



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

2026 FAMILY HANDBOOK

**SUMMER OVERNIGHT CAMP
YMCA CAMP MANITOU-LIN**

WELCOME!

At YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin, we truly believe there is no substitute for the camping experience and the meaningful friendships that are made at camp. We recognize the importance of providing safe, fun, and educational summer opportunities for your child. For 113 years, we have had the pleasure and privilege of shaping young minds on the shores of Old Lake Barlow, and we thank you for helping us make another summer possible.

From the Directors:

Thank you for enrolling your child in the Overnight and Horse Camp programs at YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin. Our core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and inclusion guide everything we do. Our summer camp program is designed to help develop important 21st century skills like communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and cooperation. We know there are many opportunities for your camper during the warm summer months and we are so glad they will be here at Camp Manitou-Lin for our 113th summer of camping here on the shores of Old Lake Barlow. Thank you once again for choosing Camp Manitou-Lin and we look forward to another incredible summer.

This packet is intended to guide you through the camping experience from a first-timer's point of view. In order for us to successfully meet our program goals, and to ensure that all campers have the best experience possible, we ask for your help and cooperation in following the guidelines contained in this handbook. This handbook contains important information for you and your camper to prepare for camp this summer. Please feel free to contact us at any time if you have a question that cannot be found in the Family Handbook. Thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin this summer!

In the Spirit of Camping,

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Important Notes:

1. Balance due date: All balances must be paid by June 1. After June 1, balance is due in full upon registration.
2. Medical forms: All medical forms are due no later than two weeks before your camper's session begins.
3. Medication instructions: Medication must be in original bottle or container and clearly labeled with your camper's name and dosage instructions. Please see page 9 for more detailed instructions.

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LAND OF THE GREAT SPIRIT

On the shores of Old Lake Barlow lies Camp Manitou-Lin, where we have spent the last 113 years shaping campers into Caring, Honest, Respectful, Responsible, and Inclusive people. We are committed to providing a camp experience rich in tradition centered on our core values. All who participate in our programs will gain 21st century skills, independence, friendships, and lifelong memories.

ABOUT US

PROGRAM GOALS AND MEASUREMENT

Our core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and inclusion guide everything we do. Our summer camp program is designed to help important 21st century skills like communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and cooperation.

Goals for campers include:

- Building meaningful friendships
- Participating in new activities
- Gaining a sense of belonging
- Practicing their independence
- Working on character development skills

These goals and their impacts will be measured through post-session family surveys, camper surveys, and staff member surveys. We always strive to improve the programs we offer our campers and their families. Please contact us to speak with a camp director and provide feedback on your individual camp experiences.

OUR MISSION

The YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids ensures a stronger, healthier community for all with a commitment to nurturing and strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. At the Y, strengthening community is our cause. We believe that positive, lasting, personal, and social change can only come about when we all work together to invest in our kids, our health and our neighbors. We are a unique environment where kids are able to learn and grow. We are a neighborhood resource allowing those that need us most access to a healthy and rewarding life. We have a long history of changing lives.

YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin is made up of people from every walk of life, working side by side to strengthen our community. Together we welcome all people regardless of ability, age, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender expression, gender identity, income, race, and sexual orientation. The Y believes that, in a diverse world, we are stronger when we are inclusive, when our doors are open to all, and when everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.



GETTING READY FOR CAMP

PRE CAMP HEALTH SCREENING

Families are asked to self-monitor and conduct the following pre-screening procedures for 10 days before the start of their camper's session:

Nobody likes to feel sick at camp, to assist us with this please self-screen for presence of illness in those days leading up to camp.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Camp Manitou-Lin has a NO CELL PHONE policy at camp. Not only are cell phones expensive to replace when they are lost or damaged at camp, but cell phones also interfere with your camper becoming more independent. We understand that parents take a leap of faith by sending their campers to spend time away from home. Unfortunately, when well-intentioned parents send a cell phone to camp 'just in case' the camper needs to call home, the message is, "We love you but don't trust that you are ready to solve challenges on your own." Having a cell phone prevents our counselors and staff from addressing problems that might arise and using that experience to help your child grow.

We will reach out to you if your camper is experiencing a challenge in their adjustment to camp. You can help by talking to your child before they leave for camp and telling them that there is always someone they can reach out to, whether it be their counselor, a camp specialist, the camp nurse or the camp administration. Cell phones brought to camp will be kept in a locked place and returned to the parent at checkout. Please express your trust in our staff and in your child by insisting cell phones stay at home.

REQUIRED FORMS

Please complete your forms online in your Camp Brain account. These forms are due at least two (2) weeks before your child's session begins. Please take the time to fill these forms out carefully — these are required before a camper can be admitted. If your child is attending more than one week of camp, you only need to fill out one set of forms.

