

the  **FIND MY  
GENIUS**



# PARENT HANDBOOK 2025

Program of the Southeast Ventura County YMCA  
in Partnership with the Simi Valley Unified School District

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Find My Genius Summer Enrichment Program! We are excited to have you and your scholar become a part of our YMCA family. The Y's past, present and future commitment is to ensure that your scholar's summer is an enjoyable and memorable one.

Since its beginning in the early 1900s, YMCA day camp has offered scholars the opportunity to build character and self-esteem through challenging and rewarding experiences. Our Find My Genius Summer Enrichment Program was designed with the needs and interests of you and your scholar in mind. Under the guidance of caring and well-trained staff members, we will offer scholars memories that will last a lifetime.

At the YMCA, we know that all children deserve the opportunity to experience success. Our staff is committed to building meaningful and authentic relationships with students so that each child makes academic, social and emotional gains. Find My Genius is based on the tenet that when learning is made relevant, students feel empowered to take ownership of their own abilities and thus become more confident to take risks, explore and succeed.

The material contained in this parent/guardian handbook will help you and your scholar prepare for our program. We ask that you become familiar with and abide by these policies. Together we can create a magical summer for our scholars!

Thank you,

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# ABOUT US

## YMCA MISSION

The Southeast Ventura County YMCA builds relationships, impacts lives and strengthens our community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

## WHAT THE YMCA DOES

As the nation's leading nonprofit, the Y makes accessible the support and opportunities that empower people and communities to learn, grow and thrive. With a focus on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility, the Y nurtures the potential of every youth and teen, improves the nation's health and well-being and provides opportunities to give back and support neighbors.

## HOW THE YMCA DOES IT

There is no other nonprofit quite like the Y. That is because, in communities across Ventura and Los Angeles Counties, the Y has the presence and partnerships to both promise and deliver lasting personal and social change.

- The Y is community-centered.
- The Y brings people together. Connecting people of all ages and backgrounds to bridge the gaps in community needs.
- The Y nurtures potential. Everyone should have the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.
- The Y has a local presence and national reach. The Y mobilizes local communities to affect lasting, meaningful change.

## OUR IMPACT

The Y is and always will be, dedicated to building healthy, confident, connected and secure scholars, adults, families and communities. Every day our impact is felt when an individual makes a healthy choice, when a mentor inspires a scholar and when a community comes together for the common good.

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### Nurturing the potential of every scholar and teen

The Y believes that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. Through the Y, thousands of youth in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties are learning the values, skills and relationships that lead to positive behaviors, better health and educational achievement.

## HEALTHY LIVING

### Improving the nation's health and well-being

In communities across the nation, the Y is a leading voice on health and well-being. With a mission centered around balance, the Y brings families closer together, encourages good health and fosters connections through fitness, sports, fun and shared interests. As a result, thousands of youth,

adults and families in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties receive the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve greater health and well-being for their spirit, mind and body.

## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

### Giving back and providing support to our neighbors

The Southeast Ventura County YMCA has been listening and responding to our communities most critical social needs for more than 45 years. Whether it's facilitating growth through education, connecting diverse communities through services or improving health through local partnerships, the Y is here to make sure everyone feels cared for, respected and included. Through the Y, thousands of volunteers, donors, leaders and partners across Ventura and Los Angeles County are empowering thousands of people in our community to be healthy, confident, connected and secure.

## OUR PROGRAM SPONSORS



Amoroso



Jeff & Meg Shumway



Simi Valley Schools  
SIMI VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Simi Valley Unified  
School District



Valentine  
Foundation

## FIND MY GENIUS EXPERIENCE

### Program Overview

Find My Genius is a 5-week summer enrichment program designed to help students strengthen foundational reading and math skills as well as increase their self-confidence and resilience that is needed to advance to the next grade level and excel in school and beyond. Our students need FMG to help fight the academic summer slide. The Y is committed to delivering this top-quality program to the youth in our community.

### The primary goals of this program include:

- Increase scholars' literacy and math skills and help them avoid summer learning loss
- Strengthen scholars' self-confidence, social-emotional development, physical health and well-being
- Increase parental/guardianships engagement

Morning lessons are provided by credentialed teachers and focus on vocabulary, phonics, spelling, grammar, reading, writing and math. The afternoon lessons include STEAM, enrichment activities

such as arts & crafts, camp songs, outdoor games and field trips. Scholars will also take part in the Y's Safety Around Water (SAW) program. Find My Genius provides your scholar with a unique opportunity to learn, grow, create and explore, while gaining confidence, making new friends and learning to share and accept others. Here are some suggestions that will improve your scholar's experience and allow some fun and learning to carry over at home.

