



Trailblazer Camp at the YMCA of Austin

Welcome to YMCA Trailblazer Camp. Below is an overview of what will be needed for camp as well as an explanation of aspects of Y programming. We are grateful for your participation and hope this makes the start of your camp experience more enjoyable.

What is a typical week at Trailblazer Camp? Trailblazer campers will enjoy three weekly field trips and two trips to the pool. One special week, Challenge Accepted, campers will face unique team-building challenges and cap off the week with a Camp Challenge between all three Trailblazer camps.

What happened to Adventure Camp? Adventure Camp is still here, only this time we have broadened the scope of camp. We now give campers the opportunity to explore a variety of different themes, activities, and interests with a particular focus on leadership and team building while giving back to the community.

What do I do when I first arrive at camp? Camp opens each morning at 7:30 AM; however you are welcome to drop off your camper at any time after 7:30 AM. On the first few days of camp, campers will wear name tags. Parents are required to sign their camper in and out each day; campers are NOT allowed to sign themselves in or out of camp. Look for information about the week ahead at the Parent Table – including Activity Plan and field trip waivers. Between 7:30 and 8:45 am, centers will be available for all campers. Centers may include board games, manipulatives, and books.

What is an Activity Plan? Each week, the Site Director will create a detailed, weekly Activity Plan listing all field trips, special activities, crafts, and swim times for that week of camp. The Activity Plan will also include all contact names and numbers. Many Trailblazer Camp field trips will require the bus to depart early in the morning. Please pay attention to bus departure times as we don't want to leave you behind. Look for the Activity Plan at the Parent Table.

What should my camper bring to camp? (Please label everything with your child's name.)

- Sack lunch and large water bottle
- Backpack—to help keep belongings together
- Swimsuit and towel on swim days: consult summer-long calendar
- Sunscreen. Because many Trailblazer activities require campers to be outside, we recommend that you either apply sunscreen on your child in the morning or send your camper with sunscreen. Camp staff will always have camp sunscreen available as well.
- Wear tennis shoes or sandals with back (no flip flops please)
- Hat

How come you don't take five field trips per week? Trailblazer campers will enjoy three field trips or special events per week and two days of swimming. We feel this allows for a healthy balance between on-site activities, team building games, and character development activities, which help complete our curriculum and provide enrichment activities to our campers. Also, Trailblazer Camp is already more costly than Kinder, Theme, or Sports Camps at the Y – adding two more days of field trips would greatly increase our costs and consequently we would have to charge more for camp.

Why don't Trailblazer Camps swim at the YMCA? While the interactive pools at YMCA facilities are awesome, we have learned that many older youth prefer larger pools and pools with deeper areas. So, while your Trailblazer Camp may take place at a Y facility, campers will enjoy Austin city pools (like Deep Eddy, Northwest, or Garrison) for free swim twice per week.

What are Opening and Closing Ceremonies? Camp opens each morning with an Opening Ceremony and closes each afternoon with a Closing Ceremony. This time is spent previewing or reviewing the camp day. This time is also used to acknowledge positive behaviors and choices by the kids. Y staff attempt to model and reward YMCA character values (respect, responsibility, honesty, faith, and caring) during all camp activities. Camp staff are trained to reward and praise generously.

How do you keep my child safe? Y staff are trained on many procedures to ensure your child's safe participation in camp and recognize that active supervision is important in all aspects of child care programs. Many Trailblazer Camp field trips can be especially dangerous without proper supervision. To ensure safety at camp, camp staff will divide the kids into small manageable groups and frequently take roll / count heads. Water breaks and rests in the shade or indoors will also be administered throughout camp.

How much will camp be outside? Trailblazer Camp will be outside for portions of the day. Some Trailblazer Camps will even begin and end each camp day from a designated outdoor location (under tent or pavilion). Staff will take precautions throughout each camp day to limit heat exposure, such as providing water, sunscreen, and taking frequent breaks. Campers are advised to bring their own water bottle to camp and keep it with them throughout the day.

The Y provides the snack and I provide the lunch, correct? Yes, correct. Each camp day, the Y will provide morning snack will occur around 8:45 AM and afternoon snack around 3:30 PM. Lunch will be around 12 noon. Please do not send microwavable food. Please inform us of any food allergies or sensitivities.

Who do I talk to if I have a question about the program? Our Site Directors and Counselors are passionate about their roles in your child's life while at the YMCA, and we welcome communication with parents. Please feel free to share any questions, suggestions, allergy information, et about your child to any on-site camp staff. Additionally, the phone number and email address of the Program Director for camp will be listed on the weekly Activity Plan and available online.