

# PARENT HANDBOOK



**YMCA CAMP OF MAINE**



Dear Families:

Thank you for joining YMCA Camp of Maine (Y Camp)! Steeped in tradition and embracing new trends in camping, we are ready for another exciting year on the shores of Cobbosseecontee.

We hope this resource is a helpful tool as you prepare your camper for Y Camp. Everyone should come to Camp prepared to have a successful experience. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us via email or phone. For a better view of YCamp, attend our Open House, view pictures on the website, and follow us on social media.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Gleason  
CEO/Director  
[jeff@maineycamp.org](mailto:jeff@maineycamp.org)

## **THE YCAMP STATEMENT**

Active and successful participation in the resident camp experience at YCamp entails the ability to independently, safely, and cooperatively:

- Live with (i.e. sleep with and create a summer home with) similarly aged campers in a tent or cabin, and take part in the social and free time of the unit.
- Exhibit suitable behavior without needing more than the usual amount of individual attention.
- Be responsible for personal care, and individual health and safety.
- Follow a varied individual and group activity schedule, and manage free time with minimal supervision.

## **THE Y CAMP EXPERIENCE**

- Maneuver rugged and steep terrain and distances between activities that are part of the natural surroundings.
- Enjoy excursions which may require challenging hikes and offer little or no shelter.
- Understand and respond to group instruction for most of the activities offered at Camp.
- Join in group activities that build community, such as singing, campfires, and family-style meals in the dining room.
- Act appropriately in case of an emergency.
- Contribute positively to the overall spirit of the Camp community.

YCamp endeavors to arrange reasonable accommodations to make Camp accessible while preserving the rustic facilities, natural surroundings and a quality camping experience for all.

The development of every camper and counselor in Spirit, Mind, & Body is important to the programming at Y Camp. The YMCA Core Values (Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility) are woven through all programming. Every child is unique, yet every child has the same critical need to discover who they are, stretch their wings, and prepare for life ahead. The outdoor, overnight camp program has proven to be a great way for a child to gain many of these assets and the YCamp is uniquely suited to deliver a camp experience that will last a lifetime.

### **We value community.**

Individual attention is given to campers by intentionally hired staff members who are positive role models and to serve as counselors, cabin leaders, and program teachers.

### **We build relationships.**

YCamp provides opportunities for campers to branch out and make new friends by offering traditional and unique activity choices.

There are daily opportunities to learn what it means to have positive friendships, deal with life's struggles, and grow in character. Counselors work with campers to get through these difficult times and guide them to emerge as stronger leaders.

## **CAMPER AGES & DIVISIONS**

While we firmly believe in younger and older campers learning together, cabins are divided into three divisions that help ensure your child's experience is age appropriate. Our campers range from age 8 (must be 8 by June 24th) to 15.

- North Village
  - Kennebec - Junior Girls Porch ..... Ages 8 - 10
  - Somerset - Middle Girls Porch ..... Ages 11 - 12
  - Maine - Senior Girls Porch .... Ages 13 - 15
- South Village
  - Cobbossee - Junior Boys .... Ages 8 - 12
  - Rotary - Senior Boys .... Ages 13 - 15

## **ABOUT OUR STAFF**

Counselors and staff members undergo a background check which includes professional and personal reference checks, and criminal background checks. Staff come from Maine, New England, across the US, and internationally. All staff members participate in a week of training that includes: Policies & Procedures; Child Abuse Prevention; Songs, Skits, and Traditions; Cabin and Behavior Management; Leading with the Core Values; and Program Planning. All staff members are trained in CPR and First Aid. The Lifeguards are trained in an internationally recognized lifesaving program.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

7:15 AM Wake Up	2:15 PM Activity Period 3
7:45 AM Morning Meeting	3:15 PM Activity Period 4
8:00 AM Flag	4:15 PM Rec Time
8:15 AM Breakfast	5:30 PM Flag
9:00 AM Cabin Clean-up	5:45 PM Dinner
10:00 AM Activity Period 1	7:00 PM Evening Program
11:00 AM Activity Period 2	8:30 PM Cabin Time
12:30 PM Lunch	9:00 PM Lights Out
1:15 PM Rest Period	

## **MEALS**

Three well-balanced meals are served each day. Food is prepared by our Chef who plans kid-friendly meals that are healthy. Campers eat family-style with their cabin mates, while counselors emphasize the importance of healthy eating and manners. Announcements and singing provide spirit and energy at mealtimes. Food options to reasonably accommodate dietary restrictions are available. The Chef and Nurse work with parents to make sure the dietary restrictions of their child are reasonably met.

