

Dear Camp Family,

I hope this finds you in good health. Thank you for your patience as we navigate what this pandemic means for YMCA Camp Carson. Our camp families have been in our hearts and minds as we plan, prepare, and envision the summer. For over 80 years, YMCA Camp Carson has strived to maintain a safe and impactful camp program that accepts, challenges, and empowers our campers.

After careful consideration of the recommendations and guidelines from the American Camp Association, State and Local government, and the YMCA, one thing has become clear. Any program we are able to offer at YMCA Camp Carson this summer would not resemble the camp experience that our families know, love, and have come to expect. It simply would not be possible for us to gather together around the campfire, eat and sing together in the dining hall, or even climb the Alpine Tower with our friends this summer – at least not in the same way we are used to.

We fully grasp the trust you place in us to provide a safe, fun, and impactful camp experience. In the end, we recognized that we would be unable to truly fulfill your expectations and deliver the high-quality experience that we promise. **With this reality before us, we have decided to suspend our overnight summer programming for 2020.**

We know that hearing this news is heart-breaking, but even with this disappointment, there is no greater comfort or encouragement than from the Camp Carson family. [Here is a video](#) you can share with your camper and family. None of us imagined we would ever see a summer without camp, but we will overcome this together. We will be able to sing, smile, laugh, and love when we meet again.

If you have questions or concerns, please explore our FAQs page [here](#). Also, please feel free to email any of the contacts below. If you would like to speak with someone on the phone, we will have staff available Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM (Central Time).

Thank you for your continued understanding, patience, and support of Camp Carson. Your love and support for the Camp experience continues to motivate and inspire us all. This pandemic has forced many of us to evaluate our priorities and it's clear that Camp Carson remains high on your list! We look forward to staying connected over the summer.

Sending love and support,

Sarah Hooper

Senior Program Director

P.S. Please continue onwards for further information about refund options, tips for talking to your camper, and other pertinent information. Please find more information on our [Summer 2020 FAQs page](#).

Email Contact Information:

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Refund Options.

For those of you who have paid some, or all, of your 2020 fees, we are offering four options:

- **Donate to Camp.** Making a tax-deductible gift of some or all of the funds you have already paid helps sustain our camp operations which allows our campers to grow. Every moment a camper spends at camp is a moment bursting with a powerful youth development opportunity. Campers are fully engaged and active in the outdoors, but they aren't just soaking up the sun! They are unplugged and learning about communication, collaboration and true friendship as they interact with each other and our staff. For one week, they are living in an adventurous but safe place to progressively gain more independence in making decisions, setting goals and caring for themselves. Through all this nurturing, camp is building kids of strong character and faith. THANK YOU to everyone who is able to make this gift to Camp Carson.
**Recently passed CARES Act legislation allows for tax deductions in some amounts for qualified charitable contributions in addition to the standard deduction. Please consult your tax accountant with questions about your specific tax situations.*
- **Carry your fees over to 2021.** Rollover your fees as a credit for Summer 2021. We are opening Summer 2021 registration on June 8th and you have priority registration through August 10th. The fees you have already paid will be rolled over to Summer 2021 as a credit. You can register for Summer 2021 by logging into our Parent Portal and completing this online.
- **Receive a full refund.** We can process a full refund in the amount paid or you may choose to take partial refund and make a donation with the remainder. *Refunds will be returned by the same method of original payment. Please be sure to log into your Parent Portal and update your credit card information and mailing address.*
- **Combination.** You can do a combination of a donation, rolling over your fees as a credit with a minimum credit of \$75 per campers, and a partial refund.

For your reference, to date we have received \$XXX.XX from your family toward camper fees (this is the total for all campers in your household).

We ask that each family complete our "2020 Cancellation Information Form" by May 29th to indicate your preference. Please log into your Parent Portal [here](#). The form is located in the "Forms and Documents" section. We only need one form filled out per family.

Re-Opening Camp Carson

Our fall programming including our Family Camp and Fall Camp as well as school trips, group retreats, and camper weekends will be proceeding and we will take into consideration all recommendations and guidelines to ensure the well-being of our camp community. If you are registered for a program in late August or thereafter, we are still holding your spot and hope to see you then. Registered guests will be informed immediately if any changes are made.

Talking to Your Child about Camp Being Cancelled

First, remember that you know your child best. Try to digest the news yourself before talking to your camper. This is why we are waiting to publicize it so you have time to discuss as a family. Below are some tips that can help guide you:

1. **Acknowledge their feelings.** Expect a range of emotions, including disappointment, anger, sadness, or even grief. Most of us, including our children, have experienced a lot of cancelled plans, and adding yet another disappointment to the list may feel overwhelming. Acknowledge that it is frustrating to suffer yet another loss.
2. **Ask: What would help?** When your camper is ready, think about what can be done to cope. What are some things that your child can do to share their favorite parts of camp with your family? Maybe they can teach you a game from camp or camp song. Is there a camp meal you can make at home? Not every child will feel better by doing

camp activities at home, so let them be the guide. Remember, it may take time for your child to process their feelings to get to a place where they can think about pro-actively moving forward.

3. Check-in Again. Over the next few days, gently ask how they're doing and see if they need more support. Try to remember to ask again as we get closer to the days when camp would have started.

4. Resources addressing other challenges that can arise in a crisis:

- [Talking About the Loss of Camp with Your camper:](#) This resource curated by our team and other YMCA Overnight Camps provides some ways to prepare before talking with your camper(s).
- [Helping Our Children Manage Summer Disappointments:](#) Dr. Tina Payne Bryson, Pediatric and Adolescent Psychotherapist and Best Selling Author of *The Whole Brain Child*, *No Drama Discipline* and *The Power of Showing Up* has some practical suggestions for parents whose children will be forced to deal with the disappointment of not being able to attend camp this summer.
- [How to Talk to Your Kids about Cancelled Summer Plans:](#) This article provides a breakdown by your child's age on what parenting role to best take when approaching your child about cancelled summer plans.
- [How to Talk to Your Children When Bad Things Happen:](#) This article offers help with one of the biggest challenges of parenthood, explaining bad things in the world.
- [Supporting Families During COVID-19:](#) The Child Mind Institute shares supportive and comprehensive resources for parents on a number of coronavirus-related topics.
- [Parenting in a Pandemic:](#) Tips to Keep the Calm at Home: These tips from the American Psychological Association are designed to help families through the current crisis.
- [How to Be Your Best Self in Times of Crisis:](#) Psychologist Susan David shares wisdom on how to build resilience, courage, and joy in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic in this TEDtalk
- [Emotional Regulation Worksheets: A Coping Skill Activity:](#) This worksheet and calming technique can help you focus on the present rather than overthinking about the past or future.
- [51 Mindfulness Activities for Kids:](#) These tips and activities can teach elementary-aged students how to practice mindfulness.