



School Closures due to H1N1 & YMCA Summer Camps

June 11, 2009.

Dear Parents and Campers,

Greetings from YMCA Camping. As always, the health and safety of our campers is our first priority. We always maintain strict health policies and concern for our camp environments to ensure that your children are properly supervised and protected.

As for our programmes this summer, **we will continue with our scheduled programmes as planned to begin on July 06** and continue for the rest of the summer. We will continue the promotion of Summer Camp Programmes and work with our Host Venues to maintain positive, safe and healthy areas for your child. We will stay open and responsive to the changing environment, respond to HK Government and Health Officials recommendations to inform parents and protect your children's health.

Like everyone in Hong Kong, the lessons learned from the past SARS outbreak has made us better prepared for public health issues. At this time we are confidently making our plans and highlighting policies for our upcoming summer camps. We will be continue our policies to best ensure the safety of your children at our Camps:

1. **Hygiene** – we will make sure that all of our campsites and equipment are sufficiently clean and hygienic through regular and thorough cleanings.
2. **Hand washing** – children will be required to wash their hands many times throughout the camp day, and especially before eating. We will also have alcohol-based gel and hand wipes available to wash hands when away from washroom facilities. We encourage parents send anti-bacterial gel or wipes along with their children as well.
3. **Food** – the lunches at our Day Camps will be served in individual portions and will not be buffet style. Also, campers will not be allowed to share any food or snacks with other children.
4. **Water** – campers will be required to bring and use their own water bottles, and will not be allowed to use public drinking fountains. We will also prohibit the children from sharing drinks.
5. **Body temperature checks/sick children** – we request all parents to keep children who feel ill at home, and to check their children's temperatures everyday before coming to camp. We will ask any camper or staff who feels unwell or who has a high temperature to stay home.
6. **Contact with human seasonal influenza / human swine influenza patients** – any camper or staff who has had close contact with a human seasonal influenza / human swine influenza patient will be requested to stay away from camp and will be compensated accordingly. (The symptoms of human swine influenza are usually similar to those of human seasonal influenza and include fever, lethargy, loss of appetite and coughing. Some people infected with swine flu may also have a runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea.)
7. **Education** – we will be taking advantage of the many “teachable moments” each day at each camp to educate and reinforce learning about proper personal hygiene.
8. **Camp staff** – our camp staff will be trained on how to maintain proper hygiene and regularly clean equipment at the camps.

Compensation

All compensation related to missed or cancelled camps due to influenza outbreaks, in the form of coupons or refunds, will be dealt with on a case by case basis and with fairness and sensitivity.

We will add any additional measures to ensure safety as we see appropriate given the future progress relating to the influenza situation. We will continue to follow the advice of the Department of Health, as well as private medical experts. In the case of any updates, parents will be notified by YMCA Camping Staff.

We thank you for your understanding and consideration regarding these difficult matters, and we look forward to working together with all of you to continue to provide “experiences that last lifetime” for your children. We always welcome any further feedback or suggestions relating to this or any other aspect of our programmes. Please contact us by phone at the Camping Office (2268-7079), or by email at camping@ymcakhk.org.hk.

Regards,

Andrew Sponagle

Manager

Camping and Community Programmes