



EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF

CAMP CHEROKEE

YMCA OF UPPER PALMETTO

PARENT HANDBOOK SUMMER CAMP



YMCA Camp Cherokee is operated by
YMCA of Upper Palmetto
151 S. Oakland Avenue
Rock Hill, SC 29730

YMCA Camp Cherokee Location
1299 Camp Cherokee Road
Blacksburg, SC 29702
803.222.2850
ymcacampcherokee.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Online Advantage	2
Camp Cherokee Mission	2
Camp Cherokee Staff	2
Behavior/Discipline	2
Off Season Registration Timeline	2
Check-In and Check-Out Days	3
Directions to Camp	3
Homesick Policy	3
Pre-Camp Forms	4
Cancellation Policy	4
Telephone Calls and Visits	4
Communication from Camp	4
Cabin Assignments/Request	5
Medical Policy	5
Medications	5
Insurance	5
Health Screening	5
Day to Day Schedule	6
Activities at YMCA Camp Cherokee	6
Add-On Activities	6
Canteen	6
Camp Mail System	6
USPS Mail	6
Lost and Found	6
Packing List	7
Packing Pointers	7
What Not to Bring	7
Financial Concerns	7
Camp Goals and Outcomes	8
Cherokee Conservation Corps	9
Camp Staff Contacts	9
American Camp Association Accreditation	9

We would like to welcome you to the Cherokee family! Being a part of YMCA Camp Cherokee should be an exciting and enjoyable experience for your child as well as you the parent/guardian! We realize that you are giving us the opportunity to have your most prized possession with us this summer. We do not take this responsibility lightly. Our purpose at YMCA Camp Cherokee is to provide a positive experience where each individual will feel comfortable and loved. We also hope they will gain a sense of independence and self-confidence. Please let us know if we can assist you in any way or answer any questions as you prepare for camp this summer. We look forward to having you there!

ONLINE ADVANTAGE

Parents can enjoy an easy, entirely online registration process with CampMinder. Upload all required documents directly to the Camp Cherokee website instead of emailing or sending them by mail. Parents also have the opportunity to break their payment into installments, helping you more easily manage your budget. Once your child is at camp, you can enjoy daily photos, end of session videos and one-way emails to your camper, all from your CampMinder parent portal.



CAMP CHEROKEE MISSION: To provide individuals the opportunities to reach their potential by building self-esteem, friendships and character through participating in activities that are in accordance with the YMCA mission.

CAMP CHEROKEE STAFF: Staff at Camp Cherokee is comprised of individuals who have a love for our campers and a dedication to our camp. Approximately 90% of each year's staff are return staff members. We select and employ staff through a competitive screening process that includes thorough references and background checks. We ensure a 1:4 staff to camper ratio in all cabins. Camp Cherokee also has a camp nurse on premises 24/7. Upon hiring, all staff complete extensive training that includes child abuse prevention, diversity, homesickness, bully prevention and risk management. All leadership are CPR, First Aid, AED and emergency oxygen certified and all waterfront staff are lifeguard certified.

BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE: Campers are expected to act in accordance with the YMCA's Mission and in compliance to the four core YMCA values: responsibility, respect, honesty and caring. Camp Cherokee staff have been trained to handle inappropriate behavior in a constructive, safe and non-degrading manner. Any misbehavior or disrespect to YMCA Camp Cherokee, the staff, the property or other campers will result in the following actions: **1st OFFENSE:** Camper behavior handled by a staff member and conduct report is filed. **2nd OFFENSE:** Camper will report to the Camp Director, a second conduct report is filed and parents will be contacted. **3rd OFFENSE:** Camper will be dismissed without a refund.

Camp Cherokee reserves the right to send a camper home at the parent's expense if the camper's behavior consistently takes away from the experience of others or endangers the safety of him/her or others. If a camper is sent home, the parent is responsible for transporting the camper from camp and is expected to respond in a timely manner. Refunds will not be awarded for campers sent home for discipline reasons. Additionally, the parent will be held financially responsible for intentional damage to equipment or facilities caused by the camper.