- Scholars are encouraged to participate and try new things at FMG.
- Scholars are encouraged to show an interest in what he or she has been doing at FMG by taking time at dinner to talk about what was seen and done during the day.
- Parents/Guardian are encouraged to review our weekly newsletter with your child.
- If a particular activity or event sparks your scholar's interest, do not hesitate to encourage further exploration at home and with the family.
- Any award or recognition given at camp is an acknowledgment of individual accomplishment. Everyone's self-confidence can use a little encouragement.
- The FMG program offers many avenues for new experiences. Many things include you, the parents/guardians, and the families of our scholars.

## ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

### Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the FMG Summer Enrichment Program is to provide scholars with an opportunity to acquire positive values, make new friends and gain an appreciation of nature in a variety of outdoor settings and situations.

To achieve this purpose, the FMG staff have adopted the following goals:

- Employ and train staff who are good role models, skilled in group work and leading outdoor activities.
- Develop and maintain facilities and equipment that provide a safe environment for exploration and growth.
- Prepare program plans that ensure an organized and well-rounded experience.
- Cultivate scholars' strong feelings of self-worth, appreciation of diversity in others and creation of lifelong friendships.
- Involve the scholars' families in the preparation, experience and evaluation of camp.

### Requirements for Registration

A completed [6crickets](#) registration that includes an authorized pick-up list, emergency contact information and a brief health history. Also, a YMCA waiver and release of liability will need to be signed at the Parent/Guardian Meeting.

### IEPs and 504 Plans

To best serve our scholars, the Y requires that all parents/guardians provide FMG with a copy of any Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504. If you are unsure if your child has an IEP or 504 plans,

please contact the site directors. Eligibility to participate in FMG is not denied if a student has any one of these plans.

### Program Attendance Requirement

All qualifying scholars must commit and attend the full 5-week program.

## ARRIVING & DEPARTING

### Days of Operation

FMG operates in weekly (Monday through Friday) sessions, for 5 weeks. Our program runs from June 23<sup>rd</sup> –July 25<sup>th</sup>. FMG Summer Enrichment Program will be closed on Friday, July 4<sup>th</sup>.

### Drop-off and Pick-up

When dropping off your scholar please pull follow signs to the drop-off your scholar. You will be able to sign your scholar in right from your car. Once scholars are sign-in with the staff they will enter through the gate go to the cafeteria for breakfast.

- Program hours are 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Current TK scholars have an optional early dismissal at 11:45 am) *\*If you would like to take advantage of these options, please contact the site director to make arrangements.*
- Breakfast is served from 7:30 am – 8:00 am every day.
- Pick-up starts at 3:30 pm (TK-2), 3:45 pm (3rd-5th)
- Late arrival and/or early pick-up are discouraged, but if it is necessary please contact the Educational director so arrangements can be made

Parents/Guardians must sign scholars in and out each day and have proper photo I.D. with them to pick them up and only people on the authorized pick-up list will be permitted to pick-up scholars. This is required for your scholar's safety. Also, no one under 18 is permitted to pick-up.

### LATE PICK-UP

The suggested arrival time for pick-up is between 3:30 pm and 4:15 pm to pick-up your child. If you are more than 5 minutes late picking up your child on a consistent basis (1-2 times per week), your child may be dropped from the program. The electronic signature of an authorized adult is required for dismissal.

The Y realizes that parents/guardians are often at the mercy of Southern California freeway systems and may, on occasion, be late picking up their children. The Y encourages you to make a contingency plan so that a relative, friend or other program parents/guardians on your authorized list can pick-up your child in those situations.

Please call if you are going to be more than 10 minutes late. If the site or directors have not heard from you by 5:00 p.m., the Y will have no legal alternative other than to request the police department maintain custody of your child. Be sure to keep us informed to avoid this situation.

