



Day Camp Gathering Pines

2025 Day Camp Handbook

About YMCA Day Camps

YMCA Day Camps are wonderful places for your child to experience fun, outdoor adventures in the summer! New and returning campers thrive during a week packed full of exciting, structured traditional and specialty activities. Campers participate in small, age-appropriate groups where they build self-esteem and learn new skills. Our experiences are built on the Y's Core values of equity, caring, honesty, responsibility and respect.

Our goal is to give all kids the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. Day Camp is an enrichment program and the next step in youth development.

Updated: March 2025

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Contact Information

YMCA Customer Service Center.

For questions about registration, payments, financial assistance etc., please contact our customer service center. Changes and/or cancellations must be completed in writing using the link email linked below.

Phone: 612-230-9622

Email: www.ymcamn.org/contact_us

YMCA Gathering Pines

Phone: 651-309-4414

Email: Gathering.Pines@ymcamn.org

Website: www.ymcanorth.org/adventure

Facebook: [YMCA Gathering Pines](#)

Instagram: [YMCA Gathering Pines](#)

Address: 23701 Zane Ave, Lakeville MN 55044

Communication

While your camper is at camp, all communication should be directed to the Day Camp office. **Campers should NOT be using their cell phones or other electronics.** We encourage campers to learn independence while at camp; communicating with your camper through the office staff will be the best way to communicate with your child.

If you have an emergency please call 651-309-4414 or email Gathering.Pines@ymcamn.org , and a lead staff member will address your situation as necessary.

We encourage families to NOT send their child to camp with a cell phone or other electronics. If your child must have a cell phone, please set the expectation with them that their device should remain turned off and in their backpack and should not be a distraction at camp.

Camp Open House (Family Nights)

We are happy to invite all campers, their families, their friends and their caregivers to visit us during our camp open houses during the summer. This is a great opportunity to visit where your camper enjoys their week at camp.

- Saturday, June 7th 11:00am –2:00pm
- Thursday June 26th 6:00-7:30pm
- Thursday July 17th 6-7:30pm
- Thursday August 7th 6:00-7:30pm

*If we need to cancel an open house due to weather (rain or heat) we will communicate that via our camp Facebook page.

Letter from the Camp Director ~ Nick Dyson

Welcome! I am extremely excited for Gathering Pines' fourth summer of Day Camp! Meeting new friends, discovering the wonders of nature and learning new skills all add up to wonderful, lasting camp memories. Our days are filled with activities your child is sure to enjoy. If you love camp, be sure to check out what else Gathering Pines has to offer. If your child loves summer camp, be sure to check out our school release day camps (Adventure Days)! I look forward to seeing everyone this summer!

REGISTRATION & FORMS

Registration

Registration can be completed online at ymcanorth.org/adventure/locations/day_camp_gathering_pines.

You will receive confirmation by email immediately if you register online or within 24 hours of your paper registration being processed.

The balance for your session is due two weeks prior to your child attending camp, unless you have a pre-approved payment plan established with the Customer Service Center.

Inclusion

It is the YMCA of the North's vision to serve relentlessly with out community until all can thrive in each stage of life. At camp, we gladly welcome campers regardless of race, ability, creed, national origin and gender.

Please contact us if you have perspective on you camper that may help us better support your camper while they are at camp or complete our [Individual Camper Care Plan](#), found on our website.

Scholarships

Scholarships are a needs-based fund that we are able to provide via annual donations and fundraising events. To apply for scholarship, go to ymcanorth.org/adventure/scholarships. Follow the online process to submit your request. Customer Service will notify you of the percentage and amount within about 5 business days.

Camp Store

The Camp Store will be open Monday through Friday during morning check in at camp. Campers will have the opportunity to purchase camp store items during this time. Please send a completed [camp order form](#) and payment (exact cash or check) with your child, so they can make a purchase. Campers will be given a schedule of their week on day one. If they wish to tie-dye with a camp store shirt, they will need to have it purchased by that day.

Camp store includes many tie-dye options!

Thank camp store will also be open during camp open houses!

Forms

All forms are available at [here](#).

The [Medication Release Form](#) must be submitted if you are sending medications, prescription or non-prescription, with your camper to camp.

The [Teen Release Waiver](#) is for campers in our teen programs, that are allowed to check themselves out from the bus.

The [Individual Camper Care Plan](#) is if you think there is anything important or specific your child's counselor should know about working with him/her. This includes, detailed allergy information, camper's fears/reservations, behavior concerns and tips etc.

