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# SPRING BREAK CAMP

**AT CAMP IMMOKALEE**  
Information Packet



Learn more at  
**[Camp.FCYMCA.org](http://Camp.FCYMCA.org)**

**CAMP IMMOKALEE**  
6765 Immokalee Road  
Keystone Heights, FL 32656  
352.473.4213



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# **YMCA CAMP IMMOKALEE**

## **Program Handbook**

### **Dear Family**

Since 1909, Camp Immokalee has been providing safe, fun, and high quality summer resident camp programs for youth in Florida and around the world. Immokalee campers learn to care for themselves, others, and the world around them while building life and activity skills through camp activities. Grit, gratitude and character are 21st-century skills every young person will need to succeed, and our camp activities are carefully designed to get kids out of their comfort zone and develop leadership skills while building community and having fun.

Campers live in cabins with other campers of their own age and gender identity, and under the guidance of their assigned camp counselor. Cabin life teaches young people self-sufficiency, contributing to a small community, and stewardship of their cabin and camp.

All sessions provide opportunities for campers to participate in a wide variety of activities that will help them explore new ideas and skills as well as time to participate in their favorites. Some activities are enjoyed with their activity group, which is a co-ed group of campers the same age range. Other activities campers select as a cabin or as an individual. The goal of all activities at camp is to help campers build relationships, develop skill, and to cultivate a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves.

Immokalee provides campers with the opportunity to immerse themselves in nature, and through that experience, learn about themselves and connect with others. With this purpose in mind, we keep Immokalee a tech free zone. Cell phones and other media devices are not allowed at camp in order to protect the privacy of all campers and to prevent campers from immersing in a screen instead of in the camp environment and community. Digital or disposable cameras are welcome, and allow campers to select what images they would like to share with friends and families after their time at camp is over.

YMCA Camp Immokalee occasionally makes changes in program policies and schedules. Families receive notification of changes through the updated program handbook at the beginning of each season. When we must change policy or substantially change program operations mid-season, we will notify families in writing.

In the event that you cannot find the information you need in this handbook, we encourage you to call camp at 352-473-4213.

Creating a camp experience that is nurturing, fun, and enriching is a priority for all of us. We welcome you input, and look forward to an amazing summer.

**Thank you for entrusting us with your children's summer memories.**

**The YMCA Camp Immokalee staff team**

### **What should I do to help my child prepare for camp?**

Camp is a place for young people to develop responsibility and independence. Campers will take care of themselves, their belongings, and make their own beds with counselor supervision. We therefore encourage you to let them help with their own packing (or do it themselves if old enough) and don't worry too much about neatness! Treat them as a young adult when arranging for their coming and going. Support your camper's decision to go to summer camp and concentrate on the many new, exciting experiences ahead!

### **What is camp policy on refunds?**

Camp fees are non-refundable except in very exceptional circumstances usually involving illness of sufficient seriousness to require withdrawal based on the advice of a physician. It should be clearly understood that minor illness, homesickness, failure to abide by camp policies/rules, and change in plans on the part of parents are not sufficient grounds to warrant a refund. When a refund is granted, it will be the prorated portion of tuition paid. Any camp session cancellation within two weeks of scheduled arrival date will require payment of full camp fee.

### **Guidance, Discipline, & Rules**

It is the goal of the YMCA to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for all participants. Camp staff play a key role in ensuring that our programs are safe not only physically, but emotionally, and to create an open environment where youth can fine tune their skills and learn about themselves and how to navigate and function in the world. The core element to promoting this safe and supportive environment is for staff to be aware of youth's developmental needs and then guide and support them to getting their needs met in a healthy and positive way.

The YMCA promotes behavior guidance and discipline through creating a supportive environment, developing structure and clear limits, promoting social and emotional learning, implementing skillful discipline, and addressing challenging behaviors. The YMCA uses positive discipline, which means staff promote desired behaviors through teaching and reinforcement. Staff will redirect or problem solve with youth when they are not displaying desired behaviors, rather than restrict behaviors by taking away opportunities or controlling youth with fear of punishment.

