time will be administered by certified personnel. If your child has unusual medication needs, it is important to discuss these with our camp nurse.

MEDICATION DURING BUS TRANSPORTATION: It is highly recommended that personal transportation be provided for campers who have medical concerns that may require medication while being transported to and from camp. Because bus monitors who are qualified and trained to administer medications are not always available, we cannot guarantee that medications can be accessible in case of a medical emergency on the bus. Parents should contact the Camp Administrator to discuss their concerns.

■ BUS TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

Transportation services are provided for camp. Bus service is provided for grades K and up that have requested transportation services on the registration form. Predetermined routes have been designated for Southington, Cheshire, Berlin, Kensington and New Britain. **DOOR-TO-DOOR SERVICE WILL NOT BE PROVIDED.**

- Pre-determined bus route schedules are available at the Southington and Cheshire Community YMCAs and online at ymcacampsloper.org. There are separate lists for Preview Week.
- East Coast campers must sit in the front of the bus.
- Sloperians will not be dropped off without a parent/guardian or older sibling at the stop unless parent's permission is granted otherwise.
- **BUS DROP OFF PERMISSION:** It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to meet their child at the appointed bus stop at the scheduled drop off/pick up time each day, unless permission to be dropped off alone is indicated on the registration form by a "Yes" answer to this question in the transportation section. If the parent responds "No" to this question, the camper will be noted as "No Alone" and will not be dropped off at a scheduled stop without a parent/guardian present. Busses will not wait past the assigned stop times. In the event that a parent/guardian is not present, the camper will remain on the bus for the remainder of the route and the driver will contact NBT who will then contact the Outdoor Center Administrator in an effort to get in touch with the camper's parent/guardian. The driver will then make a second attempt to drop off the camper at their scheduled stop before bringing the camper back to YMCA Camp Sloper where they will remain until picked by their parent/guardian.
- Buses may have a YMCA Camp Sloper bus monitor. Bus monitors are responsible to take daily attendance and assist the driver in supervising the campers. There are no bus monitors during Preview Week.
- Please allow a grace period of 10 minutes before and 10 minutes after the scheduled pick-up and drop-off times. Please note that the buses may run late the first day of each session.
- Bus transportation is **NOT** provided for the Wanderers program.
- All campers are expected to maintain appropriate behavior on the bus and at the bus stop. Campers are subject to removal or suspension from the bus based on the Camp Director's discretion.
- Buses do not leave the grounds until each and every camper is accounted for and we are certain they are on the correct bus.
- To avoid confusion and delays, we prefer that switches in end-of-day bus arrangements be kept to a bare minimum and only when absolutely necessary. All changes must be in writing.
- Bus changes or delays due to emergencies and/or unforeseen circumstances will be reported to each camper's parent/guardian or emergency contact as soon as the situation is made known to the camp. Parents should call the camp office who will contact the bus company with any concerns.

■ BUS SAFETY RULES

AT THE BUS STOP:

- Campers are to stay at a safe distance from the road while waiting for the bus.
- Campers should be respectful of the property abutting the bus stop location.
- Campers shall model the YMCA Character values (caring, honesty, respect, responsibility) to all other campers, adults, property and traffic passing by while waiting at the bus stop.
- When campers must cross the road, they should do so under the direction of the bus monitor or driver, waiting for all traffic to come to a complete stop, looking both ways and then proceeding into the road.
- Parents are responsible for determining whether their camper can be dropped off at the bus stop without being met by an adult. If "Yes Alone" is designated on the registration form, YMCA Camp Sloper and the bus monitor are not responsible for the safety of the camper once they have departed the bus.
- A "No Alone" designation on the registration form means that there must be an adult present for the camper to be allowed to depart the bus. The bus monitor will get off the bus to confirm there is an adult present for the "No Alone" campers. Bus monitors do not check identification of the adults picking up the campers; it is the responsibility of the family to make sure the appropriate adult is there waiting at the bus stop. If the camper shows concern, or verbalizes that no one is there to greet them, the bus monitor will check with the camp office to determine how to proceed.
- It is the parent's responsibility to be certain that the proper adult is at the bus stop 10 minutes before the listed time.