## **ARRIVAL AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SESSION**

Check-in on Sundays is between 1 – 3 pm. Prior to check-in, staff are busy preparing camp and making sure everything is ready for the start of the session. At 1 pm, check-in will begin.

Staff members will be assisting with parking and helping with directions.

After campers mark their luggage and drop it off at the tent by Jeff Smit Union, they need to see the medical staff at the Infirmary to hand in any medications and report changes in health and medication. Then North Village campers go to the Auditorium and South Village Campers go to the Dining Hall for a lice check and general health questionnaire. Everyone's health and well-being are our first priority. (If a camper does have lice or has other medical issues, the medical staff may require the camper to go home until the noted issues have been resolved.)

Once the check-in process has been completed, campers will be given their cabin assignment. Families can go with the camper to their cabin to meet the Cabin Counselor, fellow Cabin Mates, and set-up their bunk. Luggage will be around shortly.

If a camper will be late arriving to camp, the office should be notified as soon as possible. Families who have not checked-in their camper by 3 pm will receive a phone call from YCamp Leadership for a status update.

## **PICK-UP AT THE END OF THE SESSION**

Families should come pick-up their campers at the end of the session between 9:30 am – 11:00 am on Saturday. Come prepared with your camera to capture the last memories of the session.

Unclaimed Lost & Found will be located outside of the Dining Hall. Make sure to check the area for towels, sweatshirts, and other clothing. Please label belongings with the camper's last name so they can be returned during the session. Lost & Found will be donated to local charities one month after each session. If families get home and realize specific things are missing, a note should be sent to the Office Manager. We make no guarantees on locating lost items. If we are able to locate items, you will be charged the fees required to return them to you.

## **INFIRMARY**

The on-site Infirmary (Health Center) is the home of Camp's Medical Staff consisting of RN's and EMT's. Campers who are sick will be under the care of the Medical Staff who will contact families to coordinate care.

Health forms are required for all campers. Doctor's signatures must be within the last two years spanning the entire time a camper is at camp. Previous year's forms at camp may be carried over as long as the Doctor's signature remains valid. Valid health forms must be received by the Medical Staff before a camper will be permitted to remain at camp.

All medication must be given to the Medical Staff during check-in and must be in their original bottles. Medications include: prescriptions pills, inhalers, epi-pens, over the counter (PRN's: Tylenol (generics), Ibuprofen (generics), anti-histamines, eye drops, vitamins, etc.), prescription eye drops, birth control, etc. Medical Staff will keep record of dispensing directions and ensure campers are receiving their medications at appropriate times.

The Infirmary operates under Standing Orders in partnership with a local physician. If a medical condition is presented and requires additional consultation, the issuing physician will be consulted. The Standing Orders permits dispensing of PRN's that are stocked in the Infirmary. Parents will be notified if there are persistent issues with their camper.

YCamp wants to work with families to keep campers in good health. Toward this effort, Medical Staff will communicate issues with parents to partner in nursing campers to good health and getting them back engaged with camp. Beds are available for campers in the Infirmary when rest is necessary.

Camper will be transported to the Hospital or Doctor's Office when deemed appropriate by the Medical Staff &/or Camp Administration in coordination with the camper's family. The families Health Insurance is the primary coverage for any medical care provided outside of YCamp's prevue.

Off-site program health needs are covered by the trained staff members accompanying the trip. Health needs and concerns will be communicated by the off-site staff members back to the Medical Staff &/or Camp Administration on a regular basis. Additional resources will be coordinated with all involved parties. Communications with families in the event of off-site medical needs will come from the Medical Staff &/or Camp Administration.