1. **Medical Form:** Campers cannot be admitted to camp without a fully completed and signed medical form. This important medical information will help our staff provide better programs and supervision for your child. Please be as specific as possible—all information is completely confidential, and your answers will help guide our staff to provide the best possible experience for your camper. The more information you can provide, the better!
2. **Activity Form:** This form allows you to select your camper's afternoon activity that they will attend Monday through Thursday.
3. **Camper Information Form: MANDATORY** – This form provides us with critical information about your child's development and readiness for camp. **OPTIONAL** – You may request ONE trail group mate/ bunk mate request of the same or similar age (within 1-2 years). We do our best to accommodate these requests but do not guarantee a match.
4. **Camper Photo: OPTIONAL** – Please consider uploading a current photo of your camper under the "documents" section to help us identify them on the first day!

GETTING READY FOR CAMP

There is no formula for when a child is ready for the overnight camp experience, but the number one characteristic of a happy camper is that the camper **WANTS** to be at camp. The following information can act as a guide to preparing your child for their first time at camp.

VISIT CAMP

Many campers fare better if they are able to see where they'll be spending a week during the summer. Consider visiting us during one of our summer camp open house dates (April 12 and May 17, 2026 from 2 to 5pm) to take a guided tour and experience some activities. If you are unable to attend an open house, please call us at 269.795.9163 to arrange a tour with a director.

CAMPER EXPECTATIONS

Developing realistic expectations about camp is important. Spending a week at camp can be a wonderful experience, and it is important to make sure your camper understands it may not be fun every minute – there may be problems to solve, cabins to keep tidy, tables to set and new skills to develop. Learning and challenging yourself is all part of the camp experience.

Making friends and building confidence are also integral parts of the camp experience. Campers should be open to sharing about themselves, trying new things, and helping others. Camp is physically active, with long days spent outside. Participating fully allows for campers to get the most out of their experience.

CORE VALUES

At Camp Manitou-Lin, we emphasize the YMCA core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and inclusion. Although we are guided by Christian principles, we welcome and celebrate campers of all faiths and backgrounds. Daily chapel, thoughts for the day, graces, and evening embers emphasize our YMCA core values. These core values are a part of all we do at Camp Manitou-Lin. Our entire camp family is expected to promote themselves in such a way as to model the core values.

BEHAVIORAL POLICY

Campers are expected to behave in the safe, Caring, Honest, Respectful, Responsible and Inclusive manner modeled by our staff. Parents will be contacted if camper behavior is not acceptable and parents will be informed about the steps that are being taken to improve the behavior. Failure to abide by YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin's rules and guidelines can result in dismissal from camp. No refunds are given if a child leaves early because of disruptive behavior as determined by the camp administration.

Missing Home

Occasionally a camper becomes homesick. Our staff are prepared and trained to respond to homesickness. This can be overcome and will help the camper in developing independence and increased self-respect. Should it be in the best interest of the camper, the camp administration will contact the parent/guardian. Please find additional resources for homesickness at the end of this Parent Guide.

GETTING READY FOR CAMP

ALLERGIES AND DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

Be sure to carefully communicate any allergies and dietary restrictions on your camper's Medical Form, including food allergies. This will ensure our kitchen can prepare appropriate meals and snacks for your child.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We love to celebrate summer camp birthdays! Let us know if your camper has a birthday while at camp so we can snap a photo of them in the Birthday Chair. We will email a copy to you, so you can share in their special day.

CAMP STORE AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Parents are encouraged to deposit money into their campers' camp store account prior to check in day. This can be done by logging into your Camp Brain account. Funds may be added and balance viewed at anytime by navigating to the Camp Store page within your session details. Campers should not come to camp with any cash in their possession. Most parents/guardians deposit between \$25 and \$40, which can be used for Camp Manitou-Lin T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, drinks, snacks, and other items. All campers will receive a cabin photo, included in camp costs. At any point during the session, you can check your Camp Brain account page to see any remaining balance. You may request a refund by emailing camp@grymca.org. Any unclaimed money will be donated to our Annual Campaign on August 18th, which aids in sending children to camp at a reduced cost.

We aim to take roughly 200 photos every day to capture life around camp. Photos can be viewed at: <https://campmanitoulin.smugmug.com/> with the password ILOVECAMP (case sensitive).

MEDICATIONS

At camp, our Camp Nurse manages all medications. All medications, prescription and over the counter, must be turned in to the Camp Nurse at check in and kept in the original container. At check out, our Camp Nurse will return medications and empty pill bottles. While camp is in session, the Camp Nurse will administer all prescribed medications. Prescription medications can only be administered according to the directions on the label. We are not authorized to dispense medication out of 7-day pill containers. Please send only medications that your child takes on a regular basis. We have basic non-prescription medication (Pepto-Bismol, Tylenol, etc.) available at the Infirmary. If your camper takes multiple medications, please bring all medications in a zip-lock bag. On the front of the bag, write your child's name and session number in permanent marker. Prescribed medication must be clearly marked with the child's name, directions for administration, name of medication, name and phone number of physician.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents/Guardians are expected to provide transportation to and from YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin. Driving directions are available on our website and are included in this packet. If your camper's travel plan needs to change, please call or email our camp office with that information as soon as possible. This includes late arrival to camp on Sunday, changes to Authorized Grown-Ups list, etc. If CML must change or modify pick-up or drop-off procedures, parents/guardians will be contacted by phone and/or email to communicate those changes.