■ BUS SAFETY RULES CONTINUED

WHILE RIDING THE BUS:

- All campers must be seated, with feet on the floor at all times, facing the front of the bus.
- East Coast campers must be seated at the front of the bus, with Sloperians closest to the driver.
- Campers are not allowed to hang or throw anything out of the windows; this includes hanging their arms or any body parts out of the window.
- Consuming food or drink, and chewing gum is not allowed on the bus.
- Campers need to keep their hands and feet to themselves.
- No more than three to a seat.
- All backpacks or other equipment brought to camp must be stored out of the aisles.
- Bullying of any kind, verbal or physical, will not be tolerated.
- Campers are to treat bus drivers, bus monitors, and other campers respectfully.
- Foul language will not be tolerated.
- Older campers need to act as role models for our younger campers.
- Campers shall model the YMCA Character values (caring, honesty, respect and responsibility) to all other campers, adults, staff, property and traffic passing by while riding the bus.

■ ARRIVAL AT CAMP BY CAR

- If your child is being transported to camp by car, they should be dropped off between 8:45 AM-9:00 AM in the parking area where camp staff will greet you and guide the camper to the appropriate location for morning announcements. Please do not enter the round-about as this is where the buses disembark campers. If you wish to accompany your child, please feel free to park your car in the parking lot and walk together to the designated area.
- **LATE ARRIVALS:** Campers who are dropped off after 9:30 AM need to be walked into the office and be signed in by a parent or guardian before proceeding to their meeting place. Camp staff will see to getting the camper to the location where their particular group is at the time of their arrival.

■ CAMPER RELEASE PROCEDURES

Campers being picked up from YMCA Camp Sloper or any field trips must comply with the following procedures:

- All campers must be picked up by someone over the age of 16 who is listed on the YMCA Camp Sloper Registration Form, or added in writing by the camper's parent or legal guardian.
- No campers will be released to individuals who are NOT on an approved pick-up list unless written permission is given by the parent/guardian or with verbal permission from the parent/guardian and consent from a member of the leadership staff.
- **PHOTO IDENTIFICATION** of all persons pickup up campers will be required each and every time, regardless of relationship to the camper.
- All campers must be signed out when being released. Early sign-out, before 2:30 PM, is in the Camp Office. Regular pickup of campers is in the white tents between 2:45 PM-3:00 PM. We request that no campers be picked up between 2:30 PM and dismissal because campers are gathering in different locations throughout camp.
- When picking up campers at the white tents, please follow the directions of the pick up staff to insure the quick and safe release of all campers.
- If a child has not been picked up five minutes after dismissal has been completed, the staff will contact the child's parent/guardian. If they are unable to reach you and your child is not picked up 15 minutes after dismissal, emergency contacts will be called. One hour after dismissal, if our staff is still unable to contact an authorized person to pick up your child, they will contact the Southington Police Department for further assistance. A charge will be added to your camp bill for continued late pickups at a rate of \$10.00 for every 15 minutes or part thereof.

■ HOURS OF OPERATION

YMCA Camp Sloper	9:00 AM-3:00 PM	Monday-Friday
Extended Camp Care AM	6:30 AM-9:00 AM	Monday-Friday
Extended Camp Care PM	3:00 PM-5:30 PM	Monday-Friday

■ EXTENDED CAMP CARE

An extended day is offered to families at YMCA Camp Sloper for an additional cost by completing the appropriate section of the camp registration form. Parents can choose AM care from 6:30 AM until the start of camp, PM care from the end of camp until 5:30 PM, or both AM and PM care. Extended care is also available in Cheshire, but must be arranged through the Cheshire Community YMCA. Bus transportation is provided to the Cheshire site at Norton School from YMCA Camp Sloper.

- Extended Care must be for full weeks; we cannot accommodate random or single days.
- Please pick up your child no later than 5:30 PM. Our staff puts in a very full day and appreciates being able to leave on time. There is a late fee assessed for anyone picking up after 5:30 PM. An additional \$10.00 for every 15 minutes, or portion thereof, will be charged for late pickups. If a child has not been picked up by 5:35 PM, the staff will contact the child's parent/guardian. If they are unable to reach a parent or guardian and the child is not picked up by 5:45 PM, emergency contacts will be called. At 6:30 PM, if our staff is still unable to contact an authorized person to pick up your child, they will contact the Southington Police Department for further assistance.

