

# PARENT HANDBOOK

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## **Camp Philosophy**

Oakland Yard Summer Camps give kids an alternative from the routine of daily life and puts them in an environment with totally unique experiences, tailored to their age and development that offer growth and independence. We focus on building relationships between our counselors and kids that lead to encouraging campers to explore a variety of activities that they might not normally get to partake in. We truly believe that it's through these encouraging and motivating relationships that we're able to meet our mission. Oakland Yard Athletics was founded in 1995. That first summer we had started with only about 6 camp offerings over 4 weeks of the summer. Great staffing and varied, customized programming was the perfect combination for a successful program. Since that first year, there has been much development and growth. We now offer about nine weeks camp throughout the summer with an average of 135 kids attending per week.

## **Our Mission**

Oakland Yard Summer Camps strives to create an environment where all children not only thrive and grow as part of a fun, safe, and caring community, but also develop new friendships and memories to last a lifetime. We work to maintain a culture where everything we do is 'for the kids'. We hire counselors to work with particular groups of children, which means they have specific training to meet the behavioral, developmental, and activity needs of each age group. Our counselors' sole purpose is to build relationships with kids, encourage them, keep them safe and provide support. Counselors emphasize the importance of teamwork, safety, and respect, and build a strong culture of inclusion throughout the week. To accomplish these goals effectively, they are on duty and with their camp groups the entire time they are at camp.

## **Registration Confirmations & Communication**

Once a camper has been registered, you will receive an email confirmation. Please note that in order for registration to be complete, a minimum deposit must have been paid (comes out to about 40%) and all required forms must be complete. All documentation and communication prior to camp will be done through our online system and email. Please register using an email address that you will check and use. There will NOT be a "Welcome Packet" sent in the mail!

## **Checking In**

We require that all parents park your car and come in to our facility to drop your child off with their counselor and pick them up from their counselor. We understand people are in a hurry but this is for the safety of your child! Your cooperation is greatly appreciated in this matter. The daily check in is inside the front gates. (If it's raining outside we will do this inside the dome.) If your child requires any medication, please drop it off at the front desk. After you drop off your camper, you are free to leave.

\*\*If handicap assistance is required, please let our staff know and we will be happy to accommodate.

### **Check Out / Pick up at 12:00 pm or 4:00 pm**

You will need to bring a photo I.D. with you until we get to know you. If you anticipate that anyone other than the parents or emergency contacts (listed on the household information) will be picking up your child, they will need to be added to your child's camp profile online, and appear on the documentation we have on site. Please note that Oakland Yard staff will be strictly forbidden from releasing any child to anyone who is not registered as an authorized pick up person.

### **Ice cream / Snacks**

All kids will receive an ice cream daily – either at 12p if staying half a day, or at 2:30p if staying for a full day. Full day kids will need a mom supplied afternoon snack. OYA will supply fruit punch, lemonade and ice cold water throughout the day for the kids. Kids staying past 4:00 pm will be given a healthy snack every afternoon at 4:30 pm.

### **What to Bring to Camp**

Camper should have their own closable bag (backpack, tote bag, etc) with the following packed inside it.

- A complete change of clothes – in case they get wet!
- Beach towel
- Swimsuit – this is best worn under the clothing and campers can change out of the wet suit after they are done on the slip-n-slide
- Sunscreen

### **What NOT to Bring to Camp**

- Valuables
- Medications of any kind! (Those MUST be logged and stored at the front desk!)
- Spending money (we don't sell anything here!)
- Gaming devices, tablets, iPods, or other MP3 players, Radios, CD players etc.
- Cell phones

### **Rain Day Policy**

In the event of rain, Oakland Yard campers will still participate in all scheduled activities inside our domes. We understand that many parents rely on Oakland Yard Camps to care for their children while they are at work. Please be assured that we will never turn your child away on a rain-day. Camp will be just as much fun inside as it is outside.