We believe this approach focuses on the needs of the child and contributes positively to the child's overall development. Staff members teach children about managing their behaviors and emotions as well as about conflict management techniques, to support them as they become responsible for resolving conflict among themselves.

*There are times when restrictions may be necessary, and will most likely be directly linked to the health, safety, or well-being of that youth or others. The YMCA Camp Immokalee staff **does not use corporal punishment** under any circumstances.*

*While the YMCA will make every attempt to provide reasonable accommodations for all children, YMCA Camp Immokalee **will not tolerate behaviors that cause** (1) danger to selves or others, or (2) a disruption to the normal activities, making it impossible for other children to enjoy camp. (3) Bullying of any form and sort. Any of the above reasons will be grounds for dismissal from Camp Immokalee with no refund of tuition or fees paid.*

*Camp Immokalee has a **no-tolerance** policy for physical violence, social media bullying, use of cigarettes, alcohol, controlled substances, sexual activity, and fire arms, or any other action that places self, other children, or staff at risk. This applies to all staff, children, visitors, and parents while present at YMCA Camp Immokalee program sites.*

### **What about health care?**

All staff are First Aid and CPR/PR certified and there are staff members in residence at the Camp Immokalee Health Clinic. In case of emergencies, St. Vincent's Hospital in Middleburg accepts our campers. Emergency transportation is available from camp by our local EMS, which is only 3 miles from camp. Should any serious accidents or illnesses occur at camp, parents or guardians are notified as soon as the situation is under control. In the case of minor illness, parents are informed only if the camper is confined in the Health Clinic for more than 24 hours. Camp reserves the right to send a child home if a physician so advises. If you plan a vacation or are away for a few days while your child is at camp, please notify the camp office IN WRITING of your temporary address and phone number.

## **Health Questions:**

***Does my child need a physical to participate in camp?*** We will not require a physical for Spring Break Camp if your child participated in Summer programs and has a current physical on file.

***What about medications?*** Medications must be brought to camp in the **ORIGINAL** container issued by the physician or pharmacist and will be administered according to the instructions printed on the label. Labels must include the camper's name and the name of the medication. A medication authorization form must be completed by the registering parent/adult prior to staff accepting any medication. Put all medication in a zip lock bag and mark with child's name. All medication must be submitted to camp staff upon check in.

## **What about homesickness?**

When children are away from home for the first time, it is reasonable to assume that until they become adjusted to the camp environment, they may experience several days of mild to severe homesickness. Understanding parents realize that it is something that a child may need to experience and see through to the finish if he or she is to gain the degree of independence that is necessary to make the camper a self-reliant individual. If you suspect that your camper may become homesick, don't delay your departure from camp—he or she will be in great hands with our amazing camp staff! If you feel there is a problem, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Camp Director. They will make every effort to keep you informed of your child's progress adjusting to camp life.

## **Communication with Camp/Campers**

In the case of an emergency at home or camp, there is a camp telephone available in the office. The phone number is 352.473.4213. Messages will be delivered to campers. Campers will not be permitted personal use of the camp phone. You can also email the office or your camper at **CImmokalee@fcymca.org**.

## **Cell phones and other tech/media**

Camp is an immersive experience, designed to promote independence, self-reliance, and connections to others. Cell phones and other media disrupt that connection and disengage campers from their real-time experience. Campers, including teen leaders/CITS, are not permitted to have cell phones or other tech media at camp. If you have an emergency and require a phone call with your child, please contact the office and we will make arrangements for your child to call you.