■ DISCIPLINE POLICY

At YMCA Camp Sloper, we believe one of the best ways to deal with behavior issues is to provide a quality camp program. By keeping activities moving and well organized, we believe that many potential problems can be avoided.

Disrespect toward staff or property, injuring other children or staff, disruptive behavior, stealing, leaving camp property or profanity will not be tolerated. If such a problem arises, the following steps will be taken:

- There will be a verbal discussion with the child.
- If inappropriate behavior continues, the child will be removed from the group for a specified time frame or privileges will be taken away.
- Whenever there is a serious concern about a behavior or discipline problem, the staff will share their concerns with the parent and will make an attempt to work with the parent to resolve the problem.
- If the problem persists, or a serious infraction has been made, the camper will be put on suspension or asked to leave the program.

YMCA Camp Sloper is determined to provide a safe and fun environment for all campers, free from bullying and other possible negative behaviors that disrupt a positive day camp experience. We feel that the best way to prevent any negative behaviors from occurring is to provide a quality day camp program with well trained staff. In the event that a camper exhibits any negative behavior(s), it may result in referral to the camp office, time out of an activity and/or dismissal from the program. See below for details.

The following negative behaviors will be dealt with by the camp counselor. If the offense is repeated or the camper is continuously disrupting the group's activities, the camper will miss time out of an activity and/or be sent to the Unit Director. The Unit Director will evaluate the negative behavior and may notify the parents (depending on severity/frequency), fill out a behavior log and put it in the camper's file and require that the camper miss more time from an activity (depending on severity/frequency).

- Minor hitting, shoving or pushing
- Inappropriate language or subject matter
- Not following directions
- Straying from the group
- Distracting counselor/group
- Throwing objects

The following negative behaviors will result in camper(s) being sent immediately to the Coast Director. The Coast Director will work with the Unit Director to evaluate the negative behavior. Parent(s) will be notified, behavior log will be filled out and put in the camper's file and camper may be dismissed from camp (temporarily or permanently).

- Aggressive physical contact (hitting, shoving or pushing)
- Verbal threats to campers or staff
- Destruction of camp property or property of others
- Stealing
- Possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol or cigarettes
- Possession of weapons, including knives or other dangerous items
- Emotional harassment of other campers or staff
- Endangerment of self or others

■ LOST AND FOUND

Lost and Found at YMCA Camp Sloper accumulates quickly. Please remind your camper that it is their responsibility to look after their belongings. Please make every effort to label your child's clothing, overnight items, backpack, lunch boxes, tents or anything else that may be brought to camp. Should items be lost at camp, have your camper look in the Lost and Found area located on the side of the East Coast office. **ITEMS LEFT AT CAMP WILL BE DISCARDED OR DONATED TWO WEEKS AFTER CAMP ENDS.**

■ INSURANCE

Please take note that YMCA Camp Sloper does not provide accident insurance for campers. This is the responsibility of each camper's family.

■ ABSENTEEISM

If your child will not be attending camp on a specific day, please contact the Camp Office at 860-621-8194. If your child is absent and you have not notified YMCA Camp Sloper, a call to home or work will be made to verify your child's absence.

■ EVALUATIONS

We encourage all parents/guardians and campers to completely fill out the online evaluation. Information will be mailed home at the end of the camp season. This valued input and information is used to improve upon the programs for the following season. Please feel free to see any camp staff throughout the summer if issues arise prior to receiving an evaluation.

■ SLOPER STORE

YMCA Camp Sloper has a camp store with items such as T-shirts, snacks, drinks and small trinkets. Please note that the camp is not responsible for money brought in by campers. The Sloper Store list will be sent home with campers. Items will be sold during Family Nights and throughout the camp day.

■ SLOPER ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Our volunteers and staff have developed an Alumni Association for past campers and staff of YMCA Camp Sloper. The goal of the Sloper Alumni Association is to reconnect former campers and staff with the magic of YMCA Camp Sloper. If you are or know a former camper over the age of 18 or a former staff member who might be interested in becoming a member of the Sloper Alumni Association, please contact Mark Pooler at 860-621-8194, ext. 304 or mpooler@southington-cheshireymca.org

■ SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Our YMCA is committed to providing a quality camping experience for all. In keeping with our YMCA philosophy and mission, camp scholarships are available for qualified families. For additional information, contact Lynn Palmieri at the Southington Community YMCA at 860-426-9515. Applications for camp scholarships are due by April 1. Cheshire residents should contact Karen Thuerk at the Cheshire Community YMCA for financial assistance at 203-272-3150, ext. 307.