OFF SEASON REGISTRATION TIMELINE

- End of August**
Rates and dates announced
- Early September**
CCC Membership Enrollment Deadline for Early Camper Registration
- Mid-September**
CCC Member Early registration (lasts Monday - Friday)
- Early October**
Open Enrollment Begins
* A \$100 non-refundable, non-transferable deposit is required to secure each session.
* The balance due can be paid in full or in monthly installments.
- November 15th (and 15th of every month after)**
Monthly payments begin to draft
- Early January Add-On Registration Begins**
- April 15th**
Full Balance Due
*All payments are now non-refundable
Forms Due
 - Camper Application
 - Health History Form
 - Physician's Exam
 - Parent Authorization
 - Bunkmate Request
 - Camper Photo
 - Mental Health History (if applicable)

If you have any questions about your balance, please contact our camp administrator, Amy Parker at 803.329.9633.

CHECK-IN AND CHECK-OUT DAYS:

Sessions 1- 9

Sunday Check-in: 1:30 – 3:30 PM
Saturday Check-out: 10:00 – 11:00 AM

First-Timer's Sessions

Friday Check-in: 5:30 – 6:30 PM
Sunday Check-Out: 6:00 – 7:00 PM



- Only authorized persons will be allowed to pick up a camper. A person is authorized if his/her name is listed on the Pick-Up Authorization Form.
- Parents* may authorize another person to pick up their camper from camp with a written approval submitted to the Resident Camp Director.
- Please note that due to safety concerns we ask that all early dismissals arrive between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM; Monday through Friday. There will be no early dismissals Saturday morning. All early dismissals must be communicated to Personnel Director prior to arrival.

*At the Y, we know families take a variety of forms. As a result, we define parent broadly to include all adults with primary responsibility for raising children, including biological parents, adoptive parents, guardians, stepparents, grandparents, or any other type of parenting relationship.

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP:

From Rock Hill:

Take HWY 161 to Kings Mountain State park (entrance on the left. Follow the signs to Camp Cherokee.

From Charlotte:

Take I-85 South to the Highway 161/ Kings Mountain Exit 8. Turn left towards York. Follow four miles to the Kings Mountain State Park entrance on the right). Follow signs to Camp Cherokee.

From Greenville, SC/Atlanta, GA:

Take I-85 North to the Highway 161/ Kings Mountain Exit 8. Turn right towards York. Follow four miles to the Kings Mountain State Park (entrance on the right). Follow signs to Camp Cherokee.



HOMESICK POLICY

The staff at YMCA Camp Cherokee recognize that campers young and old may experience homesickness while at camp. Missing home is a natural, common feeling, and the staff at camp are trained to help campers when they begin to express anxiousness regarding missing home. There are many things that you as a parent/ guardian can do to help ensure that your camper has a successful stay away from home.

What To Do

- Having mindful conversations as the summer approaches is often helpful. Be sure that your camper knows what to expect!
- Write to your camper! Cheerful, positive, and encouraging letters in which you express confidence in your camper's ability to succeed go a long way! Camp Cherokee will deliver all received mail at lunch each day. All parents have access to "Camp Stamps" – emails to camp that will be printed and delivered to your camper at lunch. Camp Stamps are printed an hour before lunch, so please be sure to avoid sending letters after lunch on Fridays!
- If your camper hasn't had many experiences away from home and/or without technology, a short trip can prove to be a beneficial experience leading up to their week at camp.
- At any point during your camper's session, you are welcome to reach out to camp staff for an update on how your camper is doing!

What NOT To Do

- The staff at YMCA Camp Cherokee recommend that parents avoid communicating to their campers that they can return home if they feel like it. Campers that feel they have a guaranteed option to go home are often the most likely to express significant homesickness.
- Please do not inform your camper to conceal a cellular device to contact you on throughout the week.

Please be assured that our staff is well trained and are there to help your child. If your camper is really struggling, the staff at YMCA Camp Cherokee will be in contact with you to discuss further steps. Note that early departure from camp due to homesickness at any point in the camper's session is not refundable.



PRE-CAMP FORMS:

Please complete and upload all paperwork within the "Forms and Documents" section of your Camplntouch account prior to camp arrival. If you need help uploading or have any questions, please call our camp administrator at 803.329.9633. All forms must be submitted by April 15th.

