

# YMCA OFFERS PLAN FOR THREE SUMMER DAY CAMPS

Group wants more recreational choices to fight child obesity

By Amy Jeter  
The Virginian-Pilot

The **YMCA** of South Hampton Roads is working on plans for three summer day camps that would serve a total of 1,200 school-aged children at a time and open as soon as 2010.

The charitable group is proposing to pay a total of \$5.8 million for building or remodeling at three sites, in exchange for use of the facilities during the summer.

The sites are on the Virginia Wesleyan College campus in Norfolk, Northwest River Park in Chesapeake, and Camp E.W. Young, which is located in Chesapeake but owned by the city of Norfolk.

"We really see this as, we're putting up a dollar, and each partner gets a dollar," said Billy George, the **YMCA's** senior vice president of operations.

The **YMCA** serves about 1,900 children in before- and after-school programs during the year. The capacity for summer day programs

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The **YMCA** wants to run a summer camp at Camp E.W. Young in Chesapeake, above.

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Billy George, the **YMCA's** senior vice president of operations

## SUMMER DAY CAMPS

The **YMCA** of South Hampton Roads is proposing to pay \$5.8 million for building or remodeling three summer day camps that would serve 1,200 school-age children at a time and open as soon as 2010.

**Virginia Wesleyan College**  
1584 Wesleyan Dr., Norfolk



**Northwest River Park**  
1733 Indian Creek Rd., Chesapeake



**Camp E.W. Young\***  
145 Deepwater Dr., Chesapeake





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Camp E.W. Young, above, is in Chesapeake but owned by Norfolk. YMCA officials presented their proposal to the Norfolk School Board this week.

## DAY CAMPS | *YMCA serves 1,900 children a year*

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is 1,580, mostly in family centers. Camp Silver Beach, the overnight camp on the Eastern Shore, houses 340 children a week.

The YMCA wanted to increase its summer offerings and enhance its efforts to fight childhood obesity, George said. "We want to get kids active, and to get them back to playing."

The proposed camps would include swimming pools, open-air pavilions, climbing towers and buildings for crafts and environmental education.

This week, the YMCA was in the final stages of an agreement with the city of Chesapeake on the Northwest Riv-

**This week, the YMCA was in the final stages of an agreement with the city of Chesapeake on the Northwest River Park proposal.**

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er Park proposal. The group is still negotiating on the other sites, and officials presented their idea to the Norfolk School Board this week. The school system has operated Camp E.W. Young since the 1960s.

During the school year, it is used mostly for swimming

instruction and a science program for Title I schools - those receiving federal funding because of a high percentage of low-income students. In the summers, nonprofit groups can rent the facility, and a month-long camp for special education students is held.

School leaders said the proposal would allow for site improvements that otherwise would be difficult to pay for in the near future.

"This is exactly what we want to do with our school facilities," Board Chairman Barry Bishop said. "This really could be a great model for us, going down the road."

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