



YMCA / APYC Camp Kekoka

Parent Guide

Dear Camper and Family,

We believe that every child deserves a moment in the sun, a chance to learn, a special time to grow, and a special time to make friends and become a better person. At Camp Kekoka, the core values of YMCA living-caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility shape the best moments of childhood into unforgettable memories. Campers come to camp to have fun. Having fun means making friends, being part of a group and feeling liked, respected, and appreciated.

At Camp Kekoka, we believe children, through their participation at camp, have opportunities to gain a sense of self-worth, and are able to share, assume responsibility and cooperate effectively with others. We believe this process must include opportunities for children to think and make decisions. In this context, participation in camp cannot help but give a child the sense of competence, which is certainly equated with a feeling of confidence.

The relationship between campers and staff is perhaps the most important building block to the successful camp experience. Camp Kekoka counselors are warm, understanding, and friendly. The counselors are fun, loving, mature and sincere in their desire to provide each child with a safe and enjoyable camp session.

Spirituality is a natural part of each day's camp adventure. At Camp Kekoka, we strive to be inclusive and respectful of each child's beliefs, while practicing the principles of Christian living. Blessings at meals are a part of the daily routine, as are our daily devotions in each cabin lead by staff.

At Camp Kekoka, we are extremely excited about your interest in us and will do everything possible to provide the finest camp experience for your child.

Sincerely,

Cassie Leichty
Camp Director / Branch Executive

Opening Day At Camp:

Check In Time:

Full Week Camp - Sunday 3-5pm

Rite of Passage Camp – Wednesday 9-10am

After entering the front gate please proceed to the dining hall for check in (follow the signs). Please bring any prescribed medication to check in along with the **attached medication form**.

After checking in you will be free to move your camper into his or her cabin. There will be staff available to help with this process. Your cabin counselors will be in your cabin to meet and welcome you to Camp.

All parents will need to be off camp property by 5:00 p.m.

Transportation from the Alexandria area:

We would always prefer to have you personally drop your child off so that you get the chance to see Camp Kekoka, and we get the chance to meet you, however we realize that sometimes this can be difficult given the distance. For a transportation opportunity from Alexandria please see the below information:

A school bus will be departing Sunday at **exactly 12:00 PM** from the Alexandria City Public School's Transportation building at 3540 Wheeler Avenue, next to the city gas pumps and across from the new McDonald's. Please know that the departure will be on time. If you are late you will miss the bus. Campers should be picked up at the same location on the following Friday, **no later than, 2:00 PM**. An Alexandria Police Officer will be riding on the bus with the campers. Please know there is an additional fee of \$35, per camper, that is payable to APYC (Alexandria Police Youth Camp).

Packing for Camp

All personal items and clothes should have the camper's name marked clearly on them before arrival at camp. It is suggested that campers leave jewelry at home and refrain from bringing unnecessary articles of expensive clothing. Efforts are made to locate and return missing articles to campers; however, Camp Kekoka is not responsible for lost, damaged or misplaced items.

We ask where possible that campers use a large duffel bag or a Rubbermaid container with the height of 8.5 inches for packing. Duffel bags and Rubbermaid containers will fit under the camper's bed. Place a list of items packed inside of the duffel bag so that counselors can help campers maintain their possessions. If you wish to send items ahead the shipping address is 1083 Boys Camp Rd., Kilmarnock, VA. 22482. When received, items are delivered to the cottage prior to the camper's arrival. We recommend ordering return shipment tags ahead to avoid delays in getting trunks home.

What To Bring To Camp

Bedding: Campers will stay in cottages with single size bunk beds

- Single sheets (campers wishing to use a sleeping bag must also have a fitted sheet on the bed)
- 1-blanket or sleeping bag
- 1-pillow and pillowcase
- Towels/wash cloths

Clothing for 6 days to include:

- Sweatshirt / Sweater (just in case)
- Raincoat
- Shirts
- Shorts

- Underclothing
- 2-Swimsuits
- Old clothes
- Long pants
- Tennis or closed toed shoes
- Water shoes (bay and pool activities)

Every Day Items:

- Water Bottle (please make sure it won't break if dropped)
- Laundry bag
- Toiletry articles and something to carry back and forth to the bath house
- Small flashlight
- Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher)
- Bug Repellant

Optional Items

- Stationery/stamps
- Sunglasses & Cap
- Talent show items
- Jellyfish pants (neoprene/nylon pants; inexpensive wind pants with elastic around the ankles, panty hose also works)
- Disposable Camera
- Books, comics or magazines
- Rainy day games, cards
- Small clip on fan
- Ipod / MP3 player with head phones (to be used during rest period only).