Change / Cancellation Policy

A refund of program fees is available if you cancel your registration no later than 11:59 p.m. CT on the Monday two weeks before your program's start date.

Program deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable.

No refunds are available for changes or cancellations made after 11:59 p.m. CT on the Monday two weeks before your program's start date.

A \$10 change fee is assessed to any change made to the original registration, including transportation (where offered). No transportation or care changes accepted less than two weeks before program.

No tuition adjustment will be made for late arrival, early departure or dismissal from camp. No adjustment to registration cost will be made for campers who are tardy, absent from camper days or are restricted due to disciplinary reasons, or inability to manage pre-existing conditions, current illness/injury or dismissal.

**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.*

PICK UP & DROP OFF

Bus Transportation

We will be providing limited transportation to and from camp; you are responsible for signing your child in and out of the bus each day, with the bus captain.

If bus times deviate from what is listed online or in this handbook, they will be noted in the week before family email.

Pick Up / Drop Off at Camp

Campers not taking the bus to camp can be dropped off at camp between 9:00-9:15am daily. Pick up is at 3:20

Pro Parent Tip

Bus schedules are subject to change weekly. Usually time differs by only 5-10 minutes.

Please be sure to check the website on a regular basis to know exact bus times.

I-35: If you are driving south on I-35, you will want to take exit 81 and then turn left onto County RD-70 / 210 ST W. Turn left at the round about onto Vernon Ave. Turn right onto 240th street and then turn at Zane Ave. Gathering Pines will be on your right.

From Texas Ave: Take Texas Ave south until 240th street where you will take a left. Drive until you can take a left onto Zane Ave. Gathering Pines will be on your right.

Pro Parent Tip- *Many bus stops are at public locations. Allow yourself a few extra minutes to locate the pick up location on Monday Mornings.*

Pick-up

Safety of your child is our number one priority.

Bus security procedures are in place for the safety of your family. It is not our intention to offend anyone when we question the person's right to pick up a child.

Campers can only be picked up by someone listed on their authorized to pick up list (or emergency contacts) and carrying their photo ID.

If you need to add an authorized pick up, camp needs that in writing. Please email Gathering.Pines@ymcamn.org.

Campers in our Teen Programs are allowed to walk home from a bus stop, with your permission. You must fill out, sign and return the [Teen Release Waiver](#), found on our website.

In order to stay on schedule, busses cannot wait pass their scheduled time. If you are late for pick up please call camp. If we do not hear from you, we will attempt to reach you by phone. If you are not reached, we will call persons listed as emergency contacts. Your camper will be transported to the closest Before/After care site. After 1 hour, the authorities will be called to ensure the safety of your child.

Before & After Care

There are multiple options for extended care (times vary by location.) [Learn more here](#)

If you are signed up for a before / after care site, please have your child dropped off at the care site by 8:10 AM to ensure they get on the bus to go to camp.

For before and after care AT Gathering Pines, please drive up the hill to the welcome center and walk your child inside.

Late Drop Offs & Early Pickups

If you need to drop your child off late to camp, please park in the main parking lot and check your child in at the main camp office (grey building up the hill and to your left.)

For early pickups, please email camp with who and when you are picking up early. You may park in the main parking lot and check your camper out from the main camp office (grey building up the hill and to your left.)

Early pickups must be communicated in advance and CANNOT be accommodated after 2:30 PM.

Bus Locations

Day Camp Gathering Pines—Tentative Bus Details (these bus stops are for summer only)

*****Official bus details will be provided each week in a week before email*****

- Have your Photo ID ready for pick up each afternoon.
- If early pickup at camp is needed, please email Gathering.Pines@ymcamn.org.