## **EMERGENCIES AT CAMP**

YCamp is located on 250 acres of woodlands and fields, and is on the shores of a large lake. With guidance from the Board of Directors and local Fire and Police, a comprehensive plan is in place to keep everyone safe in the event of an emergency. During Staff Training, all counselors and staff members rehearse the safety plans and during sessions with campers, drills are conducted like they are in schools.

If there is an emergency at camp, families will be contacted via phone &/or email with more details. Please do not contact camp unless directed to do so. There are limited phone lines and we will need to have outside access in the event of an emergency.

## **BEHAVIOR POLICY**

YCamp's four core values (Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, and Caring) are the hallmarks of behavioral expectations. Every camper, staff member, and volunteer are expected to lead by example and exemplify the four core values in everything that is done. Using positive reinforcement to encourage compassion for each other and the environment is how YCamp approached Behavior Management. When campers are unclear with expectations and are not following the safety rules of camp, staff members first work to help the camper understand what the expected behavior is.

Three strikes are given to campers if their behavior does not improve. Upon receiving a third strike, families are notified and expected to immediately come pick-up their camper and not return to camp for the remainder of the summer. Before a third strike is issued, parents/guardians will be notified by Camp Administration to discuss the issues and exhibited behaviors. Families can help shed light on existing behavioral issues, coping techniques, and guidance. Keeping the safety and well-being of everyone at camp in mind, campers who are detracting from the experience of others at camp will be removed for the betterment of the community. No refund or pro-rating of fees will be issued when a camper is removed from camp for behavioral issues.

Bullying – as defined by repetitive, malicious, and targeted behavior – is not tolerated at YCamp. Counselors will work with campers who are acting with hurtful intent and families will be contact as deemed appropriate.

Physical and verbal aggression are not tolerated at camp. Campers who exhibit aggressive behaviors may be asked to leave camp immediately to protect the safety and well-being of the camp community.

Families should discuss their camper's existing behavioral issues with the Camp Director prior to the beginning of summer. It is the goal of YCamp to help every camper grow and develop. With proper planning and foresight, staff members can be better prepared to manage existing issues. If the Camp Director feels that a camper's needs require attention above and beyond what can be reasonably accommodated for, registration may be canceled with a full refund. If an existing behavioral issues comes to light during camp and a camper needs to be removed from Camp, no refund will be issued.

The camp environment should be free of distractions. Staff and campers are not permitted to use, or be in the possession of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol while at camp. Individuals found with these items at camp will be sent home immediately.

If a camper is sent home for any disciplinary issues, a refund of total or partial fees will not be issued.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS AND ACCOMMODATION POLICY**

YCamp will provide services to children with disabilities or any special needs in the same manner as services are provided for other children of comparable age. YCamp will make reasonable accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the overnight camp experience as described in the "Y Camp Experience Statement." Requested accommodations shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis as outlined.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF PRIVACY**

While your child is at YCamp, Camp Management acts in loco parentis — this means that they are legally acting as the underage child's parent while at Camp. Because of the close shared living quarters and bath houses, campers and staff should have limited expectations of privacy. But as always, the camp community expects considerate, respectful, and safe behavior by all times.

## **PAYMENT POLICY**

When registering for camp, a deposit of \$100 per week per camper is due. Payment plans can be established starting at the time of registration and ending when all remaining balances are due June 1. Registrations completed after May 31 require payments in full at the time of submission.

Families requesting a cancellation prior to 30 days before the start of their camper's session will have 50% of tuition paid returned. Cancellations requested within the 30 days prior to the start of their camper's session will not receive any refund.

Campers who are dismissed from camp for behavioral issues will not receive any refund.

Families can coordinate payment plans with the Office Manager to spread out automatic or manual payments over the months leading up to camp. All balances need to be paid in full prior to attendance.