If email is not an option, you can also send letters through regular mail. You are likely to receive more mail if you pack stamped, self-addressed cards or envelopes. Send a cheerful note to your camper often, but please avoid mentioning how much you miss them, as this triggers homesickness. Camping is quite an adjustment for some children, but they can handle it very well if only given a little help. If you don't hear from camp for a few days, don't worry! It just means we are busy having extreme amounts of fun! Please address all mail as follows:

## **Camper's Name, Camper's Cabin Name**

YMCA Camp Immokalee  
6765 Immokalee Road  
Keystone Heights, FL 32656

## How are cabin assignments made?

The camp management takes responsibility for cabin assignments. We try our very best to honor requests for bunkmates as indicated in the application process, particularly in the case of new campers. We are unable to change cabin assignments on the opening day of the session. After opening day, cabin changes are made only when they are deemed necessary for the good of the campers and staff.

## Arrivals & Departures

**Check in** is Sunday afternoon, and the times are as follows:

<b>AGE</b>	<b>Please plan to arrive between:</b>
<b>7 or 8</b>	<b>2:00pm and 2:30pm</b>
<b>9 or 10</b>	<b>2:30pm and 3:00pm</b>
<b>11 or 12</b>	<b>3:00pm and 3:30pm</b>
<b>13 &amp; up</b>	<b>3:30pm and 4:00pm</b>

Please enter camp at the dining hall entrance and park near the Airnasium. You will then be directed by a staff member to our dining hall. Please bring all medications and any paperwork to the dining hall but leave your camper's luggage in the car. Check-in will include: form and medication collection, and cabin assignments. Campers then move to assigned cabins, make their beds and get settled. Parents are requested to depart after getting children settled to ensure a smooth transition.

**Check Out** is Saturday between 9 and 10 am.

Campers will be released to the registering parent/adult or other persons designated on the registration form. YMCA Camp Immokalee requires that person to show photo identification prior to the camper's release. Counselors-In-Training may transport and sign themselves in and out of camp. Individuals under the age of 16 are not authorized to sign out other campers from camp. If an authorized or emergency contact appears to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, camp staff will not release the child until another authorized adult assumes responsibility for the child.

## What should I bring to camp?

Below is a list of necessary and optional items a camper should take to camp. A light sleeping bag will eliminate the need for all but one sheet. Personal belongings should be plainly marked for identification. Nametapes or marking pens can be used.

- Lightweight sleeping bag with sheer liner or 1 blanket with set of single bed sheets
- Pillow
- Water bottle
- Backpack/daypack
- 3 towels
- 2 washcloths
- 2 bathing suits (if program includes aquatic activities)
- 2 pair of comfortable pants or jeans\*
- Underwear, shorts, socks and T-shirts for the corresponding # number of days at camp
- Light sweater or jacket
- Rain gear
- 2 pair shoes (one being tennis shoes)
- Wash kit: soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, comb, brush
- Sunblock/suntan lotion
- Insect repellent
- Hat or cap for sun protection
- Laundry bag or old pillowcase
- Flashlight
- Disposable or other camera

**Horse-Back Trail Rides (non-horse camp)** Campers will be able to purchase a one-time horse experience at camp. A horse-back trail ride can be added upon registration. The horseback trail ride includes a short ground lesson, overview of riding and a ride on our Camp Immokalee trails. Please send you camper with long pants and closed-toe shoes to wear for the trail ride.

### **Personal Property**

Campers who choose to use personal belongings, sports equipment, and supplies will do so at their own risk! Storage and safe-keeping of personal equipment is the responsibility of the owner of the equipment. All personal equipment used within the program must meet the program standards and requirements for safety and condition. Equipment needed is provided, so we recommend that personal property is not brought to camp. Cell phones, electronic and other toys or personal items should not be brought to camp. YMCA Camp Immokalee is not responsible for lost or damaged personal equipment.

Weapons, fireworks, tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or potentially dangerous objects may not be brought to camp. If these items are suspected at camp, parents will be notified and any items found will be seized and held until parent's arrival. Pets are not allowed in camp, and must remain in cars if brought to campus.

