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# YMCA CAMP ST. CROIX FAMILY HANDBOOK

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## Contact Information

### YMCA Customer Service 612-822-2267.

Call them about registration, payments, financial assistance, cancellations, etc.

### Camp St. Croix Office 715-386-4380

Call here for general info about programs, logistics, transportation, etc.

### John Arteman, Program Director 651-259-2114.

Call if you have specific questions about programs, concerns about a camper, etc.

### Dan O'Brien, Executive Director 763-230-6527

*For escalated questions or concerns.*

## This Document

This document undergoes occasional changes. You can always find the most up to date version [here](#).

## New Camper Orientation

Each spring, we offer an in-person and a virtual New Camper Orientation. These are open house, drop in-style gatherings with the opportunity to tour Camp St. Croix and ask questions about camp. It's free and there is no need to register. You can find a recording of the virtual orientation on our website. Stay tuned for more details in early 2026.

## Mission Statement

YMCA Camp St. Croix builds community and teaches respect for self, others and nature through summer camp, outdoor education and retreats.

### About YMCA Overnight Camps

YMCA Overnight Camps are wonderful places for your child to experience fun, outdoor adventures in the summer! New and returning campers thrive during a session packed full of exciting, structured camp activities. Campers live in small, age-appropriate communities where they build self-esteem and learn new skills. Our experiences are built on the Y's Core Values of Caring, Honesty, Responsibility, Respect, and Equity.

Our goal is to give all kids the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve.



## Registration and Forms

### Registration

Registration can be completed online [here](#) or by calling the YMCA Customer Service Center at 612-230-9622. You can also download a registration form from [here](#).

You will receive an automated confirmation email within a few minutes of registering online.

### Payment Plan

Your balance is due in four monthly installments on March 1st, April 1st, May 1st and June 1st unless you have a pre-arranged payment plan established with the Customer Service Center. If the balance is not paid by June 1, 2026, you may forfeit your place at camp along with the deposit.

### Changes and Cancellations

Cancellations must be in writing and can be submitted [online here](#) or faxed to 612-223-6322.

- Cancellations received one-month prior to the start of each session will be refunded however, your deposit is nonrefundable.
- No refunds are available for cancellations made less than one month prior to the start of each session.
- Camp session change requests received one month or more prior to the session start date will be made, pending availability, and assessed a \$25 change fee.

Campers who do not show up to a session will not receive a refund. Program deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable.

\*Y Adventure Programs cannot refund payments when sessions are cut short or canceled due to circumstances beyond our control. These may include, but are not limited to, wilderness area closures, forest fires, flooding, or other climate and environmental hazards that would prevent us from providing a safe and meaningful experience for all participants..

### CampDoc

CampDoc is the software database we use to gather and track everything related to your campers health.

Starting in March, a series of email reminders will be sent to all registered campers with instructions on how to setup or login to your account. A new physical exam is required each year before attending camp. You will be able to upload this form to your CampDoc account.

#### Pro Parent Tip

*Complete your Health Exam Form & Camp Store Form prior to arrival for an easy drop-off!*



## Arrival and Departure Day

### Transportation

Overnight Camp St. Croix does not provide transportation to and from camp in 2026. You are responsible for getting your child to and from camp on the first and last days of camp.

### Directions

**Our address is:** 532 County Road F Hudson, WI 54016

**From I-94** – turn south at exit 2 Carmichael Road/ County Road F. Follow Carmichael Road south for 1.5 miles to find Camp St. Croix on the right side shortly after Coulee Road. The first entrance you will see is our North Entrance for our Day Camp program. Please continue past that until you reach the South Entrance across from River Crest elementary school.

### Drop-Off

Drop off is from **10-11:30am** on the first day of your camper session. This is usually Sunday. For Samplers, the drop off and pick up day may vary. Please call us if you will be arriving late.

We will have campers and guardians enter the River Center for check-in. Lice and temperature checks will happen immediately upon arrival as well as medication drop-off.

### Pro Parent Tip

*Please have medications ready to turn in when you arrive to Camp St. Croix.*

### Pick-up

Camper pick-up is from **4:00– 5:30pm** on the last day of your camper session. This is usually Thursday. For Samplers, the drop off and pick up day may vary.