Location	Address	Morning Pick-Up	Afternoon Drop-Off
Linden Hills Park <i>Grape & Strawberry</i>	3100 W 43rd St Minneapolis, MN 55410 (42nd St & Zenith Ave)	8:20 AM	4:20 PM
Kenny Community School <i>Apple & Coconut</i>	1203 W 57 th Street Minneapolis, MN 55419	8:20 AM	4:15 PM
Pearl Park <i>Pineapple & Kiwi</i>	414 E Diamond Lake Rd Minneapolis, MN 55419 (Hampshire Drive & E 54th St)	8:20 AM	4:15 PM
Yancey Park <i>Plum & Raspberry</i>	5520 Hansen Rd Edina, MN 55436	8:20 AM	4:20 PM
Southdale YMCA <i>Watermelon & Dragonfruit</i>	7355 York Ave S Edina, MN 55435 (Stop is in the back of the lot behind building.)	8:20 AM	4:20 PM
Eden Lake Elementary <i>Banana</i>	12000 Anderson Lakes Pkwy Eden Prairie, MN 55344 (Lot in BACK - near playground and ball fields)	8:20 AM	4:15 PM
Century Middle School <i>Blueberry</i>	18610 Ipava Ave Lakeville, MN 55044	8:40 AM	4:10 PM
Dred Scott Playfield <i>Pear - Stop One</i>	10820 Bloomington Ferry Road Bloomington, MN 55431 (Old Shakopee Rd & Bloomington Ferry Rd.)	8:20 AM	4:25 PM
Red Oak Elementary School <i>Pear - Stop Two</i>	7700 Old Carriage Ct Shakopee, MN 55379	8:35 AM	4:10 PM

LIFE AT CAMP

Our Camp Community

YMCA Programs are about learning skills, developing character and making friends. But few environments are as special as camp, where kids become a community as they learn both how to be more independent and how to contribute to a group as they engage in camp activities.

Camp Activities

Campers will experience a variety of activities during their camp experience. Our camp staff aim to encourage campers' creativity, skill development, 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. Also if necessary, to help us work with your camper, please fill out the [Camper Individual Care Plan](#).

Pro Parent Tip

Check your camper's backpack for information handouts and schedules on Monday on what your camper's week will look like.

Camp Staff. Each staff member goes through an extensive hiring process including criminal history background check, reference checks, and interview.

They receive many hours of training in camp program areas, relating to children, health and safety skills, and are First Aid and CPR certified.

Camp staff members are committed to being positive role models for campers.

Camp Groups.

Campers are assigned to camp groups based on age and program choice (i.e. Specialty/Traditional Camp). Counselors will lead the camp group of a maximum of 12 campers through a rotation of scheduled camp activities.

Buddy Requests

When registering for day camp, you will have the opportunity request two buddies for your camper. We do our best to honor these buddy requests, but there are times that it is not possible to place two campers in the same group (when age range is too wide and/or campers are registered for two different camps.)

Water Activities

All swimming and watercraft activities are supervised by certified lifeguards.

Personal Flotation Devices are worn by campers and staff at all times during boating/watercraft activities, and are provided by camp.

Each camper's swim ability will be tested on their first day of swimming. Campers may be required to wear life jacket depending on their swimming abilities. Campers are NOT required to swim.

Swim Tests

Green wristband test: Campers will Jump into the water, tread for 30 seconds, transition from treading to a front float for ten seconds, tread water for another ten seconds, and then swim ten yards.

All campers who choose to not take the swim test or are unable to pass, will be able to swim with a camp provided lifejacket.

All WeeBee Backpackers and Little Seeds (PreK-K) will be provided a camp lifejacket and will have to wait to try the test once they are in 1st grade.

Live Drills

To best prepare our lifeguard team for emergency response, we do occasional LIVE rescue drills during open swim. If campers are present for a live drill, they will be debriefed by staff following the drill. We do live drills because we champion aquatics safety!

BEHAVIOR POLICY

At the Y we believe that every family and child should have access to camp. We aspire to create a camp community that is safe, inclusive, welcoming, and exemplifies the Y's core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Equity. We recognize that campers come to us with a range of backgrounds, experiences, and history, and that this may be reflected in their mental or behavioral health while at camp. While working with children at camp our goal is to collaborate with families. To help in this effort, we utilize [an Individual Camper Care Plan](#) to help us inform and prepare our staff. We ask for families to fill out this form only if there are special concerns or situations that you feel we need to know. The more detailed information and helpful "tips" you can give, the better prepared we are to work with your child.

It is our goal that Day Camp staff make every effort to ensure all campers have a safe and positive camp experience. We believe our success at camp stems from a safety-first mentality. Day Camp is designed to be a fun and amazing outdoor experience for kids, but we recognize that the small and large group activities may not always be the best fit for all campers.

In order to best support the safety and enjoyment of camp, we approach Social Emotional Learning as strategy for systemic improvement for all as it supports adults to strengthen practices that promote equity. Social Emotional Learning is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. We believe that our campers have the opportunity for growth and support within the five pillars of Social Emotional Learning and development- self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and social awareness.