WHAT TO EXPECT

FIRST DAY OF CAMP

1. Overnight camp check-in takes place on Sunday from 2:00pm to 3:00pm. Please do not arrive early, as our staff will not be prepared to welcome campers until 2:00pm.

2. Please use the entrance marked Cheff Lodge YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin and park in our main parking lot. Camp staff will greet you, give your camper's cabin assignment, and show you where to leave your camper's luggage. **PLEASE BRING ALL MEDICATION SEPARATE FROM YOUR LUGGAGE.**

3. If you will be arriving late due to unforeseen circumstances, please call us as soon as possible to communicate those changes by calling us at 269-795-9163. You will check-in at the Welcome Center (by main parking lot) if you are a late arrival.

4. You will be directed to enter Cheff Lodge, where the rest of the check-in process will take place. Our staff will confirm our child's name, cabin placement, and your contact information. Your child will be screened for head lice. Our Camp Nurse will be present to accept all medications and answer any questions you may have. You will also have the opportunity to speak with our Food Service Director if you have questions or concerns about food allergies or dietary restrictions. Our Camp Store will be open if you would like to purchase any CML gear for your camper before your departure.

5. Campers will be directed towards their cabins by camp staff located around the property. You can walk your child to their cabin, meet their counselors, and help them get settled into their bunk. We aim to have all luggage delivered to cabins before your departure, but we appreciate your patience in the event of a delay.

Cabin groups are assigned by age, grade, and gender. We make every effort to place campers with mutually requested cabin-mates submitted via Camper Information form within your Camp Brain account. We will not be able to accommodate requests made at the time of check-in. After you have helped your child get unpacked and make their bed, give them a kiss and say goodbye with a big smile! We have found that positive parents help make for positive campers.



WHAT TO EXPECT

LAST DAY OF CAMP

Camp sessions end on Friday afternoon and pickup runs from 4:00 pm to 5:15pm. We will also have a Family Farewell Celebration at 4:15pm.

1. Please use the entrance marked Cheff Lodge YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin and park in our main parking lot. Exit your car and meet a member of our camp staff by our Welcome Center.
2. Camp staff will ask for either a valid photo ID or an overnight camp check-out card (provided during check-in). Please make sure that the adult picking up your camper has been listed as an authorized pickup in your CampBrain account.
3. If you dropped off medication during check-in, the empty container or remaining medication will be returned to you.
4. Camp staff will give you an end-of-session folder. There will be a photo of your camper with their cabin, a note from the camp counselor, information about upcoming events, and an option to make a donation to camp in honor of your child's favorite camp counselor.
5. Once you have been given your child folder we will help gather your camper's luggage and load in your vehicle.
6. Once luggage is loaded, you will head into our lodge for the Family Farewell Ceremony at 4:15 pm
7. The Family Farewell Ceremony will conclude around 4:35 pm. At that time you will check your camp out with thier cabin counselor.
8. On your way out please make sure to check our lost and found table outside of the welcome center for any items that may have been misplace.
8. We'll see you in 2027!

MINI CAMP SCHEDULE

The following sessions are Mini Camps:

- 1A - June 7-9
- 1B - June 10-12
- 2A - June 14-16
- 2B - June 17-19
- 3A - June 21-23
- 3B - June 24-26

The same locations and timeframes for check-in and check-out apply to Mini Camp. A Sessions will check in on Sunday afternoon and check out on Tuesday afternoon. B Sessions will check in on Wednesday afternoon and check out on Friday afternoon.

These sessions are intended to serve as an introduction to the Overnight Camp program. Some schedule adaptations will be made to accommodate the shorter camp sessions. Mini Camp participants may not experience all traditional overnight camp activities due to their shortened stay.

EARLY CHECK OUT

If you need to pick up your camper before 4:00 pm on Friday, arrangements must be made with camp administration before the last day of camp. Please call or email us to discuss early pick-up needs.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

ILLNESS POLICY

Please keep your child home if they are ill and/or running a fever. Children must be symptom-free for at least 72 hours prior to returning to camp. If a child becomes ill during camp, a parent or emergency contact will be notified to pick up the child.

LOST AND FOUND/PERSONAL PROPERTY

Please leave anything of value at home as we cannot ensure its safety. Labeling all of your camper's belongings helps return misplaced items back to the camper. In an effort to reduce lost and found, camp staff will label frequently lost items at camp including waterbottles that are not labeled with the camper's first and last name.

YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin will not be responsible for lost clothing and personal property brought from home. Unclaimed lost and found property will be kept for one week following the last day of camp (August 15, 2026) and then donated to local charities. If your camper has lost an item at camp, please email a description (color, size, etc.) of the lost item to camp@grymca.org and we will do our best to locate the item or items.

VALUES EMPHASIS AND EXPECTATIONS

YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin's core values are Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Inclusion. Our entire camp family is expected to conduct themselves in such a way to model these values at all times. Our daily chapel services, "thought of the day," and pre-meal graces emphasize these core values and how they can be applied to different parts of the camp experience.