Health History Form

- This form must be completed annually by a parent or legal guardian

Physician's Exam

- Please upload a copy of your child's most recent physical exam. You may use the form we provide, a copy of your school and/ or sports physical, or your state's health exam form.
- This form must be completed within 24 months of your camper's stay.

Parent Authorization Form

- YMCA Camp Cherokee does not provide camper accident or sickness insurance. If available, insurance must be provided.
- The provided Parent Authorization Form includes our permission to treat authorization statement.

Bunkmate Request

- All bunkmate requests must be submitted two weeks prior to your camper's stay at camp. Camper

Photo

- Be sure to upload a photo of your camper to their camper profile!

Mental Health History (if applicable)

- If your camper has any diagnosed medical conditions that require prescription medication, please submit this form.



CANCELLATION POLICY:

Please note: The \$100 deposit per session is non-refundable nor transferable to other sessions.

Cancellations prior to April 15

- Will result in a refund of payments less the \$100 deposit to camper's account.

Cancellations after April 15

- All payments will be forfeited.
- If cancellation is necessary due to illness or injury, a refund will be issued less the \$100 deposit with a doctor's notice stating the child is unable to attend Camp Cherokee.

Mid-Session Cancellation

- Campers who must leave for medical reasons or family emergencies may request a pro-rated refund, depending on circumstances.
- No refunds will be given to campers choosing to attend late, depart early, or those sent home for behavioral or away from home adjustment challenges.

Cancellation by Camp Cherokee due to outside circumstances

- Will result in a FULL refund of ALL payments.
- Families can choose to donate their paid tuition, or use it as a credit toward future programs.



TELEPHONE CALLS AND VISITS: At Camp Cherokee, we strive for campers to develop independence. An integral part of this growing process is the extended experience away from home. In keeping with this practice, we do not permit campers to call home. In addition, we ask that families wait until check-out to visit camp so that campers and staff may focus on the programs we run. In the case that a family needs to speak to or visit a camper, please arrange this with the Resident Camp Director ahead of time. Parents are welcome to call the camp office during their child's stay, and care packages and letters/cards are well received in substitution of a family's visit.

COMMUNICATION FROM CAMP: We will contact parents in case of the following:

- An emergency or illness
- Behavioral problems that may result in the camper being sent home
- Camper involvement in a social situation that places him/her at risk
- Severe cases of homesickness

Parents are welcome to call the Resident Camp Director at the office phone, 803.222.2850 or cell, 803.984.1713 with concerns or emergencies.

CABIN ASSIGNMENTS/REQUESTS: YMCA Camp Cherokee does not allow campers more than 2 years apart in age to stay in the same cabin in adherence to the American Camp Association standards. If your camper wishes to bunk with a friend, we accommodate 1 bunkmate request per camper. If parents/ guardians list multiple bunkmate requests, only the first listed request will be guaranteed. These requests must be submitted 2 weeks prior to the start of your camper's session at the latest. Otherwise, we cannot guarantee your bunkmate request will be honored. Cabin assignments are sent out to parents/ guardians the Monday prior to your camper's session at camp. After cabin assignments are sent out, we CANNOT make any changes to the cabin assignments.



MEDICAL POLICY: Minor medical issues are handled by the Health Directors that are present during sessions. Any camper requiring additional attention will be taken to Piedmont West Urgent Care on Highway 321 in York. If a camper presents a fever of 100.4 or higher or is too ill to participate in camp activities, they will be sent home at the discretion of the medical staff. In order to return, YMCA Camp Cherokee requires a doctor's note stating they are well enough to participate in camp activities. In case of emergency, campers will be taken to one of the following: Piedmont Medical Center in Rock Hill, SC; Kings Mountain Hospital in Kings Mountain, NC; or Gaston Memorial Hospital in Gastonia, NC.

MEDICATIONS: All medications (including over-the-counter medicines and "as-needed" medications) must be turned in to the Camp Nurse upon arrival at camp. Please do not pack medication in luggage. We encourage families to include only enough medication for the child's stay.

