



We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

CAMP GORDON CLARK

Parent Packet

GENERAL INFORMATION

Where is Camp Gordon Clark located?

Our camp is situated at 75 Mill St. in Hanover, MA on 25 wooded acres on the Hanover/Norwell line. The facility includes a spacious athletic field, three outdoor pools, games court, tennis courts, basketball court, low ropes course, volleyball court, and a bathhouse/changing area. Our web address is www.ssymca.org

I've heard about the YMCA core values...what are they all about?

All programs at the YMCA revolve around the 4 core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility, denoted by the following colors:

Caring – Represents the Heart

Honesty – Be True Blue

Respect – Follow the Golden Rule

Responsibility – The Environment (we're all Responsible for it!)

Can I come to visit camp?

Sure! We love visitors. If you do decide to come visit your child at camp, we ask that you check-in at the Camp Office, located in the rear of our bathhouse. Once there, you will be asked to sign in as a visitor and will be given a 'Visitor's' name tag to identify yourself to our staff 'in the field.' In addition we schedule one Family Night per camp session. Please refer to our Camp Calendar at www.ssymca.org for more information.

How are groups organized? Can my child be in the same group as their friend?

Campers are grouped by age. Staff-to-camper ratios are 1:10 and 1:5 for Pioneers and Explorers. Grouping requests **CANNOT** be honored. Not only will campers within the same unit see each other often, but requests make staffing assignments and the proper maintenance of state-mandated ratios extremely difficult. In addition we feel that camp is a time to make new friends and have new experiences.

DROP OFF / PICK UP

When can campers can be dropped off?

Campers can be dropped off any time after 8:00AM. During drop-off time, from 8:00 – 9:00AM, campers will report to their Unit Tent, be signed in and will participate in supervised activities. Due to our staffing patterns, campers are not allowed to be dropped off or signed in prior to 8:00AM. Our flagpole activities start our day's activities and are held at 9:00AM each morning. Regular camp activities will begin at 9:15AM.

Do I need to sign my child in to camp every day?

Yes. Safety is our number one priority at camp, and, therefore, we ask that parents or guardians go to their camper's Unit Tent to sign in their camper every day so that we know that they are at camp.

What if we're going to be late getting to camp?

If your camper arrives after our daily 'Flagpole Gathering' (approximately 9:05AM), you must check them in at the Camp Office (located in the rear of our bathhouse). Campers will **NOT** be admitted to their group without a tardy slip, and counselors will send you back to the Camp Office, so save an extra trip, check in there first.

How do I pick my camper up in the afternoon?

Follow the flow of traffic though the parking lot. Our staff and signage will direct you to the correct pick-up area for your camper's unit. Counselors will ask for your campers name and unit, and announce this information to the proper tent. Your camper's counselor will escort them to your car. **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CAR!** In order to ensure safety and avoid traffic jams all operators **MUST** stay in their vehicles at all times during pick up!

What time do I pick up my camper?

The regular camp day ends at 4:00PM, and campers will not be released from their tent until 3:45PM. If you need to take your camper home before 3:45PM you **MUST** check in to the Camp Office to receive a Dismissal Slip. Our staff in the office will direct you to your child's location, where you can sign them out with a counselor. Counselors will not release campers without a dismissal slip before 3:45PM.

What if I need to pick up my camper after 4:00PM?

Campers who stay later than 4:00PM **MUST** register and pay for Late Care. Forms are available at www.ssymca.org. You may register for Late Care on a daily or weekly basis. In emergency situations please contact the Camp Office at (781) 829-6752. Any camper who is picked up late, without the knowledge of the Camp Director, and has not registered for Late Care will be added to our roster and billed accordingly. **ALL** campers must be picked up and signed out by an authorized adult. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

What if I can't pick my camper up? Can a neighbor or family member pick them up?

Only individuals listed on the Pick-up Authorization form (part of your registration packet) are allowed to pick your camper up. These individuals must be 18 years or older, and can only pick up your camper if they are able to provide proper photo identification, every day. Campers will **ONLY** be released to an authorized adult. If someone who is not listed on the Pick-up Authorization will be picking up your child, you must provide us with a written note in advance so that we can make an amendment to your camper's Pick-up Authorization Sheet. This is to ensure that no one picks up your child other than you or those you authorize.

What if my camper will be absent for the day?

If your camper will be absent for any reason, please leave a message in our Camp Office at (781) 829-6752. This helps us to keep accurate attendance records.

DAILY ACTIVITIES**Do campers go swimming every day?**

Yes. Campers have the opportunity to swim every day. The morning swimming period is a modified instructional swim, and will take place on an every other day basis. While there will be an instructional component, it is not as in depth or intense as the regular swim lessons offered by the South Shore YMCA. The daily afternoon session is a recreational swim. Campers who wish to swim in the deep end of the pool must pass a deep end test every day to show camp staff and guards that they can swim in deeper water.

My child can't swim!! Is that OK?