The expectation that all campers follow our core values is implemented with great care and respect by our camp staff. We expect campers to follow camp rules, have a positive attitude, try new things, be respectful of others' space and belongings, be cooperative and helpful, maintain open communication, and have fun!

RAINY DAYS AND EMERGENCIES

Camp remains in regular operation, rain or shine. Regular camp activities will continue during light rain conditions. During more severe weather, including lightning and thunder or extreme heat, the day's schedule may be altered and indoor/alternate activities will be provided. In the event of an emergency, we will make every effort to notify parents by phone and email. If necessary, emergency transportation will be handled by 911 and local emergency services.

PAYMENTS, REFUNDS, AND CANCELLATIONS

We are unable to prorate camp fees due to scheduling needs or conflicts. All camp fees must be paid by June 1, 2026. If you register for camp after this date, the entire balance is due upon registration. A \$75 deposit holds your child's spot for camp. This deposit includes a \$25 administrative fee. The registration deposit and administrative fee covers all basic administrative costs for each registration. Please give us a minimum of two weeks notice to cancel or change your registrations for camp. No shows for a registered session will result in the forfeiture of the full registration fee.

The camp director reserves the right to decline the application of any child, or send home any child who, according to the Director's discretion, negatively affects other campers' experience, or puts themselves or others at risk. If a child is dismissed from camp, there will be no refund issued.

TELEPHONE CONTACT

Parents/guardians may contact the camp administrators at any time to discuss their camper's experience by calling 269-795-9163. Our experience has been that camper telephone conversations with friends or family from home tend to exacerbate homesickness. Therefore, campers do not have unrestricted access to telephones.

In the event that a camper requests to call home, permission to do so will be granted by a camp director after staff makes advance contact with the parent/guardian to discuss the situation. We strongly encourage families to utilize our website that allows for one-way email (from family to camper) as well as photo updates from the week!

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

SENDING SOMETHING TO YOUR CAMPER

There are multiple ways you can contact your camper while they are at Manitou-Lin. You can send mail by USPS Mail or drop off a bundle of mail for the whole week on check in day. You can also send a fax to the camp office or submit a message on our website at <https://www.grymca.org/camp/message-your-camper/> Care packages are welcome, but please refrain from sending food as it invites wildlife into your camper's cabin. While we make no guarantee of being nut-free, we ask families to assist with not bringing products with nuts in it to camp. Care packages to share with the whole cabin, including theme-related decorations, glow sticks, books or games are a great way to create a memory for your camper.

Please include camper's name, session and cabin name on all items sent to camp. All e-mail, faxes, and USPS mail must arrive at camp by 10:45AM for delivery on that day. We encourage campers to write at least one letter home each week. Do not be alarmed if these letters are brief and irregular as the campers are busy at camp. "No news is good news" as far as campers are concerned.

Address mail to your camper as follows:

Camper Name, Week #, Cabin Name
YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin
1095 N. Briggs Rd.
Middleville MI 49333

Fax: 269-795-1629

Email: Submit your message by visiting
<https://www.grymca.org/camp/message-your-camper/>

Photos: View photos of camp activities on SmugMug (<https://campmanitoulin.smugmug.com/> Password: ILOVECAMP).

Photos will be uploaded several times throughout the session. Not every photo we take will be posted online; however, we try to post 200 photos each day. We serve hundreds of campers each session and cannot guarantee that your camper's photo will be posted online.

HEALTH CARE

Safety is our top priority at Camp Manitou-Lin. A Camp Nurse is in residence at our Infirmary and on call 24 hours a day. Our nurse will contact parents via telephone in the following circumstances:

1. The camper has been in the infirmary for 24 hours
2. The camper has a temperature over 100 degrees
3. The camper needs to go to the doctor or hospital
4. The nurse needs to perform an invasive procedure (i.e. shot)

In case of emergency, Pennock Hospital is 12 minutes away and accepts our campers as patients. Emergency transportation is readily available. As indicated on your Registration Form, the YMCA is authorized to secure emergency medical treatment. It is the responsibility of the camper's parent to provide for the camper's own accident and health coverage while participating in activities with YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin. Should any serious accident or illness occur at camp, prudent attempts will be made to contact the campers' parent(s) immediately. We reserve the right to send a child home if our Camp Nurse or physician so advises.



SPECIALTY CAMP PROGRAMS

LEADERS IN TRAINING (LIT) PROGRAM

During this two-week program, the LIT campers focus their first week on utilizing teamwork to develop leadership skills and character traits. The LITs will live in a cabin with other leadership campers. On their second week of camp, LITs will be taking part in our Outposter Trip. Outposter Trips are designed to further the teamwork skills developed on week one. LITs should come with an open mind and be prepared for a week of on-the-go adventure. LITs sleep in tents and everyone will help to cook their meals over an open fire. Trips are rustic and LITs should be aware that there may not be modern plumbing available when they are away from Camp Manitou-Lin. The Outposter Trips are strenuous in nature and will require long periods of hiking and being outdoors.