■ OTHER PROGRAMS OFFERED AT YMCA CAMP SLOPER

If you enjoyed your day camp experience at YMCA Camp Sloper, you should know that we also offer a variety of other programs for families, school groups, companies and many other organizations all year round.

Teambuilding Programs

Environmental Education Programs

Birthday Parties

Facility Rentals

Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunities

Contact us at the camp office for more details: 860-621-8194 or visit us at ymcacampsloper.org.

■ OTHER YMCA PROGRAMS

Both the Southington and Cheshire Community YMCAs offer great programs for children and teens year round. Here are some of the programs offered:

Pre-school Programs

Teen Programs

Family Programs

School-Age Child Care

Aquatics Programs

Karate Programs

Youth Sports Programs

Gymnastics Programs

Health & Wellness Programs

For more information about these YMCA programs, please contact your respective YMCA. Southington Community YMCA – 860-628-5597 or Cheshire Community YMCA – 203-272-3150, or online at www.southington-cheshireymca.org.

■ YMCA CAMP SLOPER WISH LIST

Make a wish and it may just come true. Listed below is the official YMCA Camp Sloper Wish List. Our Wish List is made up of things that would greatly enhance YMCA Camp Sloper, but are not exactly within our budgetary capacity at this point. If your family, friends, place of employment, business or anyone you know is interested in making a donation for some of these capital improvements at YMCA Camp Sloper, please contact Mark Pooler, Outdoor Center Director for details. This is a great opportunity for personal or business tax breaks, an exciting naming opportunity and a wonderful way to leave a legacy at YMCA Camp Sloper. Our Wish List includes:

■ **A SWIMMING POOL:** Every camper's dream is to have a swimming pool at YMCA Camp Sloper. This is by far the most popular request every summer on the end of the camp year evaluations..

■ **NEW WOOD CHIPPER:** We do a bunch of cutting and clearing of trees and brush annually to maintain our trails and facility. We would love to be able to chip all that brush and use the woodchips to enhance and clean up areas around camp.

■ **DECK HOCKEY RINK:** Our campers would love to see the 80'x50' hockey rink on our master play come to life. This would be a great new activity for our campers and members.

Help make our campers' wishes come true!

Contact Mark Pooler for additional details @ 860-621-8194, ext. 304

or mpooler@southington-cheshireymca.org



THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING YMCA CAMP SLOPER!

■ THE SLOPER DICTIONARY

Boom-Chika-Boom (bum-chika-bum) n. one of many popular camp songs that have been a part of Sloper's traditions for many years.

Character Values (kar-ik-tur val-yus) n. 1. caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and fun. 2. the basis of the YMCA Mission and values we instill in our campers and staff through our day camp program at Sloper.

Check (chek) n. what we do periodically throughout the day to ensure that all campers are accounted for; some camp groups find very creative ways to let us know that they are present by yelling out crazy things.

Crystal Mine (kris-til min) n. a natural formation in the ground where quartz crystals form, located on the Orange Trail; beyond popular belief, we do not put the crystals there for campers to find.

Dupa (dew-pah) n. 1. a person's backside, which is what they should use to properly slide down our 80' Superslide. 2. part of the body we ask you to stick out in the camp song, "Singing in the Rain".

East Coast (est kost) n. 1. the side of camp dedicated to campers in pre-K – 5th grade. 2. home of our McLeod Family Pavilion, Superslide, 50th Anniversary Amphitheater and more.

Foursquare (for-skwar) n. a very popular camp game in which campers and staff hit a kickball from square to square following various rules in hopes to attain control of the #4 square.

Funyak (fun-yak) n. a smaller and open-faced version of a kayak, in which campers can put on a life jacket, grab a paddle and explore Sloper Pond and it's surroundings.

Gator (ga-tor) n. our very cool and very green maintenance vehicle that everybody wants to ride, but is only accessible to our maintenance gurus and very privileged camp staff.