Sure. There are always campers who have not learned how to swim yet. We have certified lifeguards supervising all swimming activities and our camp staff is ready to assist any camper that is not comfortable in the water. With the flexibility our three pools give us, we feel that we can provide the proper atmosphere for all levels of swimmers. In addition to our summer camp, the South Shore YMCA does offer instructional swimming lessons throughout the summer. You may enhance your child's swimming ability by enrolling them in one of these classes outside of camp time. For more information about our Aquatics program, or to inquire about pre-camp swim lessons for your child, please contact Jill McCusker at (781) 829-8585 ext. 238, or at jmccusker@ssymca.org

Do campers go on field trips?

With the exception of our River Adventures, Sailing Camp, Golf Camp and the Voyagers Unit, our camp programs take place on site. All campers who are participating in off-site programs are accompanied by at least two counselors, including a licensed and trained driver at least 21 years-of-age.

What happens if it rains? Or gets REALLY hot?

With the exception of a few of our specialty camps, our camps are outdoor camps. In the event of inclement weather, the camps use tents for activities when possible. Severe weather conditions (i.e., lightning) may dictate the limited use of

indoor facilities for some or all of the day. Be sure to dress your child appropriately for such days – umbrellas, rain coats, sweatshirts and a dry change of clothes on rainy days, extra layers on colder days and hats and other items of clothing to protect from the sun on hot days. We constantly monitor the weather conditions and make appropriate modifications to the schedule to ensure camper safety. In the event there is an electrical storm during pick-up we will conduct pick-up from our indoor facility. Traffic will be diverted accordingly. Please follow the directions of the YMCA staff, and be patient, as this will add some time to the procedure.

What is Camp Gordon Clark's Discipline Policy?

The philosophy of the YMCA is based on our Core Values, and thus we have the **Responsibility** to treat all campers with **Caring, Honesty** and **Respect**. Staff will communicate on a daily basis to monitor the camper's experience at camp. Should a discipline problem arise, we follow a three step process. Each step will be documented for reference purposes by the Unit Director. We will communicate with the camper each step along the way to help them to understand why they have been disciplined.

- **1st Offense – Verbal Warning**
- **2nd Offense – 5 minute Time-Out/Conference with Unit Director**
- **3rd Offense – Time-Out/Conference in Camp Office**

A repeat visit to the Camp Office will result in a phone call to the parent about the behavior, and a meeting may be scheduled. Suspensions* will be issued for violent or inappropriate behavior, or repeated visits to the Camp Office for 3rd Offenses. Expulsions* from camp occur when a camper's behavior puts anyone at risk (including themselves), or the camper has already received one suspension.

*No refunds will be issued for suspensions or expulsions.

STAFF

Who are the camp counselors?

We take great pride in our camp staff. Each year approximately 75% of our camp staff are returning staff members. Our camp is run by a full time YMCA director who has extensive camp experience, as well as an Assistant Director who is also a full time staff member. Our staff is comprised of teaching professionals, local college and high school students. We also have a fully licensed nurse on staff during regular camp hours. All of our staff have been interviewed, had reference checks completed on them and have had both CORI (criminal) and SORI (sex offender) background checks completed. During the week leading up to camp, all staff members receive extensive, week-long camp training.

What is the staff to camper ratio?

A counselor-to-camper ratio for most of our camps is 1:10. Both of our Explorers programs and the Pioneers program ratios are 1:5.

Will the counselors apply sunscreen to my child during the day?

No, however the proper application of sunscreen several times a day, particularly after time in our pools, is a priority at Camp Gordon Clark. Camp staff will supervise and encourage the application of sunscreen during the day. The use of spray type sunscreens have been the most successful in past years.

Please Note, sunscreen is not provided by the camp, but rather should be sent daily with campers.

MEDICATION / ILLNESS / INJURIES

What if my child needs to take daily medication?

Parents must fill out the 'Authorization for Distribution of Medication' form on the first day of camp. All medication must be turned into the Camp Nurse. Per state-mandated regulations **Prescription medication** must be submitted directly to a Camp Nurse in its original container bearing the pharmacy label, which shows the date of filling; the name of the pharmacy, patient, doctor and medication; directions for use and cautionary statements, if any, and medication quantity. **Over the counter medication** must be submitted directly to a Camp Nurse in its original container bearing the original label, and a doctor's note which shall include the directions for use. **All medication**, with the exception of epipens and inhalers, will be kept in the Camp Nurse's Office and administered by the Camp Nurse at the required time of dosage. Expired medications will not be administered.

What happens if my child gets sick at camp?

Children must be healthy enough to participate in the program's daily routine. We have limited facilities to care for sick children. If your child gets sick at camp (i.e. vomiting or any high temperature) the Camp Nurse will call you to pick up your child. If we are unable to reach either parent, phone calls will be made to the other individuals listed on the Emergency Contact sheet. For the safety and comfort of your child and all other campers, if your child has had a fever or vomited within 24 hours please keep them at home until they feel better and no longer present the danger of passing on the illness to others. In addition, please notify the camp if your child has any communicable conditions (i.e. whooping cough, chicken pox, etc.) so that we can notify all parents as soon as possible.