LIT TRIP ITINERARY

Sunday: Packing, team building, and final preparations

Monday: Leave for Empire campsite at 11am, set up camp for the night

Tuesday: Leave for Tahquamenon campsite

Wednesday: Full day at Tahquamenon state park

Thursday: Return to Camp to join the Farewell Fire.

Friday: Clean and secure all gear for the next trip and join closing camp activities.

COUNSELORS IN TRAINING (CIT) PROGRAM

Our CIT program is a two week program designed to build upon the experience gained as an LIT, helping young leaders develop an understanding of leadership styles, techniques, and positions found specifically in a camp setting. During the first week, CITs will spend time on team building, goal setting and participation in some camp activities. During the second week of the program, CITs will shadow counselors in the cabins. Those interested in being future horse camp staff will shadow one of the Horse Overnight Cabins and will develop their instructional skills in the arena. The CIT program is intentionally structured to help campers become future staff members at camp, building job skills training into the two-week experience. Beginning Summer 2022, our LIT and WIT programs have been merged into a single track to create a solid foundation for all future camp staff members. During their second year in the program, campers will have the option to select a "traditional" camp track or a horse camp track and focus on their preferred future role at Camp Manitou-Lin. Please contact a camp director with any questions or concerns related to this change.



SPECIALTY CAMP PROGRAMS

In addition to their riding time, Horse Overnight Campers will have the opportunity to spend part of their afternoons participating in one of our Equine Clinics. These clinics will focus on other areas of the horse industry, outside of the traditional “riding lesson”. Each of these clinics are designed to help your campers grow and develop their horsemanship skills and will help reinforce what is taught during their riding time. Horse Campers will have an evaluation period Sunday evening after check in. This will help place them in an appropriate riding group for the week. Requests can be made to be in the same riding group as a friend, however, for safety purposes, both campers will be placed in the lower of the riding levels. Horse requests cannot be guaranteed. Campers are assigned to a horse based on safety, size and/or a horse that help the camper best develop new skills. Long pants are required for riding. Campers can bring their own riding helmet as long as it is ASTM/SEI approved within the past 5 years. Camp will provide appropriate riding helmets for all campers. Proper riding boots are preferred, but not required. We do ask that shoes be close-toed and hard soled (i.e. no Crocs). Water bottles are extremely important for all Campers - but especially important for Horse Campers. We want all campers to stay hydrated so please make sure to pack a refillable water bottle.



PACKING LIST

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

Camp is hard on clothing and equipment due to uneven trails, weather, and very active days spent outdoors. We recommend against bringing new and/or expensive clothing, luggage, or other items. We also advise that both you and your camper pack together – it better ensures your camper knows what they have and increases the likelihood that it will return home with them. Campers should have enough clothing to last the duration of their stay. Campers should bring clothing that can get wet and dirty without concern. Clothing should be appropriate for an inclusive environment, without slogans or pictures that are in poor taste, inappropriate, or immodest. All personal belongings (clothes, luggage, and sleeping bags) should be plainly and boldly marked for easy identification but are ultimately the responsibility of the camper. When you are packing for camp, please keep in mind that storage space is limited. Unclaimed lost and found property will be kept for one week and then donated to various local charities.

MEDICATIONS

As mentioned before, all medication (both prescription AND over the counter) must be turned into the Camp Nurse at check-in and will be kept in its original container. Asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors (i.e. EpiPen) can and should be kept with the camper. However, if they use them, they need to report that information to their counselor and/or the infirmary immediately. It is highly recommended that you send a second inhaler or auto-injector that can be kept with the nurse as a backup.

PACKING LIST (LABEL EVERYTHING!)

- Sleeping bag or blankets in stuff sack or plastic bag
- Pillow
- Laundry bag
- 1 bath towel, 1 beach towel, 1 washcloth or loofah
- Shampoo and soap
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Deodorant/antiperspirant
- Comb and/or brush
- Waterproof jacket or rain poncho
- Sweatshirt
- Long sleeve shirt
- Pajamas or other sleeping clothes
- Underwear and socks for each day, plus two extra
- T-shirt for each day
- Shorts
- 2 pairs of long pants (required for horseback riding)
- 2 pairs of shoes (in case one pair gets wet)
- Sandals with heel straps (i.e. Texas, Chacos, Crocs)
- Swimsuit (1-piece or trunk style is recommended)
- Refillable water bottle (wide mouth preferred, i.e. Nalgene)
- Sunscreen (spray or cream)
- Bug spray
- Chapstick
- Flashlight and/or headlamp
- Playing cards, UNO, travel games, etc (optional)
- Book or quiet activity for reading time
- Notebook or journal and pen/pencil
- White t-shirt or other clothing item to tie-dye (label required)

PLEASE DO NOT PACK ANY FLUSHABLE WIPES FOR YOUR CAMPER, WHILE THESE MAY BE FLUSHABLE AWAY FROM CAMP, THESE WIPES CAN CAUSE MAJOR DISRUPTION WITHIN MANITOU-LIN'S PLUMBING FACILITIES.