Please be sure:

- Medication is in original container and labeled with the child's name and address as well as the phone number of the pharmacy with the practitioner's name
- Current and correct dosage is listed. Prescription medications will be administered based on the instructions given on the bottle.
- Medication is listed on the child's "Physical Exam Form"
- Medication is from a licensed pharmacy
- Medication is not expired.

INSURANCE: CAMP CHEROKEE DOES NOT CARRY ACCIDENT OR SICKNESS INSURANCE ON SUMMER YOUTH CAMPERS. In the event of serious illness or accident, the parents will be notified at once. Parents/guardians are responsible for prescriptions and charges incurred for outside medical treatment of their child, should services be required while in attendance at camp. Services rendered by the camp medical staff are at no additional charge. Families are highly encouraged to have insurance for their children while they are at camp. If you do not have insurance for your child, short term or student insurance can be purchased through any independent insurance agent.

HEALTH SCREENING: In accordance with the American Camp Association, YMCA Camp Cherokee conducts a health screening for all campers and staff members upon their arrival to camp. The health screening is a visual check for evidence of illness, injury, communicable diseases, and a lice or "knowledge check". YMCA Camp Cherokee asks parents to make note of any health concerns on the Health History Questionnaire online form, as the health and well-being of our campers and staff members are our top priority.

During check-in, staff will perform a head lice or "knowledge" check. If lice are found, the camper will be sent home for treatment. Campers are permitted to return to camp when the lice are fully treated. Campers will not be readmitted to camp without a note from a physician.



DAY TO DAY SCHEDULE

8:00 AM	Flagpole
8:15 AM	Breakfast
8:45 AM	Cabin Cleanup/Inspection
9:40 AM	Pow-Wow
10:10 AM	1st Period Classes
11:20 AM	2nd Period Classes
12:30 PM	Lunch
1:15 PM	Rest Period
2:40 PM	3rd Period Classes
3:50 PM	4th Period Classes
4:50 PM	Prepare for Evening Activity
5:30 PM	Flagpole
5:45 PM	Dinner
7:00 PM	Evening Activity
8:30 PM	Showers/Devotion/Wind down
10:30 PM	Lights Out

ACTIVITIES AT YMCA CAMP CHEROKEE

Campers at YMCA Camp Cherokee participate in many activities throughout their stay at camp. Camp operates on an A/B Day schedule with alternating classes each day. A typical day at camp includes four class periods that last about an hour each with a lunch break in the middle. Additionally, after dinner each day, all of camp gathers together for a large group evening activity prior to bed. Please see the list below for some examples of activities offered at YMCA Camp Cherokee:

- Swimming
- Boating
- Rock Climbing
- Ziplining
- Archery
- Team Sports
- And much, much more!
- Arts & Crafts
- Frisbee Golf
- Hiking
- Themed Dances
- Capture the Flag
- Team Building Games

ADD-ON ACTIVITIES

We have additional activities that have additional fees.

- Rock Climbing at Crowders Mountain
- Horseback Riding
- Bridge Sessions



Safety is always a top priority at YMCA Camp Cherokee. In addition to thorough staff training, YMCA Camp Cherokee is an accredited member of the American Camp Association (ACA). The ACA is the leading authority for summer camps and youth development. They work to preserve, promote, and improve the camp experience. As part of our membership, YMCA Camp Cherokee must adhere to strict guidelines that include the successful completion of on-site visits and peer-reviewed policy reviews.

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

CANTEEN: All snacks and drinks are provided and included in the fees for camp. No additional cash is needed for the purchase of additional food or beverage while at camp. Merchandise is available for purchase at pick up or drop off.

CAMP MAIL SYSTEM: Campers always enjoy receiving mail, so feel free to write to your camper while they are at camp. Campers receive plenty of food and drink through three "all you can eat" meals and a candy snack with drink daily. Please note that YMCA Camp Cherokee is a peanut-free camp due to the increase in food allergies in youth. YMCA Camp Cherokee reserves the right to confiscate any products violating our camper code of conduct. No packages will be delivered to YMCA Camp Cherokee from other YMCA of Upper Palmetto branch locations. YMCA Camp Cherokee and the YMCA of Upper Palmetto are not responsible for any lost or damaged mail or mail received after your camper's session has completed.