What Not To Bring

- Cell phones, Radios, Game boys/DVD's/Internet Devices (In addition to these items being costly and unsecured at camp, the content of material accompanying them is often not suitable to be shared with other campers.) If these items are brought anyway, they will be collected and secured for the camper and returned upon his or her departure.
- Valuables
- Cash (Camp Kekoka does not have a camp store so there is no need to send money with your camper)
- Tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, and illegal substances are not permitted at camp. The possession, use, or consumption of any illegal substances may lead to immediate dismissal with no refund.
- Possession of firearms or weapons of any sort may lead to immediate dismissal with no refund.

Closing Day: Friday 10-11am

Parents/guardians should plan to pick up their child by 11:00 am. You are welcome to join us at 10:00 am for the video & award presentation.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide a Photo ID in order to pick up their camper. This policy is for the protection of all of our campers. If someone other than a parent or guardian is picking up your camper we must have prior written permission as well as a photo id.

If your camper has prescription medication, please let staff know at the Check Out table.

Typical Daily Schedule

8:00 am	Rise and Shine
8:30 am	Breakfast
8:45 am	Character Development
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Morning Activity
12:15 pm	Lunch
12:45 pm – 1:45 pm	Rest Period
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Afternoon Activity
5:30 pm	Supper
6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Evening Activities
8:00	Snack
8:15 pm – 10:00 pm	Cabin Time/Devotions/Shower Rotations
10:00 pm	Lights Out

- Evening programs and lights out may be adjusted for youngest or oldest camper groups
- Campers have a rotating schedule. The schedules alternate so that children will have the opportunity to be involved in both land and water activities.

Cabin Assignments

Campers are assigned to cabins by age and grade level. Cabin assignments will be given upon check in. Mutual requests from campers within the same year of age are honored with the approval of the Camp Director (**limited to one friend**). The Camp Director reserves the right to determine final cabin mate placement.

Meals

Appealing and nutritious meals are prepared under the careful supervision of our trained dietary staff and satisfy the hearty appetites of campers and staff. A variety of fresh fruit, cereal, hot breakfasts and vegetables are offered every day. A main entree, vegetable, salad, bread, and dessert are typical lunch and dinner meals. Lasagna, sausage egg casserole, and cookout nights are the campers' favorites. Special dietary needs should be indicated to our camp director. The Camp Kekoka Dining Hall is inspected by the Virginia Health Department and maintains a permit to operate a restaurant.

Lost and Found

Camp Kekoka is not responsible for any items lost while your camper is at camp. It is very important that campers clearly label all belongings with their name. We suggest using a permanent marker. Campers will be able to view found items on a daily basis. Parents are encouraged to also view these items on closing day.

The shipping of found items after the camper's departure may be arranged at the expense of the owner.

Discipline

Camp rules are designed to enhance the happiness and safety of all campers. The Camp Director will contact parents to let them know if there is an on-going behavior problem. Children who do not demonstrate appropriate behavior, in the judgment of the director, will be sent home from camp. Early dismissal from camp will not warrant the refund of fees.

Visitation/Phone Calls

Camp Kekoka **does not** have a visitation day, although letters and e-mails are welcomed and encouraged! Parents are also invited to inspect the facilities and meet the staff on Opening and Closing Days.

Due to the volume of campers, Camp Kekoka does not permit campers to make or receive phone calls. (Especially when campers are homesick, we have found that calls from home disrupt the camper's adjustment to camp life.) If an emergency situation arises at home, we ask that parents contact one of the Camp at 804-435-3616 or 804-761-0298. Directors will gladly assist you and your camper in every situation.