LIT PACKING LIST

LEADERS IN TRAINING GEAR

The following items are needed for the LIT backpacking trip. The island's easy-to-moderate hiking terrain will not require any specialized equipment, but campers should be prepared to carry all of their gear for at least one mile. We would advise against suitcases or wheeled items being brought to camp or the island due to terrain. A backpack or bag with straps is preferable. Please be aware that each participant will be asked to help carry items used by the entire group, like cooking materials, food, and tents.

- Sturdy walking shoes or boots
- Backpack for transporting gear or clothing
- Compressible sleeping bag (down or synthetic fill)
- Sleeping pad
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Deodorant/antiperspirant
- Comb or brush
- Swimsuit (1-piece or trunk style recommended)
- 1 sweatshirt
- Waterproof jacket or rain poncho
- 1 pair of long pants
- 1 long sleeved shirt
- Pajamas or other sleeping clothes
- Underwear and socks for every day, plus 2 extra
- 5 t-shirts
- 2-3 pairs of shorts
- Sandals with heel straps (i.e. Chaco, Teva, Crocs)
- A portable mess kit (plate, spork, Nalgene bottle)
- Day pack (or string backpack) to hold:
 - Refillable water bottle (i.e. Nalgene)
 - Sunglasses, towel, sunscreen, bug spray

PLEASE DO NOT BRING:

- Pocket knives, weapons or hazardous materials
- Matches or fireworks
- Alcohol or any tobacco products including cigarettes, vape devices or chewing tobacco. Any camper found in possession of a vape/e-cigarette will be sent home from the trip.
- Cash - Money can be deposited into your camper's account on check-in day to be used for souvenirs or snacks during their time at camp. Some families opt to send around \$20 in cash for souvenirs, etc on the island.
- iPods/MP3 Players
- Cell Phones - Trip Leaders are expected to collect any cell phones found on the trip and will hold onto them until the group returns to Camp Manitou-Lin.
- Video games
- Pets



MISSING HOME

Homesickness is usually a result of the discomfort of being in strange surroundings. Camp staff are trained to deal with homesickness by providing extra patience and attention and by keeping the camper active. Most campers quickly recover because they are having so much fun. You will be called if there is a serious problem. The general rule of “no news is good news” stands true at YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin as we are working with the staff to give all of our campers an amazing experience.

If you are feeling apprehensive about sending your child off or our child is feeling nervous, there is a lot of great information on the internet and books to help both parents and campers have a successful camp experience. We know that it is as hard for the parents as it is for the campers to be away from each other, so we encourage you to look for information.

The following excerpts are taken from Dr. Chris Thurber’s website, www.campspirit.com. Dr. Chris Thurber is a board-certified clinical psychologist, author, consultant, and father. A graduate of Harvard University, Chris co-authored the critically acclaimed “Summer Camp Handbook,” the premier preparatory resource for new campers and families. He has more than 30 years of camping experience and had written numerous book chapters and scholarly articles on homesickness prevention and child development. (YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin does not receive anything from Dr. Chris Thurber, we merely are giving parents a resource that we feel is helpful.)

TOP FIVE TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAMP EXPERIENCE

1. Avoid making a “pick up deal.”

Promising, “If you feel homesick, I will come and get you” undermines children’s confidence and dramatically intensifies homesickness. Instead, normalize their anxiety, talk positively about camp, and assure them that you want them to enjoy themselves. Sometimes we find that campers feel like they need “permission” to have fun!

2. Double check the camp’s packing list.

Many seasons of experience have helped your child’s camp directors refine the packing list to include all the essentials. So, if it says, “stick bug repellent,” do not buy spray. If it says, “no electronics,” then leave the cell phone at home.

3. Spend practice time away from home.

Nothing builds confidence and teaches a child how to cope with time away from home better than.... (you guessed it)...time away from home. That weekend at Grandma and Grandpa’s house will do wonders for their adjustment.

4. Label everything.

It is easy to lose things at camp, but if you want it back, it’s got to have your name on it. Label everything from your t-shirts to your sleeping bag, to your toothbrush. And leave really expensive things at home.

5. Double check the opening and closing dates and times.

Start camp off on a smooth note by arriving on time and on the right day. Use a wall calendar in the months prior to opening day to make an exciting countdown to the big day.

MORE ABOUT OUR STAFF

BULLYING AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

The YMCA recognizes that positive discipline teaches and encourages the healthy development of a child's self-esteem. The YMCA does not allow the use of corporal or physical punishment. Instead, caregivers employ positive discipline techniques, which include praising, calling attention to appropriate behavior and acting as positive role models to influence and reinforce positive behavior. Camp reinforces positive behavior through the use of behavioral contracts. The staff sets limit that are developmentally appropriate and consistently enforced.

Staff will encourage and assist all children in following the camp rules. All campers will be given an orientation on the first day of camp. All questions will be answered and the rules will be explained during this orientation. Campers will be held accountable for their behavior through positive feedback and age-appropriate consequences.