USPS MAIL: Please remember that the kids are away from home for a short period, so we encourage you to limit all packages. It is a good idea to send letters in advance to camp so that they are there on the first day. Please address all mail to the following address:

Camper Name/Cabin Name (you will be told this a week prior to arrival)
YMCA Camp Cherokee
Session Number
1299 Camp Cherokee Road
Blacksburg, SC 29702



LOST AND FOUND: We will make every effort to return lost and found items while your camper is at camp. Please encourage your camper to be responsible with his/her belongings at camp. Please mark all items with a permanent marker or label for easy identification. Lost and Found items will be displayed at a table at the front of camp during check-out. Please check these items before leaving camp. If you discover that something is missing upon your return home, please call immediately. Lost and Found items will be held for two weeks after the session ends. At that time, items will be donated. Camp Cherokee is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. Please do not send valuables or cash with your child to camp.

PACKING LIST: Please send appropriate clothing with your child, taking into consideration the weather forecast and camp activities.

- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Raincoat/Poncho
- ☐ Eno/hammock
- ☐ Fan with extension cord
- ☐ Blanket or sleeping bag
- ☐ Pillow
- ☐ 1 set of twin-sized sheets
- ☐ Laundry bag
- ☐ Pajamas
- ☐ Underwear (at least 8 pair)
- ☐ Socks (8-10 pair)
- ☐ 1-2 long pants
- ☐ 6 pairs of shorts
- ☐ 10 shirts (short and long sleeved)
- ☐ 2 swimsuits
- ☐ 3 towels
- ☐ Spray sunscreen (SPF 30 min.)
- ☐ Hat with visor
- ☐ 2 pair of closed-toe shoes (Crocs are considered open-toe shoes)
- ☐ 1 pair of sandals or water/shower shoes
- ☐ 2 washcloths for bathing
- ☐ Soap and shampoo
- ☐ Deodorant
- ☐ Shower caddy/soap dish
- ☐ Comb/Brush
- ☐ Toothbrush and toothpaste
- ☐ Feminine products if necessary
- ☐ Mosquito repellent
- ☐ Flashlight/batteries
- ☐ A great attitude

OPTIONAL

- ☐ Devotion book
- ☐ Camo attire
- ☐ Outfit for closing ceremony (collared shirt or sundress)
- ☐ Wacky costume (optional)

If you will be participating in any horseback riding activity:

- ☐ Jeans/long pants
- ☐ Required: Closed-toe shoes, boots or sturdy shoes

*Two-Week Campers – please remember to bring enough clothes to last 8 days. Laundry service will be provided for participants signed up for the Bridge Session add-on.

FINANCIAL CONCERNS: We do not accept payment at check-in on opening day. Fees cover all special programs and trips, t-shirt, camp photo and canteen. Campers do not need any additional money, with the exception of money for YMCA Camp Cherokee merchandise. YMCA Camp Cherokee staff is not responsible for money brought by campers.



PACKING POINTERS:

- Send old clothing to camp as your child will be camping out, participating in rugged sports, climbing and hiking through the woods.
- Label all of your children's belongings; first initial and last name works well.
- Please review with your child the things you are sending with him/her so he/she knows what clothing and personal items are his/hers.
- Please pack items in luggage, backpacks, or duffels—no plastic bags! They do not hold up for a week.
- Luggage should be compact and easy to carry uphill. Please do not bring expensive luggage!
- Swimwear should be packed at the top of the camper's luggage because campers will be checked for their swimming ability shortly after arrival at camp.

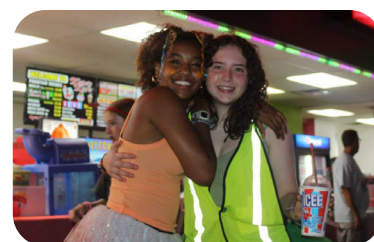
WHAT NOT TO BRING: Camp is a natural setting to unplug from electronics and to get more in touch with people. The items that are listed below (or other items deemed dangerous or inappropriate) will be confiscated until the end of the session.