Gladiator Dodgeball (glad-ee-ey-ter doj-bawl) n. Commonly played in an eight-sided Gladiator Dodgeball pit, this one of the most popular games at YMCA Camp Sloper. Player must avoid the ball while trying to bat it into the legs of their opponents. Last one in the pit wins!

Jiggy (jig-ge) n. 1. nickname of our YMCA's first member, Anthony Egidio. 2. saying 'Jiggy' is a substitute for 'cheese' when campers are getting their picture taken on picture day at Sloper.

Joke Day (jok da) n. 1. a popular L.O.G.S. performance in which our Camp Director goes head-to-head with campers to see who has the better jokes. 2. the only day at camp where campers can 'boo' somebody on the stage, and it's not their fellow campers.

Killdeer (kil-deer) n. our official camp bird, which is known to make a nest and lay eggs near our gravel parking lot or the front field; you can spot one by looking for a red cone and railroad ties protecting it from foot or vehicle traffic.

Liquid Sunshine/Heavy Dew (li-kwid sun-shin/he-ve du) n. a camp phenomenon that a camper might mistake as rain or a downpour; as we all know, it never rains at YMCA Camp Sloper.

L.O.G.S. (el-oh-gee-es) abbr. Lots Of Great Stuff n. our daily camp-wide assembly that is filled with skits, songs and activities based on our session theme. 2. a chance for the entire camp to get together and enjoy some good old fashion entertainment.

Mama Cass (mah-ma kas) n. our camp's official mascot, a seldom seen friendly giant turtle that lives in the middle of Sloper Pond; Mama Cass is known to catch some sun at Turtle's Paradise, which is located off of the Green Trail at the north end of the pond.

National Popsicle Day (na-shu-nol pap-si-kol da) n. a camp tradition that takes place on every Friday throughout the summer when all campers and staff get to enjoy a Popsicle and take part in the world-famous Super Sloper Slurp.

Orange (or-inj) adj. 1. our official camp color, as seen on our staff shirts. 2. our adopted fifth character value color, which represents FUN and is the basis of our staff philosophy: "Be Fun, Have Fun, Give Fun, Everyday!"

Red Barn (red barn) n. home of our Wanderers program, which includes our youngest campers (pre-K), who are frequently seen 'wandering' around the entire camp.

Sam Hoover (sam hu-ver) n. according to folklore, he is a legendary former camp director from the 1950's who some say still walks the trails of Sloper throughout the summer nights to make sure campers are behaving.

Shake 'n' Bake (shak en bak) n. a popular swimming activity where campers and counselors run out of the water, roll themselves in sand and run back into the water to clean the sand off.

Sloper Store (slo-per stor) n. our camp's trading post, which has Sloper items: t-shirts, snacks and drinks, etc. It is open throughout the camp day and during the East Coast Family Nights each session.

Trails and Tales (trails and tails) n. our camp's quarterly newsletter that is used to keep campers and parents up-to-date on all of the happenings throughout the year at YMCA Camp Sloper.

Unit (yu-nit) n. a grouping of campers in a specific grade range; Explorers (2nd-3rd graders) and Rangers (6th-7th graders) are just two examples of our different units.

West Coast (west kost) n. the side of the camp dedicated to campers in 6th-10th grade. 2. home of our Jacob Family Pavilion, Wiffle Ball Stadium, West Coast Water Park and more.

Did you know...?

- The numbers on the back of all of our orange staff shirts (52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59 and 60) represent how many years YMCA Camp Sloper has been serving the local communities. In the summer of 2012, we will be celebrating 63 years!
- As stated in the definition above, the crystal mine is all natural. We never put rocks, minerals or crystals there for the campers to find. It has been said that another quartz crystal mine exists somewhere on our Orange Trail.
- Every summer, we have at least one international counselor. In the past, some of the international counselors who have worked at Sloper were from Spain, Australia, Russia, England, Egypt, Turkey, The Gambia, France and Taiwan.
- YMCA volunteers and staff have written a book based on the history of YMCA Camp Sloper. The title of this book is Cow Paths to Climbing Walls. Get your copy at www.ymcacampsloper.org!

■ FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Q: What does the basic camp day look like (schedule/activities)?

A: Please see page 4 for a detailed schedule of our traditional, specialty camp and Wanderers programs.