### **Registration Info And Payment Options**

You can pay by cash, check, or credit card. Please note that no registration is complete/confirmed until payment is submitted. Additionally, we offer the option to pay a deposit (about 40%) and then pay off the balance in one or two payments. When this option is chosen, the credit card used for the deposit is

automatically charged on the installment dates. Any orders not on a payment plan need to be paid in full prior to the first day of camp. Canceled Check Policy: There will be a \$25 fee for all returned checks. Cancellation Policy Camps: Oakland Yard Athletics will refund 90% of the registration fee if requested 7 days prior to the start of the camp. If a refund is requested within 7 days of the start of the camp the refund will amount to 75% of the registration fee. Refunds will not be given once a camp has started. Prorated refunds will be granted upon receipt of a doctor's note only, once a camp has started. Oakland Yard offers 100% refunds for any programs we cancel. There are no deductions from the camp for missed camp days.

### **Changing Weeks**

All order changes must go through the camp director, it is not a problem; please communicate with us how we can help. Email us @ [campdirector@oaklandyard.com](mailto:campdirector@oaklandyard.com). Please include camper name, order number, date change, and how we may contact you. Changes will be made based on availability of camps.

### **Medical Care**

We do not hesitate to call 911 if there is a problem. Our camp directors are certified in first aid & CPR and trained to use out AED (Automatic Defibrillator). The staff responds to emergencies, distributes medications, and provides basic first aid care for our campers. If your child requires medications, they need to be turned in to the main office in the original container during check in on the first day of camp. Counselors will be given a list of campers' medications and the time they need to take it. During the camp week, campers will go with their counselor to the office to get their medication at the designated time. Campers may carry epi-pens and inhalers that are required to be with them at all times. We contact parents with infirmity issues when:

- Any illness or injury requires an emergency 911 call
- Any illness or injury requires a physician's attention
- A camper is in the infirmary more than 1 hour
- A camper is in the infirmary for same complaint more than twice
- Camper gets a major scrape, bruise, or other injury requiring additional attention
- Fever is suspected
- Camper has had any sort of head collision.

### **Personal Safety**

In order to protect children, our policy prohibits any staff person to be alone in a private location with a camper. If a camper needs to use the bathroom, for example, a staff will never do this alone with the camper—they will get another camper or staff person to go with them. If a one-on-one conversation is necessary between a staff member and a camper, it will always be in view of other people. We come alongside parents and help educate them on how to keep their children safe when they're away from their care.

## **Camper Health**

Counselors are trained to make sure your child is staying hydrated, and sunscreen has been applied properly. Please send sunscreen with your child in their backpack, and have it applied already at the start of camp. We make sure it is reapplied properly after lunch. We are a PEANUT-FREE ZONE. We are a nut and peanut free zone. Camp lunches, ice cream, all candies and snacks are peanut free. Please do not send any kind of nut butters (this includes peanut, almond, cashew, etc.) with your camper to camp.

## **Case of Emergency**

A manual siren system on camp allows instant communication to all campers and staff in the event of an emergency. Staff monitors weather radar when conditions might be threatening and we move staff and campers to severe weather shelters when there is an immediate threat of severe weather. All staff is trained in our Emergency Action Plan, which covers scenarios like severe weather, fire, medical emergency, intruder on camp, and missing camper. The focus is on accounting for and protecting campers in these situations. All counselors are trained to respond to emergencies on camp. For emergencies that require additional assistance, local EMS respond when needed, arriving in an average time of under 5 minutes.

## **Grounds Security**

The entryways are gated and kept closed during the camp day. Any adults who are not staff members will be required to identify themselves and wear a visitor badge while on site.

## **Inclusion**

Oakland Yard Summer Camps are an inclusive experience. While your child is at camp, we make sure every camper is given individual attention and is included in as many activities as they want. Our intention is to meet the needs and challenges of every camper that comes to camp, whether it's physical, behavioral, dietary, allergies, or medical. If your child has special needs, please help us out and give us a clear picture of your child's diagnosis on the registration page on the 'notes' section. Please note that we are not a "special needs" facility, however, we will be happy to work with you and do our best to accommodate each camper's needs to the best of our ability. Please call our office for more information @ 248-673-0100.