Please do not pack expensive personal belongings such as clothes, shoes, make-up, memorable stuffed animals/ blankets, etc.

Please leave the following items at home:

- Radios, iPods, MP3 players and any personal music device
- Electronic games
- Cell phones/smart watches
- Hair dryers or curling irons
- Firearms or knives (including Swiss army's)
- Weapons
- Alcohol/marijuana/illegal substances
- Tobacco/vapes/e-cigarettes
- Personal sports equipment
- Expensive items/money (Canteen is included with camper tuition)
- Aerosol sprays (excluding insect repellent and sunscreen*)
- Matches/lighters
- Animals/pets

YMCA Camp Cherokee is a screen-free camp. Do not bring cell phones or smart watches.



CAMP GOALS AND OUTCOMES

YMCA Camp Cherokee believes setting goals and outcomes for camp expresses our purpose of existence and operation. Parents and campers should feel informed about YMCA Camp Cherokee's goals, and should have some ideas as to the nature of the outcomes that might be observed so they are able to evaluate the effect of their camper's experience.

Camp Goals

1. Better understanding of living in harmony with and respecting nature.
2. Learn/Sharpen skills in various program areas such as archery, boating, swimming, crafts, nature study, rock climbing, athletics, etc.
3. Improve personal relationships by learning how to respect one another within a limited living space.Social interaction and making friends.
4. Learn to be yourself.
5. Increased self-confidence.
6. Learn essential life skills such as teamwork, character, right and wrong choices.

Camp Outcomes

1. All campers will learn respecting nature through devotions, camp policies, and implementation of activities throughout the session.
2. All campers will develop and sharpen various program skills by practicing in the class activities each day.
3. All campers will improve personal and social interaction through living and participating with each other every day in activities and the cabin in a respectful manner.
4. All campers will learn to be themselves through participating in activities that help them become comfortable around people without outside influences.
5. All campers will gain self-confidence through positive reinforcements given by staff.
6. All campers will develop and learn life skills through devotions, discussions, and conducting themselves in respectful and positive manner.



CHEROKEE CONSERVATION CORPS

The Cherokee Conservation Corps (CCC) works directly with YMCA Camp Cherokee to fulfill the CCC's mission – Preserving Our Legacy while Preparing Our Future. YMCA Camp Cherokee alumni, supporters, friends, and parents/ guardians join together in the CCC to bring awareness to the amazing Camp we love, to fund capital projects, to reconnect with Camp, and most importantly – to make certain the children that get to experience Camp Cherokee have facilities to match the unrivaled spirit that has always been present.

Individuals or businesses can become members of the Cherokee Conservation Corps. A minimum annual gift of \$300 (or a monthly recurring donation of \$25) entitles you to become a member of the CCC. 100% of donations go to the preservation and upkeep of Camp Cherokee.

Matching Donations

Does your employer match donations? Ask them to match your donation to the CCC. Our funds are separate from the YMCA of Upper Palmetto, but we operate under their 501c3, you can specifically note it for the Capital Campaign if you choose! Their matching donation will go towards the preservation and upkeep of Camp Cherokee. Contact us to find out more information!



In addition to staying connected to the place we love, members will also receive the following:

- Early Camper Registration
- Exclusive Camp Newsletters and Updates
- Yearly CCC Auto Decals
- CCC T-Shirt

More information regarding the Cherokee Conservation Corps (CCC), or becoming a member may be found online at www.cherokeeconservationcorps.com or contact cherokeeconservationcorps@gmail.com

CAMP STAFF CONTACTS

Will Gilmore
Resident Camp Director
willgilmore@ymcaup.org

Ian Estes
Assistant Camp Director
ianestes@ymcaup.org

Amy Parker
Administrator
amyparker@ymcaup.org

AMERICAN CAMP ASSOCIATION ACCREDITATION:

YMCA Camp Cherokee is proudly accredited by the American Camp Association. Each year, staff undergo an audit of nearly 400 standards set forth by the American Camp Association. The American Camp Association is the only national accrediting body for camps of all types. Accreditation standards focus on health, safety, and risk management. American Camp Association provides evidence of a camp's commitment to the well-being of campers and staff members.