While working toward our goals of providing a safe and positive camp experience we may implement Action Plans. Action Plans are tailored to children and their specific needs. We work in partnership with campers, families, and camp staff to determine appropriate action plans for a camper. When determining action plans we strive to partner with families and meet campers where they are at in their development, all while keeping safety at the forefront.

We train and empower our camp counselors to support campers' individual needs with the implementation of action plans. These action plans are designed to work with campers on a personal basis to reach success while ensuring we are meeting each camper where they are at.

When a situation becomes harmful to an individual, the group, or when it cannot be resolved, then we will bring in additional support from the Camp Leadership team. Examples of this could be a camper running away from their group or not staying within sight and hearing range of their staff members, bullying toward another camper or staff. Our Day Camp Leadership teams include a small team of Blue Card® holders trained in CPI Nonviolent Crisis Intervention®. This team is trained in crisis intervention, de-escalation, non-restrictive and restrictive intervention. If camper behavior escalates to physical violence, endangering the health and safety of themselves, other children, or staff, purposefully hurting themselves, another child or staff, restrictive intervention will only be deployed as a last possible resort due to extreme danger or intent to harm. Our Y Camping teams hold a range of compassion and expertise, but we are not mental health professionals, social workers, or 1:1 camper to staff support.

We will support your child the best we can to make camp as successful as possible. If change has not been made after a thorough action plan, should a camper need support that goes beyond what we can safely provide, or, should a situation escalate to a level where we can no longer safely find a resolution for the camper an action plan may determine the need for a child to be removed from a program for any amount of time, including the remainder of the summer season.

The above serves as an overview of how our camps help to ensure the success and safety of all our campers. If you have questions regarding further details of our procedures, or if you have concerns regarding your camper's needs, please contact the day camp via phone or email.

BEHAVIOR POLICY CONTINUED...

Bullying

At YMCA of the North, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against bullying. Each participant is expected to treat all other participants respectfully and help each other achieve the best possible experience.

Parents and guardians may be called upon if a participant has difficulty meeting this expectation.

Our leadership addresses all incidents of bullying seriously. Our staff is trained to uphold our core values and follow proper communication channels to report and respond to bullying. Our team works with their groups to ensure all participants receive safe and equitable programming opportunities.

Living Our Values

The YMCA's core values are caring, equity, honesty, respect and responsibility. Living out these core values means there is no place for racism, bigotry and any form of verbal abuse and disrespect in our programs. Our camp teams immediately respond in line with our behavior policy to make sure camp remains a safe place for everyone. As you prepare your camper to join us, we ask for your partnership to review the behavior policy in our handbook and discuss how your camper can help contribute positively to our camp community during their time with us.

Pro Parent Tip

Have proactive conversations with your camper about appropriate behavior at camp. Include the importance of being respectful to others and keeping electronics off and in their backpack.

Technology at Camp

To foster quality outdoor experiences and to keep youth safe, **campers are NOT allowed to use electronic devices while at day camp or on the bus.** This includes cell phones, smart watches, gaming devices and digital cameras. **We highly recommend campers keep all electronics safe at home.** If campers must bring devices to camp, the expectation is that they are turned off and kept inside camper's backpacks. If parents need to contact their child, they can call the camp office. There is zero tolerance for using electronic devices in restrooms or changing spaces.



What happens if campers use electronics while at camp?

Campers will get one reminder to turn off their devices and place them in their backpack. If campers continue to use their electronics, they may be required to keep the device in the office until the end of the camp day. Parents may be asked to pick up their child's devices and/or talk to a camp program lead. The YMCA of the North is not responsible for lost or stolen electronics.

What risks do cell phones and electronics present at camp?

- *Damage or lost property.*
- *Privacy of campers.*
- *Unsupervised access to internet.*
- *Campers are preoccupied with media interactions during camp programming.*

What are the benefits of an electronic free camp experience?

- *Connecting to nature.*
- *Building strong connections with others.*
- *Social & emotional growth.*
- *Fewer distractions from camp experience.*

Are there any exceptions?