## WHO MAY PICK-UP YOUR CHILD

Persons authorized to pick-up your child must be identified in the online program registration. Initially, anyone picking up your child should be prepared to show picture identification until the staff becomes familiar with him/her. It is the policy of FMG and the YMCA not to release your child to anyone not authorized on record to do so. Please make sure that anyone you send to pick-up your child is on the authorized pick-up form. Additions to your authorized list must be added by you, in writing or email to our program directors. Siblings or any person under the age of 18 may not sign your child out, even with your authorization.

## IMPORTANT PROGRAM INFORMATION

### Daily Camp Schedule, Monday – Thursday:

7:30 am – 8:00 am	Drop-Off and Breakfast
8:00 am – 8:15 am	Community Time
8:15 am – 10:15 am	SEL/English Language Arts
10:15 am – 10:40 am	Recess
10:40 am – 11:40 am	Math
11:45 am – 12:45 pm	Lunch and Play
12:45 pm – 1:45 pm	Enrichment Activity #1
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Enrichment Activity #2
2:45 pm – 3:45 pm	Enrichment Activity #3
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Snack/Dismissal/Pick-up

## FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE (subject to change)

- June 27th –In house field trip
- July 11th – Moxi Museum
- July 18th – Lake Casitas
- July 25th – In house field trip

2 Fridays are Field Trip Days where scholars will be off campus all day.

## GENERAL POLICIES

### PROGRAM RULES

On the first day of the program, teachers, counselors and their groups will spend some time making up their own rules. This gives every scholar a buy-in and it is surprising how thoughtful and appropriate the rules they come up with are. The following rules will be included even if the scholars do not think of them on their own.

- FMG program scholars and staff are to have a fun and safe time; no one has the right to take it away.
- Scholars must keep our hands to ourselves.
- Trees are made for shade and cannot be climbed or separated.
- Rocks and other objects must be left where they are, they cannot be picked up or thrown.

### DISCIPLINE

The Y does not believe that punishment is the best way to help scholars learn good behavior in a group setting. Instead, the following graduated approach is applied when a scholar's behavior goes outside of the group's rules or is otherwise inappropriate. These are the steps that will be followed:

- Reason with the scholar.
- Ask the scholar to sit a small distance away and take some time to calm down. After that, the behavior choices are discussed.
- The director will talk with the scholar to figure out a positive behavior modification plan
- Plan a conference with parents/guardians and scholars to come up with strategies to correct behavior and consequences.
- In extreme or reoccurring cases, the program director will be brought in and review the situations and responses, then the appropriate action will be determined. This will usually include temporary or permanent removal from the program. Scholars who appear to be a threat to themselves or others must be temporarily removed from the program, even if steps 1-4 have not been taken.
- Continued disruptive and poor behavior may result in expulsion. The Y has zero tolerance for bullying.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

The YMCA expects all participating parents/guardians to act as positive role models while at a YMCA site. Participants, parents/guardians and guests are expected to behave in a civilized manner toward one another and toward YMCA employees and volunteer staff at all times.

Parents/Guardians who exhibit inappropriate behavior will be asked to leave the site immediately. While it is rare that extreme incidents occur with adults relating to our FMG Summer Enrichment Program, the YMCA reserves the right to immediately terminate scholar's enrollment due to extreme hostility or misconduct demonstrated by parents/guardians. Parents/guardians may not discipline children who are not their own at the YMCA. Conversely, if you observe a problem with our program or with a staff member, please contact a YMCA Director and/or put your complaint in writing. By doing this, we avoid any unnecessary confrontations that might be uncomfortable for the children, other parents/guardians and the staff.

## WHAT TO BRING TO FMG

### Breakfast, Lunch and Snacks

Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are provided. If your child wants a morning snack, they should bring it from home. The following suggestions should help plan your scholar's day:

- Morning snack, if needed and please be sure to label
- Refillable water bottle
- Sunscreen, to be reapplied throughout the day
- Backpack
- Bathing suit and towel for swim days

## SCHOLAR T-SHIRTS AND CLOTHING

Scholars need to wear their FMG t-shirts every day. Parents/Guardians will receive t-shirts at the Parent/Guardian Meeting.

Students must wear their swimwear on their swim days under their normal clothing.

Every year the lost and found end up with a large amount of clothing left by scholars. The Y will not be responsible for lost items. Dressing scholars appropriately and labeling clothing will save you a considerable expense, so please observe the following:

- Scholars should wear close-toed shoes to camp each day. For safety, open-toed shoes and bare feet are not allowed.
- Please help your scholar dress appropriately for FMG activities. Comfortable play clothes are best. There is a chance that clothes may get dirty. Do not send them in new clothing.
- Label all clothing and belongings with the scholar's name.