## **Behavior Management**

We enforce a no tolerance policy at camp. All counselors are trained in our behavior management and anti-bullying policy. If a behavior does arise that causes a disturbance: the child is removed from the situation, there is a very caring conversation about a change in behavior. We partner with the camper to come up with a solution that works for everyone, grace is given, and consequences are enforced, if necessary. At no point will corporal punishment be allowed. If there is no change in the camper's behavior, the Camp Director will call the child's parent/guardian and discuss the options.

## **Bathroom Accidents**

We want you to be aware that your camper will be expected to be fully potty trained when they arrive at camp. It is our policy that the campers will not be wearing pullups or diapers at camp. We understand that occasionally accidents do happen, and we will deal with that as it arises. However, if a child does have an accident we will call you to let you know. If it happens a second time during the week, we will speak to you about options for how to proceed. If it is determined that your child is not yet ready for camp, we will refund the rest of the registered days. We hope you understand our procedure and we're happy to answer any questions you might have.

## **Staff Search**

We recognize that our staff is the most important part of the equation when it comes to a safe, successful camp. The hiring of our summer staff is not left to part-time employees or volunteers – we have our best people, the summer camp directors/owners, personally building their teams. They are seasoned, having done hundreds of full interviews with applicants; they know what to look for, the right questions to ask, and how to select top performers. Our directors never stop staffing summer camp. It is always at the forefront of their mind, and staffing the next summer begins before summer is finished. They network with schools and colleges, community organizations, ministries, and churches to find the highest quality young adults to work in the summer. In addition to searching for the best new staff, we identify and invite back our top performers every summer. We choose those who align with the mission and core values of Oakland Yard, who effectively engage children and teens, and who did an outstanding job providing safe and fun summer camp experiences. After they have experienced a summer on staff, they share stories with friends and family about their experience. We use these word of mouth referrals to also help us find new staff.

## **Staff Hiring and Screening**

We are always on the lookout for the best staff we can get! We strive to find staff members that are intelligent, enthusiastic and caring so that you always can be confident that your children are in great hands. Each staff member has been personally interviewed, reference checked and background checked before they ever set foot on camp. Before camp kickoff, they receive multi training sessions of job specific training.

## **Lost & Found**

Please put your child's name/telephone number on everything your child brings to camp. That will allow us to call you if we find something. Lost & found items without name/telephone numbers will be hung up on the hooks outside the main building throughout the week. All unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to charity at the end of the summer.

### **Slip-N-Slide**

From our youngest campers to oldest counselors, our slip-n-slide is always a favorite. Every child enrolled in a camp at Oakland Yard will get the chance to play on our gigantic slide. Completely redone in 2014 and measuring 200 feet long and 20 feet wide, our amazing slide is even a hit with our counselors! Everybody that wants to cool off will get plenty of opportunities at a run down the slide this summer. Campers should bring a towel and bathing suit to camp each day if they would like to use the slip-n-slide. To speed the transition, we recommend that campers wear a swimsuit underneath their clothes so they do not need to change before getting on the slide.

### **Mail Call**

Here is your chance to surprise your child with a letter from home while they are here at camp. Every Thursday our camp counselors will have "mail call" for all those that have mail in our mailbag. You may either deliver a letter, postcard, pictures, or care package. Simply drop it in our green "Mail Call" mailbox located by our front door by Wednesday. Please address the envelope as follows: Oakland Yard Summer Camps, C/O Camper Katie Jones, "MAIL CALL".

### **Electronics Policy**

We do not allow campers to bring electronic devices such as games, iPods, cell phones or tablets to camp. These devices are disturbing to the camp counselors and other campers. If your camper needs to bring a phone to keep in touch with you, please explain to him or her that we will keep it in the office, you'll need to let the front desk or the Camp Director know that your child will be calling you. We ask that all electronics be left at the front desk so they do not get damaged or lost and do not disrupt camp. Parents/Campers can retrieve them at the end of the day from the desk/office. Oakland Yard is not responsible for any lost or damaged electronics. We believe that children come to OYA to experience camp without the electronic world to interrupt them. Even our staff is asked not to use their phones unless needed for an emergency.

***We're looking forward to seeing your kids this summer!***

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