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YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee  
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**Milwaukee YMCA and Milwaukee County Parks announce partnership to bring day camps and swim lessons to County Parks sites this summer**

MILWAUKEE – The YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee is partnering with the Milwaukee County Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture to bring its day camps and swim lessons to County Parks sites this summer. The new partnership will extend the Y's programming into the communities it serves and give more children the opportunity to experience a safe, fun camp environment and learn life-saving swim and water safety skills.

Of the Milwaukee Y's seven area day camps, three will be held at new County Parks sites – Lincoln Park, Wilson Park and the Milwaukee County Sports Complex in Franklin. Beginning the week of June 22, swim lessons taught by certified Milwaukee Y swim instructors will be held once a week for nine weeks at Jackson, Washington, and Sheridan pools, as well as Schultz Aquatic Center in Lincoln Park and Pelican Cove in Kosciuszko Park.

"One of the ways the Milwaukee Y is working to achieve our vision of a stronger, healthier Milwaukee is by bringing our programs out into the community rather than requiring community members to come to us. Partnering with the County Parks gives us a unique platform to introduce hundreds of kids to the fun and value of summer camp and life-saving water safety education," said Julie A. Tolan, president and CEO of the YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee. "Both the Milwaukee Y and the County Parks are invested in developing healthy kids who grow up to be good citizens, and together we will be able to teach even more young children lifelong skills that will help them grow to be healthy, thriving adults."

"We are very excited about our Day Camps and swimming lessons partnership with the Milwaukee YMCA," said Milwaukee County Parks Director John Dargle. "This is a strong partnership that is mutually beneficial to both parties, but especially to the residents of Southeastern Wisconsin. Together, we'll provide opportunities for healthy activities and water safety for kids and parents."

**Day Camps Partnership**

The Milwaukee Y will serve approximately 800 kids each summer weekday at seven fun, safe Day Camps where kids can just be kids. The three new day camps held at County Parks sites will introduce more children throughout the County to opportunities to explore nature, try new activities and create memories that will last a lifetime.

New this year, the Milwaukee Y Camp FLY (Fun Learning for Youth) curriculum model to reduce summer learning loss – written by licensed educators with an expertise in summer learning – will be integrated into all seven Milwaukee Y day camp sites. Research has proven that children in a lower socioeconomic climate may on average begin every new

school year two months behind their peers due to summer learning loss because of lack of resources in our urban areas.

In response, Camp FLY was started in 2011 as a pilot through a partnership with Wells Fargo, with the goal of incorporating reading, math and science learning into camp activities. According to data the Milwaukee Y collected from its Camp FLY pilot program, more than 70 percent of campers who attend a minimum of four weeks at Camp FLY were able to sustain or gain in their reading, math and science skills.

"Following the Camp FLY model, every child who attends a Milwaukee Y Day Camp will receive 30 minutes of reading per day and daily time dedicated to improving math and science skills taught in a fun way through camp activities and play," said Chris Przedpelski, Milwaukee Y Association Director of Day Camps. "For example, children will take part in a cooking activity where they have to read to follow recipes and use their math skills to measure out quantities. Every fun activity is done with the intention of learning, without the child realizing that they are actually doing reading, math and science."

All Milwaukee Y day camp staff are CPR and first aid trained, and the Milwaukee Y dedicates 40 hours of training for camp staff prior to the start of Summer Day Camp season, which almost doubles the 24 hours of training required by the State of Wisconsin. More information and registration is available at [ymcamke.org/daycamp](http://ymcamke.org/daycamp) or by calling (414) 276-9622.

Milwaukee County Parks sites that host Milwaukee Y Day Camps during the week will still be available for rent on the weekends.

### **Milwaukee Swims Partnership**

As a leader in swim education, the Milwaukee Y teaches more than 9,000 children and adults to swim each year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has warned that drowning is one of the top three causes of unintentional injury death for people 29 and younger, and for African-American children aged 5 to 19, the drowning rate is five times that of white children. Nationally, 70% of African-American children, 58% of Hispanic children and 40% of white children have little or no swimming ability and are at risk of water-related injury or death. The Y's "Milwaukee Swims" partnership with the Milwaukee County Parks will bring swim lessons to more sites throughout the County in an effort to help reverse these preventable and troubling trends.

Beginning June 15, 2015, the Milwaukee Y will offer swim lessons taught by certified YMCA swim instructors at five County Parks sites. These introductory classes are geared toward non-swimmers to learn basic swim skills and water safety, including how to recognize dangerous situations when in and around water environments. Lessons are available for children ages six and above, as well as non-swimming adults. Swim lessons will be taught in age-appropriate groups to ensure optimal skill and safety outcomes.

The Milwaukee Y will offer a reduced-cost package of 10 swim lessons as part of the Milwaukee Swims initiative. For more information, contact the Milwaukee Y by calling (414) 357-2838 or emailing [milwaukee-swims@ymcamke.org](mailto:milwaukee-swims@ymcamke.org).

"During our restructuring process, we pledged to partner with like-minded organizations to bring our strengths – including swim education and camps – out into the community to increase their effectiveness and have greater impact. This partnership with the County Parks means those goals are becoming reality, but it is only the beginning of our continued work to champion families in their efforts to lead healthy, productive lives," said Tolan.

**About the YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee**

The YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee is a powerful association of men, women and children of all ages and walks of life joined together by a shared vision to create a stronger, healthier Milwaukee where families of all incomes and backgrounds truly thrive. Supported by the generosity and vision of our benefactors, the Milwaukee Y offers solutions that reduce health issues that plague our community, such as chronic diseases and preventable injuries; provides safe places seven-days-a-week where kids can have fun, families can gather and seniors can build meaningful connections; serves as an access point for vital community needs, such as preventative health care and reliable, safe before- and after-school care; partners with families, schools and other non-profits to help kids grow into productive adults; and makes fitness fun and accessible for all. Comprising five locations throughout the Milwaukee area, as well as YMCA Camp Minikani on the shores of Lake Amy Belle in Hubertus, Wisconsin, the Milwaukee Y has been a part of the lives of the greater Milwaukee area's kids and families since 1858. For more information, visit [www.ymcamke.org](http://www.ymcamke.org).

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