## SUNSCREEN

To avoid potential allergic reactions, all scholars should supply their own bottles of sunscreen to be used in the program. This bottle should be clearly labeled with the scholar's name in black permanent marker. Scholars should apply sunscreen before they arrive at the program. Re-application reminders will occur at several points throughout the day to ensure proper protection. Scholars should wear a minimum of SPF 30, but this may be higher if the scholar has characteristics for a greater chance of burning.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Our program is full of fun activities, many involving sunshine and water. Cell phones and all other electronic devices **MUST** be left at home. The YMCA is not responsible for any lost or damaged items. Directors have the right to confiscate all electronics until the end of the program day. Repeated offenses will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

## TOYS, ELECTRONICS AND PHONES FROM HOME

Find My Genius provides games, toys and plans a variety of activities as part of our curriculum. Therefore, with the exception of special events, toys from home, cell phones and electronics are not permitted at FMG as they disrupt our scheduled program. FMG is not responsible for any lost stolen or damaged personal belongings. If your child needs to make an emergency phone call, he/she may request the use of the site phone. Directors have the right to confiscate all electronics until the end of the program day. Repeated offenses will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

## SWIMMING AT THE Y

### Swim Information

Twice a week, from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm, our scholars will participate in the Safety Around Water Program (SAW) at the Simi Valley Family YMCA facility. In order to ensure the safety of all swimmers, the YMCA aquatics team will conduct swim tests. Swim tests allow the aquatic staff to make recommendations regarding personal flotation devices and appropriate swim areas based on the swimmer's skill level.

### Swim Test Evaluation

Lifeguards are the only staff who can perform a swim test. During the test lifeguards are looking for continuous forward movement through the water and the stamina to support it. If a swimmer can swim the length of the pool but looks exhausted or their body position has gone from horizontal to vertical will be required to wear a life jacket or puddle jumper. Even though they may have been able to swim the length, they may not have the stamina to swim without an adult in the water for an extended amount of time, which can easily lead to an aquatic emergency.

## Swim Test Eligibility

Any child that would like to swim without a life jacket or puddle jumper is required to take the swim test. If you would prefer your child to wear a life jacket/puddle jumper and not put them through the swim test please contact the program directors. Please remember that swimming at the Y is different than swimming in a backyard pool. Please review the rules so that you are familiar with them. The pool is for your scholar to enjoy and to have a fun (and safe) experience!

## Swim Test Requirements

Lifeguards are the only staff who can perform a swim test. While performing a swim test, the swimmer may not touch the side of the pool, the bottom of the pool or the lane lines or have any assistance through the duration of the swim test. The swimmer must perform the following to successfully pass a swim test:

- Start in the shallow end, swim to the deep end
- While swimming, the swimmer must demonstrate repetitive breathing while swimming horizontally, not vertically
- Tread water in deep end for 30 seconds
- Climb out of the pool
- Jump back in the pool feet first with head fully submerged
- Swim to the surface and side of the pool to climb out

## Safe Pool Rules

### 1. Swim Safely

- Obey the lifeguards at all times.
- Lifeguards are on duty to enforce rules and respond in case of emergency.
- Breath holding activities are not permitted in Y pools.
- YMCA lifeguards may test the swimming competency of any swimmer.

### 2. Play Safely

- No riding on backs, diving, running or rough play.
- Camp staff are in the water the entire time during swim sessions.
- Non-swimmers may wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device, such as a life jacket or puddle jumper, and must have an adult in the pool with them at all times. Not water wings, floaties or other inflatables.
- No sitting, hanging on or crossing over lane lines.

### 3. Respect Others

- Proper swim attire must be worn at all times. Cut-offs, t-shirts or other cotton clothing are NOT permitted in the pool.
- No food, glass or gum is allowed in the pool area. Plastic water bottles are allowed.
- Please throw all trash in designated trash receptacles.
- Return equipment to the appropriate location after use.

- Please have the utmost respect for the Y's equipment.
- Be safe and have fun!