Scholarships are made available through the generosity of Alumni, community groups, and camp families. Once the Scholarship Form has been completed and returned to Y Camp along with the appropriate supporting documents, the Scholarship Committee will confidentially review each application and determine the scholarship amount based on need.

Scholarships for families with an actively serving and Reserve military family member are available. This scholarship is supported through special gifts and covers a one-week tuition at Y Camp. If campers attend a two-week session, the family is responsible for covering the balance.

## **CAMP STORE**

The Camp Store is open on opening and closing days. Store items include sweatshirts, sweatpants, hats, water bottles and other items to show your YCamp pride all year long.

## **ELECTRONICS POLICY**

Being outdoors and at camp is a good excuse to unplug. Cell phones, tablets, handheld video games, and other electronic devices are not permitted at Camp. When devices are found at Camp, they will be sealed in an envelope with the campers name on it and locked in the camp safe. Items need to be retrieved by families at check-out.

International campers who are traveling long distances to come to YCamp will have their electronic devices placed in the safe when they come to Camp. Items will be sealed in an envelope with the campers name on it and kept in the camp safe.

Pictures should be taken to capture the special memories that are created at Camp. Reminiscing of warm, summer days help the cold of winter melt away. Cameras (not attached to phones, iPods, or other electronic devices) are permitted and encouraged at Camp. Because not all campers have given photograph permission to camp, campers may be asked to limit the pictures they take in their cabin. Counselors will work with campers to take advantage of perfect photo ops. Misuse of a camera will result in the camera being stored in the camp safe until pick-up day and any inappropriate pictures will be deleted at the discretion of the Administration.

## TWO WEEK CAMP PACKING LIST

This list is a guide to help make sure campers have everything they need while at Camp. Enough supplies should be packed for the entire session because laundry service is offered for an additional cost. Luggage is stored underneath beds in cabins. Keep that in mind when packing.

### CLOTHING:

- Shorts
- T-Shirts
- Jeans/long pants
- Sweatshirts/fleece
- Socks
- Underwear
- Pajamas
- Bathrobe
- Rain coat
- Swim suits

### FOOTWEAR:

- Sneakers
- Sandals/flip flops
- Rain boots

### BEDDING:

- Sleeping Bag
- Single Sheets
- Blankets
- Pillow with cases

### TOILETRIES:

- Soap
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Razors/Shaving Cream
- Hair Brush/Comb
- Bath Towels
- Beach Towels
- Face Cloths
- Shower Bucket
- Cloth/Mesh Laundry Bag

- Feminine Hygiene Products

### OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS:

- Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Insect Repellent
- Sunscreen
- Water Bottle
- Stationery, Pens & Stamps
- Ball Cap / Sunglasses

### OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- Tennis racquet
- Musical instruments
- Camera
- Notebook for journaling
- Books
- Playing Cards
- White T-shirt(s) to tie-dye
- Baseball / Softball Glove

### Please Do Not Bring:

- Personal Electronics (TVs, radios, cell phones, iPods & music players, iPhones, digital book readers, computers, tablets, game players, etc.)
- Valuables
- Expensive cameras
- Jewelry
- Pocket knives
- Guns
- Duct tape
- Hatchets
- Fireworks
- Hair dryer, curling iron, straightening iron
- Skateboards & Roller Blades

- Please note that Camp is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- The Camp Disco and Social Event is an evening program that does not have a specific, formal dress code. Some campers do enjoy dressing up with nice, casual clothes for the evening (a sundress for girls and khaki shorts with polo for boys).

## LETTERS, PACKAGES, BAGGAGE ... HOW TO GET THEM TO CAMP!

Letters and packages to your camper should be sent to this address:  
(Camper's Name and Cabin Number)

YMCA Camp of Maine  
PO Box 446  
Winthrop, ME 04364

If you would like to encourage your camper to write home, include self-addressed and stamped envelopes in their luggage along with some stationary and a pen or pencil. Counselors will remind campers to write home – we cannot guarantee results.

Email is available for campers through Camp Stamps in the CampInTouch app.