What can I do to find out if bullying is occurring?

Bullying among peers is growing daily in the United States. At camp, we train our staff on preventing, recognizing, and dealing with bullying. However, we need your help as the parent to ward off and correct bullying behavior and to get bullied children to speak up when they are bullied. If your child is having challenges at camp within their group, we strongly recommend that you reach out to the main camp office line and connect with a director.

What is it?

Bullying is any intentional, repeated hurtful act, including inflicting physical pain, name-calling, exclusion, defacing property, hurtful pranks and public humiliation. You can be part of the solution through awareness, insight and action. Prevention is the best cure. Use dinner time as an opportunity to ask your children about camp and the specifics of their experience every day. Remember, that your tone and listening skills is critical to whether your child will have these conversations with you in an honest way.

AFTER CAMP ENDS...

Our pledge is to put your children in the company of the most trustworthy and capable young adults we can hire: counselors who are well suited to the task of caring for campers. The effort we put into screening and selecting our staff is part of that pledge. Our staff work with your children in the context of a visible, well scrutinized environment that has many built-in checks and balances. Counselors are supervised by senior staff guided by clear, firm policies regarding behavior. Their actions are also visible to co-workers and campers. By hiring them, we do not recommend them as babysitters, nannies, or child companions outside of camp. In general, we discourage our staff from having contact with your children after camp since we cannot supervise their actions outside of camp programs. We hire our staff for the camp season. We do not take responsibility for their behavior off season. As a parent you are, of course, free to make your own choice in this matter. While we cannot keep you from allowing your child to visit one of our staff members, in so doing you take full responsibility. We also know many children exchange contact information (e.g. email address, profile name, cell phone numbers) with counselors without our or your specific awareness or permission. Staff are explicitly forbidden from connecting with campers in this way while they are employed at Camp. We also advise against this sort of communication in the "off season." We recommend that you as the parent supervise your child's online activities just as you do other aspects of their life in your home, and oversee any off-season contact between staff members and our child. You take full responsibility to oversee any contact that results between your child and their camp staff. Campers are always welcome to write to their counselor at the following address, and we will make sure it is forwarded to their school address:

(Counselor's Name) c/o Camp Manitou-Lin
1095 N Briggs Rd
Middleville, MI 49333

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP

From Grand Rapids:

- Take M-37 (East Beltline/Broadmoor) south through Caledonia.
- Approximately 5 miles past Caledonia turn right on Cherry Valley.
- Approximately another 5 miles, after a sharp right curve, immediately turn left on Briggs Rd.
- Camp is on the right 3/4 of a mile down Briggs Rd. CONTINUE PAST THE MAIN ENTRANCE FOR THE DAY CAMP ENTRANCE

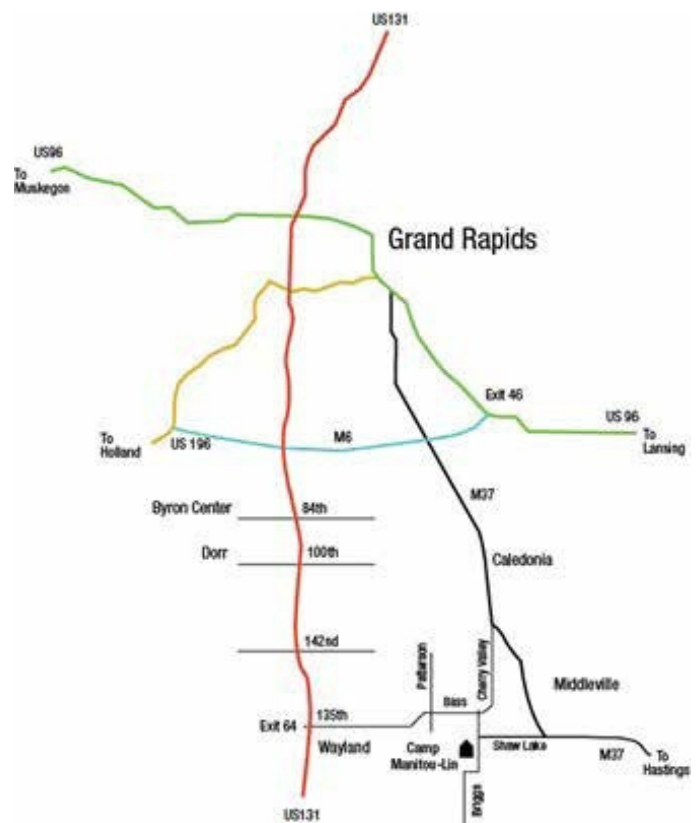
DAY CAMP WILL BEGIN AND END THEIR DAY AT THE DAY CAMP ENTRANCE. THIS IS DIFFERENT THAN THE MAIN ENTRANCE. DAY CAMP CAN BE ACCESSED 1/2 MILE SOUTH OF THE MAIN ENTRANCE, ON THE EAST SIDE OF BRIGGS RD.