**Campers can only be picked up by someone listed on their Camper Personal History and carrying their photo ID**

**There will be an opportunity to visit the camp store in the River Center during this time.**

### Camp Store

The camp store will be open throughout the camp session for each cabin to visit, and will also be open during Pick-Up on Thursdays.

To help manage spending and ensure campers have access to what they need, we've created a simple process for families:

#### 1. Set a spending limit:

Before camp, families will complete an online Camp Store Authorization Form to indicate how much their camper is allowed to spend during their session. Please fill out the form one time per camper per session.

#### 2. Add a Payment Method:

Families must add a card to their online account and label it as "Camp Store". This card will be used to cover purchases up to the authorized spending limit. If there is not a card on file labeled 'Camp Store' but an authorization form was filled out, we will use any available card on the camper's account to complete the purchases. Payment methods should be added to the online account in which the camper is tied to and the registration is under.

**\*Please do not send cash/checks with your camper**

More information about this year's Camp Store process should be sent to you in your Pre-Camp Communications before your session start date.

Item Examples & Pricing:

- T-shirt \$20
- Stuffed Animals \$10
- Sweatshirt \$35
- Hat \$20



## Life at Camp

**Cabins.** Campers spend their session with two counselors and a group of other campers in a cabin group. Our counselors are well trained and love their jobs. Campers are assigned to their cabin based on age and gender-identity.

**Friends.** Campers will have an opportunity to bunk with one or two friends if they are the same age and the request is made in advance. If the request was not made on the registration form, you may call camp prior to your session or email [john.arteman@ymcamn.org](mailto:john.arteman@ymcamn.org). Children make many new friends at camp in addition to enjoying their old ones. *We limit the number of friends coming together to three per cabin to support strong group dynamics.*

### Mail \*UPDATED THIS SUMMER

We are asking families to **NOT** send camper mail via the Post Office or other delivery method. The unreliability of these services to drop off mail exactly when it needs to arrive for your campers to receive it, has lead us to this decision.

### PLEASE DROP OFF ALL CAMPER MAIL-IN PERSON ON ARRIVAL DAY

For a faster/more reliable delivery option, you can send your camper a message via email that will be printed and delivered. Please be sure to have your child's name AND cabin in the subject line. Any emails received after 10:00am will get to them the next day. Camp email: [info@campstcroix.org](mailto:info@campstcroix.org)

**Phoning Home.** Campers may not have cell phones or smart watches at camp. Except for emergency situations, phone and e-mail by campers are off limits as it distracts from the camp experience. If you have questions, a Camp St. Croix staff member will be available to speak with you over the phone.

**Visiting Camp:** To keep campers fully immersed in the camp experience, and for all of our campers' safety, we do not allow visitors during their time at camp.

However, you are welcome to see more of camp and walk around during departure day pick-up.

**Stay in the Loop!** View photos of your camper while they're at camp! We post photos on our Facebook and Instagram site often.

**Photo Gallery:** [campstcroix.smugmug.com/](http://campstcroix.smugmug.com/)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/ymcacampstcroix](https://facebook.com/ymcacampstcroix)

**Instagram:** [@ymcacampstcroix](https://www.instagram.com/ymcacampstcroix)

**Food.** Croix campers eat very well; our kitchen takes great pride in providing a tasty, well-balanced diet, including free organic produce raised right here, at The Farm at Camp St. Croix. If your camper has dietary restrictions or allergies please note them on their Camper Personal History via CampDoc. You can learn more by navigating to [this page](#).

**Health and Safety.** Croix campers are well looked after. Our first aid, CPR, and lifesaving certified counselors are supported by our health professional (an RN), and student nurses.

We will treat bumps, bruises, and scrapes. In the case of illness or advance injury, parents or emergency contacts are called to make arrangements for treatment or pick-up. Camp St. Croix uses the Hudson Physician's Clinic located at the Hudson Hospital, in Hudson, WI.

**Medications.** All medications must be entered into Camp Doc but the guardian prior to arrival. **Please keep all medications out of your campers' luggage** so that you (parent/guardian) can hand them directly to our health team at drop off.

All medications must be turned into the Health Office (a) in the original container (b) inside a zip lock back that is labeled with your camper's name and (c) we prefer you send along only as many doses as the camper will need during their stay. Prescription medication must be in the original container and include dosage, frequency, and camper's name.