2. Q: What camp activities will my child participate in throughout a two-week session at camp?

A: Here are some traditional camp activities that campers do throughout a session. Participation in some activities varies by age and ability.

Rock Climbing	Archery	Hiking	Field Games	High Ropes
Tie Dye T-Shirts	Skits and Songs	Basketball	Climbing Tower	Swimming
Crystal Mine	Nature	Low Ropes	Boating	Playscape
Skate Park	Water Park	Arts and Crafts	Relay Races	Superslide
Mountain Boards	Fort Building	Frisbee Golf	Family Night	Parent-Child Overnights

3. Q: What is the camper-to-counselor ratios for each unit?

A: Our camper-to-counselor ratio varies per Unit. Wanderers, our pre-K program, is a 5:1 ratio and Sloperians, our K-1 program, is an 8:1 ratio. The rest of our Units (Explorers, Pioneers, Rangers and Trailblazers) and specialty camps (Sports Camp, Rock Climbing Camp, Skate Camp, Art Camp, etc) can be up to 12:1.

4. Q: What qualifications does the staff at your camp have?

A: The Camp Director, Coast Directors and Unit Directors are all CPR, First Aid and Epi-pen Administration Certified. They all have been working at YMCA Camp Sloper for a minimum of 3+ years and most of them are year-round employees of our YMCAs. Senior Counselors, the head counselor for a group of campers, are all entering their senior year of high school or higher and go through our camp's hiring process and 30 hours of staff training prior to working at Sloper. Junior Counselors, group assistants, are all entering their junior year of high school and also have gone through our camp's hiring process and 30 hours of staff training prior to working at Sloper. The hiring process includes a background check, verifying certifications, a group and one-on-one interview, reference checks and specific skills verification.

5. Q: What do you do to monitor swimming activities in Sloper Pond?

A: Along with having fully certified lifeguards supervising the waterfront, each camper is tested on the first day of the session and placed in a swim group based on skill level and each swim group is supervised by a Senior Counselor while in the water. The waterfront is separated into a shallow-end and a deep-end, where campers in certain swim level groups stay for the entire swim period. We do a buddy check every 6-8 minutes during the swim period. We also have set emergency procedures, which are strictly practiced during staff training and periodically throughout the summer. As far as water quality is concerned, the pond is treated for algae and weeds annually and tested once a session and treated as needed.

6. Q: What should my child wear/bring to camp each day?

A: All campers must have a few items with them each day: a lunch, closed toe shoes and a bathing suit and towel. Some recommended items are: a backpack (to hold everything), a water bottle and a hat or visor. Some items that should not be brought to camp include: cell phones, beepers, gameboys, trading cards, knives and matches or lighters. For more information, please refer to the "What to Bring" and "What Not to Bring" sections on page 6 of this handbook.

7. Q: What is before care and after care and what will my child do while there?

A: Before care (6:30AM-9AM) and after care (3PM-5:30PM) are options for parents who need to drop-off their camper earlier than camp begins or pick-up their camper later than camp ends. We like to think of it as an extension of our day camp program, where they participate in various camp activities. You can choose before care or after care or both on our registration form when signing up for camp.

8. Q: What are some of these notices that I am getting throughout the session?

A: Refrigerator Calendar – a lay out of the theme days, special events and field trips throughout the 2-week session at YMCA Camp Sloper.

Unit Newsletter – this describes what is happening in your child's specific unit during the session (field trips, special events, family night information, the predicted weather, etc).

Permission Slips – depending on the event (field trip or Parent-Child Overnights), they are for the parents to see what permission is needed for, if there is a cost involved and who to contact with any questions; make sure you read them to get all of the information you need.

Picture Forms – each session, we have our picture lady come in to take group pictures; these forms give parents an option to purchase their child's group picture.

9. Q: How do I make a special request to have my child in another child's group?

A: We ask that all special group requests are made as far in advance as possible. There is a space on our registration form where special requests can be made. Also, you can contact us at YMCA Camp Sloper and we can inform the appropriate director prior to the making of groups. We will do our best to accommodate all special requests.

10. Q: What do they sell at the Sloper Store?

A: Our revamped Sloper Store sells fun Sloper trinkets, t-shirts, snacks and drinks with items from 50 cents and up.

Best Mexican in Southington!



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