## SWIM SCHEDULE

- PARK VIEW ELEMENTARY: Monday & Wednesday from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm at the Simi Valley Family YMCA
- WHITE OAK ELEMENTARY: Tuesday & Thursday from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm at the Simi Valley Family YMCA

## DOLPHIN DASH

The Dolphin Dash marks the exciting finale of our swim program! Parents/Guardians are invited to cheer on our scholars as they showcase their progress at the Simi Valley Family YMCA. Join us for this special event:

- **Park View Elementary:** July 23rd, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
- **White Oak Elementary:** July 24th, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Looking forward to celebrating our swimmers' hard work and achievements!

# INJURIES, ILLNESS, EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

## INJURIES

The Y works very hard to anticipate and prevent injuries at FMG. Usually, any injuries are minor or the result of a scholar not following directions from his or her counselor.

- Clean the area and administer Band-Aids for minor cuts, scrapes and bumps.
- Contact you or your emergency contact if an injury may require medical attention including bee stings, moderate cuts, sprains or possible fractures. You may then decide what you want to be done.
- A secure medical treatment immediately in the event you cannot be reached or the nature of the injury warrants fast action.

## ILLNESS

Should your scholar become ill while at FMG, you will be called or your emergency contact person if you cannot be reached. Sick scholars cannot remain at FMG while ill, so please arrange to pick him or her up within an hour of notification.

## MEDICATION

If your scholar needs to take any type of medication while in the program, please completed the required medication authorization form on file, before the start of the program. Please take the following action:

1. Bring any required medication in its original container or prescription bottle to the site and directly hand to the Educational or Logistics Director.
2. Please do not send medication with your child or have your child hand to staff.
3. Provide the directors exact written directions on our Authorization to Administer medication forms. Please indicate the schedule, dosage, permission to administer and the doctor's prescription. YMCA staff are not authorized to give injections of any kind (except epi-pens). Please sign and date the written instructions.
4. Although over-the-counter medications, vitamins and natural remedies are not prescription medications, the Y must still have both a doctor's prescription stating its need and parental/guardianships permission for us to administer them.

## BATHROOM ACCIDENTS

All scholars in our program must be toilet trained. However, occasional accidents happen. If this occurs with your scholar:

- You will be called to bring a change of clothes immediately
- Your scholar may change clothes and return to the site
- If they already have a change of clothes, they may clean themselves and change their clothes (The staff cannot assist in changing clothes).

## LICE

In observance of Health Department safety standards, the Y cannot allow a scholar with lice into the program. Should lice be discovered on your scholar while at the program, you will be asked to pick him/her up within one hour of notification. Scholars will only be readmitted to the program with a clearance from a doctor stating that he/she is lice, egg and nit-free. The YMCA has a NO NIT policy.

## CHILD ABUSE

The YMCA has to be especially careful about who we hire, how we work with children and how our staff conducts themselves with children away from the job.

- The Y requires every volunteer and paid employee to submit fingerprints and we send those fingerprints to the California Department of Justice and FBI for a criminal background check.
- The Y requires every volunteer or paid employee who works with children to complete the YMCA Child Abuse Prevention training.
- Staff members are prohibited from allowing any child to be alone and unsupervised.
- Staff members are prohibited from putting him/herself in a position where he/she is alone with a child and out of sight of other adults.

- Employees and volunteers are prohibited from arranging to have contact away from the YMCA with the children they have met or worked with at the YMCA.
- To protect minors, adult staff are prohibited from dating employees or volunteers under 18

The state legally requires any employee who suspects that a child has been abused to report the suspicion to the proper authorities. If you observe or hear about a YMCA staff member or participant behaving inappropriately towards any child, please report the incident to the YMCA Find My Genius program directors:

- Sonia Garcia (805) 587-5338 ext. 4004
- Nina Ruiz (805) 583-5338 ext. 4007

Your report will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

## DISASTER PLAN

The YMCA participates in the City of Simi Valley Emergency Operations Plan. In the event of a major emergency (such as an earthquake, chemical spill or fire) scholars will remain at the site until directed to move or evacuate. If the program is away on a trip, We will return to the site if possible or a designated emergency shelter if appropriate.

## FIND MY GENIUS STAFF

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## THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS

FMG Summer Enrichment Program challenges children to grow in imagination, creativity, self-directed initiative and leadership. The Y is dedicated to changing the lives of our scholars in the most positive way possible. Thank you for allowing us to do so!