The Difference Between Kinder Connections and YMCA Day Camps

As you transition from YMCA Kinder Connections to YMCA Day Camps, it's important to understand the key differences.

	YMCA Kinder Connections	YMCA Day Camps
Regulated by:	• Ministry of Education under the *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)*	• Accredited camp with OCA (Ontario Camps Association)
Licensed	• Yes	• No
Age Group	• Children ages 4-5 years who are presently in Kindergarten or attending Kindergarten in September ***Note:** if your child turns 6 years of age during enrolment they may finish the current month but must transition the following month.	• Children ages 6–12 years (varies by camp)
Location	• Licensed child care spaces within select schools	• Community centers, schools, and conservation area
Staff Qualifications	• Includes Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) or staff with Director's approval	• Staff must be a minimum of 17 years of age. • Camp staff trained in YMCA Canada Working with Children curriculum, Standard First Aid and CPR, and child supervision
Ratios	• 1 staff to 13 children	• 1 staff to 10 children
Supports for Exceptional Needs	• May be able to provide enhanced staffing to lower ratios (limited availability) • 1:1 support is not available	• Limited spaces in Helping Hands Camp for 1:1 support (max two weeks); no other ratio adjustments

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Programming	• Follows *How Does Learning Happen?* and YMCA A Place to Connect® curriculum, emphasizing play-based learning and social-emotional development • Neighborhood walking excursions • Guest speakers	• Focus on recreation, outdoor activities, sports, arts, and team-building rather than formal curriculum
Hours	• 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	• 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM; *Limited extended care available for purchase (7:00–9:00 AM and 4:00–6:00 PM) at select locations
Safety & Standards	• Must meet all licensing requirements for health, safety, nutrition, and programming	• Follows YMCA safety policies and ratios, and OCA guidelines
Parent Communication	• Weemarkable App • In person communication	• Call Camp Senior Staff to ask questions • Community Camps -speak to Senior Staff at drop off and pick up • Call Day Camp Office
Food	• Bring lunch • Snacks provided	• Bring lunch • Bring snacks
Billing	• CWELCC Funding • Parent/guardian payment • Regional Fee Subsidy eligible	• Parent/guardian payment (regional fee subsidy may apply in some cases)