**Due to rules and regulations, we cannot accept any medications or supplements in pill boxes or loose in zip lock bags, nor may campers keep their own medication with them (with the exception of Epi-pens and Inhalers, which will be held by your camper's counselor) This includes prescription as well as over-the-counter and supplements.**



## Life at Camp

**Camp Activities.** Campers will experience a variety of activities during their camp session. Our camp staff aim to encourage campers' creativity, skill development, and understanding of the world around them. Often times, during these creative learning experiences in a camp setting, campers are exposed to the natural elements of camp. They will experience dirt, mud, bugs, plants, and various types of weather—but camp will go on. Our staff are trained to recognize and avoid unsafe situations. However, if your child has a specific reaction (allergies, fears, etc.) to any camp elements; be sure to indicate this in their health information.

### Traditional Camps

Camp St. Croix defines 'traditional camps' as Samplers, Pioneers, Trail Blazers and Taste of Croix. During your child's time at camp they will participate in activities with their cabin group. Activities **may include** swimming, boating, archery, arts and crafts, field sports, and more. Camper schedules are built to try and include as many activities as possible. The specific activities offered will vary by session based on factors like weather.

### Specialty Camps

Specialty camps will spend significant time during their week in those specialty areas such as sailing, horseback riding, canoeing, climbing or hiking. The traditional in-camp activities offered will vary by session based on factors like weather.

### Overnights.

The cabin groups that are part of our Trail Blazer and Taste of Croix programs will pack up one afternoon during the week and head out to an on-site campsite in the woods for an overnight with their cabin group. Our specialty camps will have an off-site overnight experience ranging from 1-7 nights, depending on the program.

Campers learn basic camping skills in addition to having an opportunity to do something new and challenging. Overnights happen rain or shine. We certainly watch the weather and bring groups in at first sign of a severe storm, but groups remain at their campsites if it's lightly raining. Campers should bring rain gear—some of the best memories happen in the rain!

**Waterfront.** Each camper's swimming ability will be tested prior to their first activity. Personal Flotation Devices are available and are required for any boating activities. We hire a team of beach lifeguards who are always present when swimming or boating activities are happening.

**International Staff and Campers.** Camp St. Croix has a long history with international staff and campers as they add a deep level or richness to the camp experience. This summer we are hosting staff from Mexico, Colombia, Spain, the United Kingdom, and more!

**Summer Samplers.** During summer sampler sessions, the camp schedule is altered to provide a variety of camp activities in a three-day session; this is a great way for first time campers to get the feel of overnight camp. Sampler campers will not take part in the cabin overnight.

**Homesickness.** For many campers, a week away at Croix will be the longest time they've ever been away from home. The challenge can be significant for both kids and their parents. Croix counselors and staff are very experienced in coaching campers through their time away and we believe overcoming the challenge of homesickness can be an opportunity to build resilience and confidence. We also have Camp Life Coordinators to assist counselors and their campers with homesickness or other issues within the cabin.

### Pro Parent Tip

*Don't be alarmed if you get a call from Croix while your camper is at Camp. Camp likes to get parent input on even minor health, homesickness, and behavioral issues. It's a low bar to call home.*



## Notices

### Belonging

The mission of Camp St Croix is to build community and teach respect for self, others, and nature through summer camps, outdoor learning programs, and retreats.

Here at Camp St. Croix, we strive to create a community in which every child feels an authentic sense of belonging. We believe that every camper is unique and should feel confident in sharing who they are and what strengths they bring to their communities. Our goal is to celebrate each camper's strengths and have them leave camp with a stronger sense of self confidence.

Please contact us if there is anything our staff team at camp can do to best support your camper during their session (e.g. what your camper needs to feel at home).

### Camper Behavior

Caring, honesty, equity, respect, and responsibility are the YMCA's core values and the foundation of what we do:

- We expect campers to take responsibility for their actions.
- We expect campers to respect themselves, one another, the environment, and camp equipment.
- We expect campers to behave equitably towards one another and our staff.
- We expect campers to be honest with one another and their counselors.
- We expect campers to care for themselves and one another.

St. Croix staff do a great job at coaching campers who behave inappropriately. If we find that we are unable to redirect your camper's behavior we may be in contact with you.