- *Campers who need their phones for medical purposes (example- blood sugar monitoring app)*
- *Some specialty camps may allow the use of electronics for taking photos and videos (example- Photography Camp.) These camps will include lessons on internet safety.*

WHAT TO BRING

Packing for camp

Dress your child for a day of outdoor fun. Please do not send your child's best clothing/shoes, as camp activities are outside and rugged. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's first & last name. This will assist us with claiming lost and found. **The YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. Valuables and meaningful items should be left at home.**

Bring

- Lunch and 2 snacks (*AM & PM*)
- Layers appropriate for the weather of the day
- Re-fillable water bottle
- Insect repellent and sunscreen*
- Swimsuit & Towel
- Backpack/Bag (labeled)—to carry all items
- Shoes with backstrap (please no flipflops/slides)
Close toed shoes (for climbing activities)
- Hand Sanitizer
- Camp store money and/or tie-dye item & plastic bag

Pro Parent Tip

Label your child's belongings with their first and last name, so we can help return them if they get lost!

Horse Camps

- Sturdy closed-toe riding shoes (boots with a heel are not required, but may allow older campers to utilize stirrups.)
- Loose fitting long pants—avoid capri pants, *no shorts for riding.*
- Bring shorts for time spent at camp if weather is appropriate.

*HAS-approved riding helmets are provided by camp.

Bike Helmets are not allowed for riding.

Overnight / Tripping Camps

Campers participating in overnight camping trips will be provided a backing list specific to the overnight experience.

Do Not Bring

- **Electronic Equipment, cell phones, iPods/mp3 players** (*except when needed for medical reasons or a media based specialty camp.*)
- Personal cards/games, sports equipment
Firearms, pocket knives or weapons
- Personal climbing or archery equipment.
- Alcohol or drugs
- Unregistered friends/family
- Motor Vehicles
- Pets or Animals

Lost & Found Policy

To support lost items being returned to campers, we highly encourage that campers be sent to camp with their personal belongings labeled. Camp will keep to these items for no longer than two weeks from the end of the session. After this time, these items will be donated or thrown away. Please note that all items will be held at the discretion of camp staff. Items that are soiled, damaged, or otherwise deemed not able to be safely stored will be disposed of.

The list of items camp will not hold on to includes but is not limited to: socks and underwear, all toiletries and toiletry bags, all swim gear, hats, t-shirts, pants, shorts, towels, water shoes, water bottles, sunglasses, toys, cameras, arts and crafts projects including tie dye. We highly encourage parents to label all items with their camper's name to help our staff identify items during the camp session. Many items look similar and it can be confusing for both staff and campers. As a reminder, please do not send your camper with anything that is irreplaceable. Things like jewelry or favorite stuffed animals can be easily lost or damaged. Electronics, including phones, are not permitted at camp. Phones may not be used at camp and will be confiscated and returned to families at the end of the day.

Camp is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items—including confiscated phones.

Health & Safety

Risks at Camp.

YMCA Day Camps are members of the American Camp Association, meaning we are rigorously held accountable on over 300 standards regarding health & wellness, transportation safety, aquatic and program safety and more. These standards guide us to use the best practices regarding camper safety, behavior management, staff training and much more.

Nonetheless, like all other experiences, camp is not risk-free. Please refer to our waiver on our website if you would like to review our indemnification policies.

Child Protection Policy.

Your child's safety is our top priority. If you witness or feel that your child is in danger of verbal, physical, sexual or emotional abuse while at camp, please report it to our Human Resource Department at 612-465-0551.

Medications

Please turn in your campers medication to the team member checking in your child. Medication must be in the original container and marked clearly with dosage, frequency and camper's name. This includes over-the-counter drugs. Please only send medication that will be needed for your child's week at camp. Additionally, a [Medication Release Form](#) will need to be completed upon arrival and turned in with medications. The form can be found on our website.

Accommodation Request

The YMCA of the North is committed to improving access to our programs and spaces for all members, participants, and children in our care. If your child has complex medical or behavioral needs, please fill out the YMCA's [Accommodation Request Form](#). YMCA of the North teams will then collaborate with you and your family to determine what accommodations we may be able to put in place and to provide a response guided by our core values if we are unable to accommodate part or all of your request.

Most YMCA Day Camp programs are not specially designed for children with complex medical or behavioral needs, so this form is a great first step for identifying potential accommodations.

Diabetes Medical Management Plan (DMMP)

If your child is diabetic, please provide a completed [DMMP](#) with your child's med form. If your child is not self sufficient in managing their diabetes, please complete the above accommodation request form.

Illness Procedures & Guidelines

If your child is ill and must miss camp, please notify camp by phone or email (email preferred).