### **What about lost & found?**

All unclaimed articles will be brought to the dining hall on the morning of departure. Please check if you think your camper is missing an item. Any unclaimed clothing will be donated to a local charity.

### **Camp Goals and Outcomes**

The YMCA of the USA has charged all YMCA camps to help change kids for the good by supporting the following outcomes at camp:

- **Relationships.** We will help campers build positive relationships with each other, and with our camp staff. We will build positive relationships with the families of our campers.
- **Skill Building.** Our activities will be progressive- campers will not just have fun, but also build hard and life skills through what they do at camp.
- **Belonging.** Campers will belong to a caring camp community through large and small group programming.

These outcomes are the framework that supports and defines all that we do at camp, and provide us with tangible deliverables on our mission.

### **Camp Activities**

Your camper will participate in a variety of fun, progressive activities focusing on skill building, creating relationships, and fostering an awareness and appreciation for the outdoors. The core camp activities include:

- Canoeing and Kayaking
- Swimming
- Archery
- Riflery
- Nature and Outdoor Living Skills
- Outdoor Cooking
- Sports and Games
- Adventure Course, Zip Line, and Teambuilding Activities
- Arts & Crafts and Camp Crafts
- Songs and Skits
- Opening and Closing Camp Fire
- Evening Activities and Group Games

Many other fun activities will be planned by the camp staff based on the camp theme, and the skills, interests, and sparks of camp staff.

Your camper will participate in these activities in a variety of groups throughout the day and week. These groups include:

- Cabin groups. Activities that each cabin selects to participate in.
- Activity groups. Co-ed age groups.
- Individual choice. Activities that each individual camper selects to participate in.
- Clubs. Extended activities that each individual camper selects to participate in.

**What does a typical day look like?**

<b>Sunday</b>		<b>Monday – Friday (sample/demo daily schedule)</b>	
Arrival	<b>2:00 – 4:00pm</b>	Rise and Shine	<b>7:00 am</b>
Orientation and Camp Tour	<b>4:00 – 5:00 pm</b>	Flag Pole	<b>7:45 am</b>
		Breakfast	<b>8:00 – 8:30 am</b>
Flag Pole	<b>5:15 – 5:30 pm</b>	Activity #1	<b>9:00-10:00 am</b>
Dinner	<b>5:30– 6:00 pm</b>	Activity #2	<b>10:15 – 11:15 am</b>
Evening Activity	<b>7:30 – 9:00 pm</b>	Clubs	<b>11:30 – 12:15 pm</b>
Evening Snack	<b>8:00 – 8:30 pm</b>	Flag Pole	<b>12:15 pm</b>
Back to cabins/devotions	<b>9:00 PM</b>	Lunch	<b>12:30 – 1:00 pm</b>
Lights Out	<b>10:00 PM</b>	Rest Period	<b>1:00 – 2:00 pm</b>
		Activity #3	<b>2:00 – 3:00 pm</b>
		Snack/Store	<b>3:15 - 4:00 pm</b>
		Activity #4	<b>4:15 – 5:15 pm</b>
		Dinner	<b>6:00 pm</b>
		Evening Activity	<b>7:00 – 8:30 pm</b>
		Snack/Camp Store	<b>8:30 – 9:00 pm</b>
		Back to cabins/devotions	<b>9:00 – 9:30 pm</b>
		Lights Out	<b>10:00 pm</b>

**Direction to Camp Immokalee:**

**From Jacksonville:** Take Route 21 (Blanding Blvd) south towards Keystone Heights (approximately 34 miles from I-295). Turn right on Immokalee Road, which is just before you enter Keystone Heights (approximately 17 miles south of the junction of Rt. 21 and Rt. 16). Look for our signs. The entrance to camp is 1.5 miles on the left. Please turn in next to the dining hall.

If you are coming from some other direction than Jacksonville, please call the camp office and we will be glad to assist you with the best directions to get to us! You can also get directions at [www.maps.google.com](http://www.maps.google.com).