**We reserve the right to send a camper home, without refund, if consistent misbehavior affects the experience of other campers.**

### Risks at Camp

Camp St. Croix is a member of the American Camp Association (ACA), meaning we are rigorously held to account on over 300 pages of standards regarding health and wellness, transportation safety, aquatic safety, and more. These standards guide us to use the best practices regarding ticks and other insects, sun exposure, hygiene, bullying prevention, staff medical training, and much more.

Nonetheless, like all other experiences in life camp is not risk-free. We simply cannot guarantee that no harm will befall a camper. Please refer to our waiver at [campstcroix.org/forms\\_publications/](http://campstcroix.org/forms_publications/) if you would like to review our indemnification policies.





## Packing: Traditional Camps

The following is a suggested list, the specific quantities of items are not required. You may need to modify this list to your camper's needs and session type. Please do not send your child's best clothing, as camp activities are outside and rugged. Pack items and clothing that can get wet and dirty. **All items should be clearly labeled with your child's full name.** This will assist us with claiming lost and found. You can find more detailed packing lists under the 'Preparation' header on the main page. Camp St. Croix is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

### Make Sure to Bring

- A sleeping bag and a twin sized fitted sheet
- A pillow
- 1-2 pajamas
- 2 pairs of sturdy footwear that can get dirty (i.e. old tennis shoes or sandals **with back straps**) for daily wear (not Crocs)\*
- A pair of shoes to swim in—will get wet and sandy
- 2-4 pairs of shorts
- 1-2 pairs of long pants
- 1-2 long-sleeved shirts or sweatshirts
- 6 T-shirts
- 6 pairs of underwear
- 6 pairs of socks
- 1-2 swimming suits
- Rain jacket/pants or poncho
- 2 towels
- Personal toiletries
- A flashlight (headlamps are great)
- Water bottle
- Insect repellent and sunscreen

\*Flip-flop sandals, Crocs, or "slides" are to be used for showers only, not activities or walking around camp. Please be sure to send your camper with at least 1 pair of close-toed sneakers/running shoes. If your camper does not have the correct footwear (i.e. sneakers), there may be activities that they will not be able to participate in for safety reasons.

### Consider Bringing

- A camera (disposables are a good idea)
- 1 hat for sun protection
- Journal and pen
- Paper, envelopes and stamps for letters (pre-addressed post cards work well)
- Books and small games

### Do Not Bring

- Cell phones
- Smart watches
- Music players or video games
- Food or drinks
- Fireworks, knives, or weapons
- Personal Sports Equipment
- Animals

### Lost and Found

If you return home and realize you have left something behind, either call us or send an email to [info@campstcroix.org](mailto:info@campstcroix.org) and we'll try to find it for you. Unfortunately we can't send items home for individuals; however, we will hold them at Camp St. Croix for pick-up up to 2 weeks after your session. Please call or email us ahead of time to let us know you'll be stopping by.

Please assist us with Lost & Found by labeling everything with your camper's full name. Valuables and meaningful items should be kept home for safe keeping. YMCA Camp St. Croix is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.



## Packing: Specialty Camps and LDP

In general, what one would pack for St. Croix's Traditional Camps isn't too different from what you'll want if you'll be hitting the trail on your camp session. Here are a few notes and a few additional suggested items

- For canoeing—over the ankle boots or light hiking boots with a sole that will hold up when wet are recommended. Your camper will be required to wear shoes (not crocs, flip flops, slides, etc.) at all times while canoeing, so regardless, you should plan to send them with shoes that can get wet.
- Rain gear—jacket and pants are much more useful than umbrellas while out on trail.
- Sleeping bag—preferably that packs up to be small.
- Cap with brim to shade the sun
- 2-4 pair of wool socks, not cotton
- Extra layers, preferably not cotton If your camper is coming to camp for 2 or more weeks, please send them with more changes of clothes. Our 4-week LDP program will have 1 opportunity to wash clothes during their stay.

For more detailed packing lists, please visit [this link](#)

### Horse Camps

- Sturdy riding boots (must be closed-toed)
- Durable riding pants (Jeans or similar, no leggings)

### Outdoor Challenge Camps

#### Pro Parent Tip

*Don't feel the need to go buy lots of new things if you already have gear that will do. With very few exceptions, high-end gear doesn't improve your camp experience. Camp St. Croix has a limited amount of gear that can be lent if needed.*

- Extra pair of closed-toed shoes for climbing (no Crocs)