From US-131:

- Take US-131 South to Wayland Exit (exit #64)
- Go left (East) 8 miles and turn right on Briggs Rd.
- Camp is on the right 3/4 of a mile down Briggs Rd. CONTINUE PAST THE MAIN ENTRANCE FOR THE DAY CAMP ENTRANCE

From Lansing:

- Take US-96 West towards Grand Rapids
- Take US-6 West (use exit #46) towards M-37
- Take the Kentwood exit (exit #15) and turn left on M-37 South
- Take M-37 South through Caledonia
- Approximately 5 miles past Caledonia follow Cherry Valley to the right
- Approximately another 5 miles, after a sharp right curve, immediately turn left on Briggs Rd.
- Camp is on the right, 3/4 of a mile down Briggs Rd. CONTINUE PAST THE MAIN ENTRANCE FOR THE DAY CAMP ENTRANCE



From Detroit:

- Take I-94 West to Kalamazoo
- Turn right and take US-131 North towards Grand Rapids
- Take exit #64
- Go right (east) 8 miles and turn right on Briggs Rd
- Camp is on the right, 3/4 of a mile down Briggs Rd. CONTINUE PAST THE MAIN ENTRANCE FOR THE DAY CAMP ENTRANCE

BED BUG POLICY

In response to the rising epidemic of the nuisance known as “bed bugs” we wanted to let you know the steps YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin is taking to safeguard your experience and assure your continued confidence in Camp Manitou-Lin. Bed bugs are transferred from luggage, items of clothing and equipment. They are increasingly being encountered in homes, apartments, hotels, motels, health care facilities, dormitories, shelters, schools, camps, and modes of transport. Other places where bed bugs sometimes appear include movie theaters, laundries/dry cleaners, furniture rental outlets and office buildings. Immigration and international travel have undoubtedly contributed to the resurgence of bed bugs in the U.S. Bedbugs are nondiscriminatory and can affect an socio-economic group. Bedbugs are not an indication of a dirty facility.

If bed bugs were found, either through our investigation or a participant complaint, the camp administration would work efficiently to address the issue and we would treat the cabin for bedbugs. The cabin would have an additional treatment several weeks after the initial treatment. While effective with other insect concerns, preventive spraying of the cabins is not effective. We have all of the cabins on a preventative heat treatment protocol.

If there were evidence of bedbugs while a group is present, the group would be moved to a “clean” cabin. All bedding and clothing would be run through hot dryers to the necessary heat level required to eliminate the bedbugs. A note would be sent home on how to prevent the transfer of the bedbugs to their home.

BEST PRACTICES TO PREVENT BEDBUGS

Before Arriving:

1. When packing, bring only necessary items. Do not over pack. Pack in a duffel/soft sided bag so if needed it can be heated in a dryer.
2. Heat kills bedbugs. Place clothing, pillow, and sleeping bag in a hot washer and dryer cycle.
3. Pack belongings in garbage bags (bring extra), bags that have been heated, or hard/plastic sided totes/suitcases, as bedbugs often attach to rough side/corduroy luggage. Wipe luggage down before packing and thoroughly inspect it.
4. Pack toiletries in zip lock bags, rather than soft sided toiletry bags.

After Camp:

1. Leave your camp gear outside, take all clothing and bedding directly to the washer and dryer. Wash and dry on hot.
2. Place luggage in a black garbage bag and leave it out in the sun for a day or two to heat up to 120 degrees for at least 2 hours. (If during summer)
3. Notify Camp at 888.909.2267 if any evidence of bedbugs are found after your departure. Information needed: name of cabin, bed location of the affected person, number of people affected. If a bedbug can be collected, place in a Ziploc bag for identification.

Bed bugs normally do not reside on people like head or body lice and, immediately after feeding, they crawl off and reside elsewhere to digest their meal – usually within 5’ of the sleep location. Symptoms after being bitten vary with the individual. Many develop an itchy red welt or localized swelling within a day or so of the bite. Others have little or no reaction, and in some people the reaction is delayed. Unlike flea bites that occur mainly around the ankles, bed bugs feed on any skin exposed while sleeping (face, neck, shoulders, back, arms, legs, etc.). The welts and itching are often wrongly attributed to other causes, such as mosquitoes. Bed bugs also are suspect if you wake up with itchy bites you did not have when you went to sleep. Conversely, it is important to recognize that not all bites or bite-like reactions are due to bed bugs. Confirmation requires finding and identifying the bugs themselves, which often requires the help of a professional.

A common concern with bed bugs is whether they transmit diseases. Although bed bugs can harbor pathogens in and on their bodies, transmission to humans is considered unlikely. Their medical significance is chiefly limited to the itching and inflammation from their bites. Antihistamines and corticosteroids may be prescribed to reduce allergic reactions, and antiseptic or antibiotic ointments to prevent infection.

Conventional insect repellents, like those used to deter ticks and mosquitoes, do not appear to be effective against bed bugs. Sleeping with the lights on is not likely to deter hungry bed bugs either.

We hope this information is helpful to you. Should you have additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. For more information about bedbugs, please visit: <http://www.michigan.gov/bedbug>