WHAT TO BRING EVERY DAY

What should my child bring to camp?

Each day campers should bring the following items to camp. Be sure that all items are labeled properly to ensure that everything that comes to camp goes home from camp.

- Backpack
- Bathing Suit & Towel
- Bagged Lunch & Drink (Lunches will be kept in backpacks and can not be refrigerated. Insulated lunchboxes with icepacks are suggested. In addition, we can not heat up lunches. Campers will not be permitted to use the vending machines during the camp day.

- Snack
- Sunscreen, hat and/or other sun protection
- Refillable Water Bottle
- Change of clothes (especially for younger campers)

What should my child wear to camp?

The most important thing when getting ready in the morning is to make sure the camper is comfortable for the day's weather. In addition, closed-toed shoes should be worn, as campers will be very active throughout the day. Another handy rule of thumb when getting ready for camp is "Don't dress in your best, 'cause you may get a mess."

My child says other children bring trading cards, ipods and Cell phones to camp, is this allowed?

No. Children should leave iPods, Cell Phones, trading cards and other valuables at home – for a few reasons. First and foremost, we do not want children to lose or ruin any of their valuables. In addition, we view summer camp as a time for children to partake in social games and activities. When children use electronic and other portable games, they are missing out on a valuable camp experience. The YMCA is not and cannot be held responsible for the loss or damage of toys, games, clothes or other personal belongings. Please **DO NOT** allow your child(ren) to bring personal belongings to camp. Examples of items to be left at home include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Cell Phones (please call the camp office in the case of emergency)
- PSP/Nintendo DS
- Ipod/MP3 player
- Money (our camp store only accepts Camp Store Cards)
- Trading Cards (Pokemon, Magic, etc.)
- Valuable items
- Crocs
- Heelys
- Weapons of any kind – real or fake



Can my camper wear her/his flip-flops or Crocs to camp?

No! Because of the nature of most of the activities at camp footwear such as flip-flops, sandals, Crocs, Heelys, etc. are not appropriate. Campers need to wear closed-toed shoes which provide proper support for running, low-ropes activities, and travel over uneven surfaces on the fields and in the wooded areas. To avoid problems such as blisters our camp nurse also recommends clean socks (always pack an extra pair).

What happens if my child loses their bathing suit...or towel...or socks...or hat....

The best prevention to your child losing belongings is to make sure EVERYTHING is labeled. Should anything be misplaced over the course of the day, we will collect lost & found items in each tent as well as a central location outside the Camp

Office. Always check first at your camper's tent. At the end of every session, any items that have not been claimed will be donated to a local charity.

Does camp provide lunch?

We do not provide lunch. Campers should bring a lunch every day for camp (we will provide an afternoon snack for Campers in Late Care). Since some days can get quite hot at camp, it is always a good idea to keep lunches cool with icepacks, frozen water bottles or juice boxes in an insulated lunch box. Our Camp General Store provides healthy snacks, juices and bottled waters at a nominal cost. Camp General Store Cards will be available each Monday morning at our Camp Check-in Tent, and are available every day at the Y's Choice Café in the YMCA main lobby (cash, checks, MasterCard, VISA, and Discover Cards are all accepted).

Can I send my child with a lunch that needs to be reheated at camp?

No. Since our camp is an outdoor camp, we do not have any means of reheating lunches.

FIRST DAY OF CAMP

Is there anything different that happens on the first day of camp?

On the first day of every session, families must go through our check-in process, so that we can make sure we have all of the required information on file. Check in could take a few extra minutes at drop off so we ask families to plan accordingly.

How do I know where to bring my child on their first day?

After checking in on the first day (of each session), you will be given a check-in slip. This will indicate your camper's Unit Tent. Our staff will assist you in locating the proper tent location. From that day on, please sign in at your campers Unit Tent at drop off. Campers will be picked up from the same tent.

I don't have an extra inhaler or epipen to leave at camp on the first day. Can I drop it off at a later time?

No, these items are essential in emergency situations, particularly in a new environment such as camp. For your child's safety, children are not allowed to remain at camp if their proper, up-to-date medications are not on site. Please make sure to order extra inhalers, epipens and other prescription medications prior to the start of camp, so that we have appropriate medications on site with your child.

This is my child's first time at camp and they don't know anyone. Will they be ok?

Absolutely! Prior to camp, our staff take part in a week long training and we dedicate a lot of time to helping make new campers feel comfortable. Every session, we have a lot of new campers and our staff make a point to help them all transition into the group and get to know the other campers. By the end of the day, campers usually know their counselors and all campers in their group.

Camp Leadership Staff:

Camp Director

T.J Coogan, ext. 312..... tcoogan@ssymca.org

Asst. Camp Director

Jamie Whitcomb, ext. 262.....jwhitcomb@ssymca.org

Business Office/Financial Assistance

Jane Fallon, ext. 308.....jfallon@ssymca.org

We thank you for choosing Camp Gordon Clark and the South Shore YMCA! It is our sincere hope that your child's experience with us creates lasting memories and that you will come to join us again in the future.

Thanks again.