All campers love packages! However, please do not send food, powdered drinks, candy, or gum. Food attracts mice, raccoons, skunks and more. All food sent to Camp will be discarded. Camp provides enough food and snacks each day for your camper. Please mail packages via the US Mail.

Baggage & trunks can be sent UPS or FedEx, addressed to the camper. Please notify Camp if you plan to ship baggage. Shipped items should be sent to this address:

(Camper's Name & Cabin Number)  
YMCA Camp of Maine  
305 Winthrop Center Road  
Winthrop, ME 04364

## **ON HOMESICKNESS**

Initial letters home might involve strong homesick feelings, especially from first-time campers. If a second unhappy letter is received at home, parents can call Camp to discuss their concerns. Families with a unconsolable homesick camper will receive a phone call from Camp Leadership before (we hope) the second letter is mailed home.

Homesickness can be a natural part of the Camp experience. Counselors create an atmosphere of belonging and friendship within their cabin. Campers who are not fitting in, having a difficult time adjusting, or otherwise not having fun at camp will receive extra attention from staff members while we work out the issue.

Camp should be a rewarding, fun, growth experience for everyone who attends. If a camper is not able to overcome their homesickness after working with counselors, directors, staff, and support from home, further arrangements will be made. Camp should not end up being a tortuous experience.

Parents of first year campers will receive a phone call from their camper's Unit Leader within 48 hours of the session's start. This is often a check in and assurance that everything is going well. Occasionally, the Unit Leader will ask for guidance on their camper's behavior. Additional follow-up will occur as necessary.

In general, no news is good news.

## **FREQUENTLY GIVEN ANSWERS**

- Telephones are not allowed for camper use. Any cell phone found will be brought to the office for safekeeping until parents pick up at check-out.
- Snacks are provided daily by Camp; we do not allow food in cabins as it attracts animals. Any food sent to Camp will not be given to your child, to control squirrels etc. in cabins.
- Tipping the staff individually is discouraged, but we do have a "staff appreciation fund" for special pizza parties, etc. If you wish to show your appreciation, stop by the Camp office.

## **SURVEYS**

While you are on your way home, a survey will be emailed to you. Please take the time during your ride home to talk with your camper about their experience and let us know what you think — both good and bad! By completing the survey, we can continue to improve.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AND CAMP**

YCamp's position is to discourage camper-staff interactions on social media sites and outside of Camp. This is for everyone's safety. However, YCamp does maintain its own monitored social media accounts where campers and staff may keep in contact with each other.

We hope parents can help their campers understand that this allows staff to have "their own space" where they can participate in their private lives, while still giving a public location for campers and staff to communicate.

As a close-knit community, social networks present a special challenge for YCamp during the year. We encourage parents to talk to their children about this issue, and research their own children's internet activities so they can stay informed.

## **LIT & CIT'S**

Leaders In Training (LIT's) are 15 year old campers (16 years old if international campers) who have the ambitions and interest to be a counselor. Registration for this program is done through the Camper Registration process. During the two-week session, campers learn about their leadership styles and different leadership skills (leading with character, group management, and organization) as it pertains to Camp and "real life." LIT's are evaluated at the end of the session and recommendations are made for participation as Counselor In Training (CIT) the following summer.

CIT's are typically 16 years old (17 years old if international) and an application process is required. CIT's are invited to participate in either Group 1 (Sess 1 & 2) or Group 2 (Sess 3 & 4) to continue developing their Leadership Skills. CIT's are living in cabins and helping counselors manage group dynamics and assisting in Program Area. Final schedules are released once all applications have been received. There is no charge to participate in this program.

CIT's spend time in cabins and program areas honing their counselor and leadership skills. Informal evaluations are conducted on CIT's throughout their experience and a formal evaluation is completed at the end. Recommendations for hiring will be made to the Director at the end of the summer.

## **SUMMER TIME**

We are excited for your camper to be joining us this summer. We care about sharing the YCamp Experience with everyone and hope your camper finds a place to belong with new friends, healthy challenges, and experiences that strengthen their mind, body, and spirit.

Please let us know what questions you have along the way.

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