Camper Mail & Daily Photo Updates

There is a large volume of mail at Camp Kekoka. We encourage families and friends to write and we ask that every mailed item be labeled with the camper's name. Be aware that because of our rural location at times the mail is not timely. If you wish to send food items please make sure they are in sealed containers that can be resealed.

Campers can receive one way emails from Bunk1.com. Please see the attached sheet for more information Email is printed and delivered daily at lunchtime along with the regular mail. We ask that you put the campers name and in the subject line. Please no electronic cards or attachments. **Campers will not be able to send emails from camp.**

Parents and families can view the current photos by clicking the Bunk 1 icon on our website. On this site you can download and print pictures.

Spending Money

There is no need for campers to bring money to camp. All food and snacks will be provided. Camp Kekoka is not responsible for any lost or stolen money.

Health Center/Medications

Campers must check-in all prescribed medications with the Director upon arrival to camp. All medications must be in the original container. No medications are allowed in cabins. Please **fill out** the **attached medication form** and bring it with you.

Cabin counselors observe campers daily for cleanliness, cuts, sunburn, insect bites, etc.

To ensure good health and the ability to participate in normal camp activities, the health form must be completed by parents and a medical doctor, and returned to Camp Kekoka by June 1. The doctor's signature verifies that he/she has examined your child within the past two years; substitute forms or incomplete forms are not admissible.

At the end of the session, remaining prescription medications need to be picked up from the director. All prescription medications and/or hospital care during camp are billed to parents. General medications and first aid materials are provided at no cost. Accident insurance is not included in the camp fee.

First Time Campers/Homesickness

Homesickness is common at all ages and is a natural response to being separated from loved ones and a normal routine at home. Parents, siblings, grandparents, and friends all are affected by homesickness, also known as separation anxiety. Parents can help their camper adjust to camp by following simple steps outlined in an American Camping Association publication, written by University of California Psychologist Chris Thurber:

- Encourage your child's independence throughout the year. Practice separations; a sleepover at a friend's house can simulate the camp environment.
- Involve your child in the process of choosing a camp. The more that the child embraces the decision, the more comfortable the child will feel at camp.
- Discuss what camp will be like before your child leaves. Consider role-playing situations, such as using a flashlight to find the bathroom.

- Reach an agreement ahead of time regarding phone calls home. If your child's camp has a no phone calls policy, honor it.
- Send a note or care package ahead of time to arrive the first day of camp. Acknowledge, in a positive way, that you will miss your child. For example, you can say "I am going to miss you, but I know that you will have a good time at camp."
- Don't bribe. Linking a successful stay at camp to a material object sends the wrong message. The reward should be your child's new-found confidence and independence.
- Pack a personal item from home, such as a stuffed animal.
- When a "rescue call" comes from the child, offer calm reassurance and put the time frame into perspective. Avoid the temptation to take the child home early.
- Talk candidly with the Camp Director to obtain his/her perspective on your child's adjustment.
- Don't feel guilty about encouraging your child to stay at camp. For many children, camp is a first step toward independence and plays an important role in their growth and development.
- Trust your instincts. While most incidents of homesickness will pass in a day or two, Thurber's research shows that approximately 7 percent of the cases are severe. If your child is not eating or sleeping because of anxiety or depression, it is time to go home. However, don't make your child feel like a failure if their stay at camp is cut short. Focus on the positive and encourage your child to try camp again next year.

The Camp Kekoka staff is well trained to help campers adjust to camp by immediately involving them in goal setting, team building and fun activities.

REFUND POLICY

We are happy to accommodate a switch in a camper's session dates, at no charge, as long as the new session has availability. If a camper must cancel altogether, the following fees apply: If we are notified of cancellation prior to May 14th, a \$100 cancellation fee, per session, applies. If we are notified of cancellation after May 14th a three week cancellation notice must be made in writing, and a \$200 cancellation fee, per session, applies. Parents/Guardians are responsible for camp tuition for all weeks cancelled without three weeks written notice.

Weather Related Emergency

Camp Kekoka staff will carefully monitor and track all weather systems.

Contact Information

Cassie Leichty Camp Director / Branch Executive

P.O. Box 580

Kilmarnock, VA 22482

Phone (804) 435-3616 or (804) 761-0298

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