For the health & safety of all campers, please do not send your child to camp if they are ill. If your child is ill and must miss camp, please notify camp by email. Please notify camp if your camper contracts a communicable disease. Please follow the below guidelines before sending your camper back to camp:

- **Fever over 100.4F:** please keep your camper home until they are fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours.
- **Influenza like illness:** Keep your camper home until fever free for 24 hours, without medication.
- **Vomiting or Diarrhea:** Please keep camper home until 24 hours after last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.
- **Bacterial Pink-Eye/Conjunctivitis:** Please keep camper home until they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours, or until doctor has determined they are no longer contagious. This includes no more mattering or drainage from the eyes.
- **Strep Throat:** Please keep camper home until they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours and are feeling well.
- **Possible Impetigo/Other Rash:** Please keep camper home until doctor determines whether or not rash is contagious. If treatment is started, camper should be on medication 24 hours before returning.
- **Head Lice:** Campers should begin the appropriate treatment before returning to camp.

Injury & Illness at Camp.

Campers are well looked after. Camp staff are First Aid & CPR certified.

We will treat bumps, bruises, and scrapes. For an injury that requires more attention than our staff are trained to do, Y Staff will:

- Call 911, perform immediate first aid and/or contact you or emergency contacts.
- If emergency transport is required, a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and remain until the parent/guardian arrives.

In the case of injury or illness, parents or emergency contacts are called to make arrangements for treatment or pick-up.

Health & Safety

Inclement Weather

Camp is held rain or shine. Please make sure your camper dresses for the weather, with appropriate rain gear. On rainy days, many time fun filled activities are held inside our rain shelters. Your child may return home wet and muddy! Updates regarding bussing delays and inclement weather will be communicated to families via email.

Heat Waves

To keep participants safe during extremely hot days, we will occasionally cancel and/or adapt certain activities. We follow these principles when caring for campers during warm weather:

1. Stay Hydrated: We encourage campers to drink water early and often.
2. Slow Down: We frequently rest and seek out shade / water.
3. Wear the Right Gear: We encourage campers to wear light loose and breathable clothes.
4. Listen to Your Body: We encourage campers to "listen to their bodies" and take breaks in the office if they feel dizzy, lightheaded or nauseated.

As always, you know your camper best. If you believe your camper will not thrive on a day with severe heat and would prefer to keep your camper home, please just notify your camp. You can also connect with camp to coordinate an early pickup if you decide that is most appropriate for your child. **Refunds will not be offered due to heat waves.**

Horse Camps & Weather

Like humans, horses are affected by the air temperature and relative humidity. Keeping campers, staff, and horses safe during the program is our top priority. Below are the guidelines we follow during our summer horse programs.

- If the air temperature combined with the relative humidity reaches over 130, ride / work time for horses will be limited. If the air temperature combined with the relative humidity excides 150, we will not be able to ride horses.
- Camp Wranglers will continue to provide horses with free access to clean water, relief from the sun and reduced ride time and intensity.
- During hot days at camp, Wranglers and Camp Counselors will continue to engage campers with educational and fun activities at the barn while following our YMCA of the North plans for warm weather conditions. Staff and campers will practice the principles above for staying safe in warm weather.

Pro Parent Tip

Please apply sunscreen before your child comes to camp!

Air Quality

In times of Air Quality Alerts, we carefully follow the guidance from the Minnesota/Wisconsin Pollution Control Agency, National Weather Service, CDC, and Minnesota/Wisconsin Department of Health.

- We monitor and adjust programming to ensure children can safely participate in our outdoor programs.
- Adjustments include slowing down physical activity, emphasizing hydration, and spending more time in our indoor spaces (when available).
- For campers with specific health concerns, sensitivity to air quality, or other concerns, we encourage guardians to send an N95 mask and speak with a camp leader for accommodations.
- As always, you know your camper best. If you believe your camper would not thrive on a day with poor air quality and would prefer to keep your camper home, please notify your camp. You can also refer to your camp's early pickup information if you determine an early pickup would be appropriate for your child., Refunds will not be offered due to air quality.

Deer Ticks at Camp

YMCA Gathering Pines is home to amazing natural landscapes, including grasslands and pasturelands. This space does contain ticks, so there are a few things you should note:

- Most of the ticks found at YMCA Gathering Pines are wood ticks. Wood ticks do NOT carry Lyme Disease.
- Deer ticks may carry Lyme Disease. We rarely receive reports of deer ticks being found at camp, but we want to make sure we are aware of the potential exposure.
- Please remind and/or help your camper check for ticks daily to reduce potential exposure to Lyme Disease.
- See this DNR site for information regarding [deer ticks](#) and Lyme Disease.