

YMCA Camp Oxbow 2023 Family Handbook

About YMCA Day Camps

YMCA Day Camps are wonderful places for your child to experience fun, outdoor adventures in the summer! 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 caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and equity.

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. Day Camp gives traditional camp experiences during the day. Each child will benefit from this connection with nature.

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Contact Information

YMCA Customer Service Center. 612-230-9622 or visit online at [www.ymcanorth.org/contact us](http://www.ymcanorth.org/contact-us). Contact them about registration, payments, financial assistance etc. Changes and/or cancellations must be completed in writing using the link above.

Camp Oxbow

Phone: 507-328-7340 (Summer Only)

Email: campoxbow@ymcamn.org

Website: [https://www.ymcamn.org/camps/day camp oxbow](https://www.ymcamn.org/camps/day-camp-oxbow)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ymcacampoxbow/>

Address: 5731 County Rd 105 NW Byron, MN 55920

Summer Office Hours: 9:30am - 3:00pm

Nicole Weninger, Camp Director.

507-215-8395

Email: nicole.weninger@ymcanorth.org

This Document

This document undergoes occasional changes.

You can always find the most up to date version at [https://www.ymcamn.org/camps/day camp oxbow/forms documents](https://www.ymcamn.org/camps/day-camp-oxbow/forms-documents)

Camp Open House & Family Nights

Pre-Camp Open House: TBD

Camp will be holding an Open House before summer begins; follow us on Facebook to see the most up to date event details. During summer families will have the opportunity to join us for an Open House at camp on the following dates:

-Friday, June 16th

-Friday, July 21st

-Friday, August 18th

Open Houses are from 5:00-7:00pm.

Communication

While your camper is at camp, all communication should be directed to the Camp office (507-328-7340). We encourage campers to learn independence while at camp. Speaking with your child during camp hours is not encouraged. If you have an emergency please call (507-215-8395) or email Nicole Weninger at

nicole.weninger@ymcanorth.org. Most of our weekly communication is done through counselor notes that will be sent home in your camper's backpack.

Letter from the Camp Directors

WELCOME!

YMCA Camp Oxbow is excited to present an outstanding program this summer. 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 that your child is sure to enjoy. Our staff is caring, nurturing and well trained to provide a safe and fun environment for our campers. Please call us with any questions or concerns you may have. We are looking forward to a wonderful summer!

- Nicole Weninger, Director

Registration and Forms

Registration

Registration can be completed online at https://www.ymcanorth.org/camps/day_camp_oxbow or by downloading a registration form from https://www.ymcanorth.org/camps/day_camp_oxbow

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 one week prior to your child attending camp, unless you have a pre-approved payment plan established with the Customer Service Center.

Diversity & Inclusion

It is the YMCA of the North's vision to serve our community relentlessly, 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 directly if you have perspective on you camper that may help us to better support your camper while they are at camp or complete our [Individual Camper Care Plan](#), found on our website.

Forms

All forms are available at https://www.ymcanorth.org/camps/day_camp_oxbow under the 'forms and documents' tab.

The ***Medication Form*** must be submitted if you are sending medications, *prescription or non-prescription*, with your camper to camp.

The ***Camp Store Form*** may be turned in if you would like your camper to be able to purchase items from the camp store.

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

Scholarships

The YMCA offers need-based financial assistance to help people access the programs that are important to them. To apply please go to <https://www.ymcanorth.org/scholarships>.

About Camp Oxbow

Transportation

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

You may also elect to drop your child off at camp between 8:45-9:15am daily. Pick up is from 3:15-3:45pm.

Pro Tip

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

Please be sure to check the website one week prior to know exact bus times.

Pick-up

Safety of your child is our number one priority.

Whoever is picking up the participant **must have a photo ID and be listed on the Authorized Pick-Up section of the registration form.** We will only release children to individuals listed as authorized to pick up.

If you need to add an authorized pick up or change a pick up location, camp needs that in writing. Please email campoxbow@ymcamn.org to make any changes or additions.

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.

Pro Tip

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

CAMP OXBOW BUSSING/BEFORE AND AFTER-CARE INFORMATION—2023

Registration issues or questions about wait lists:

Elk Bus

Jefferson Elementary

June 12 – August 18

1201 10th Ave NE, Rochester, MN

Pick Up: 8:35AM | Drop Off: 4:10PM

Gibbs Elementary

June 12 – August 18

5525 56th St NW, Rochester, MN

Pick Up: 8:55AM | Drop Off: 3:50PM

Owl Bus

June 12 – August 18

Pinewood Elementary

1900 Pinewood Rd SE #5833, Rochester, MN

Pick Up: 8:30AM | Drop Off: 4:15PM

Bamber Valley Elementary

2001 Bamber Valley Rd SW, Rochester, MN

Pick Up: 8:45AM | Drop Off: 4:05PM

Lourdes High School

2800 19th St NW, Rochester, MN

Pick Up: 9:00AM | Drop Off: 3:50PM

Families who are dropping their camper off directly at camp and are not choosing a bus: **Be prepared to show your photo ID!**

- **Camp Oxbow Address: 5731 County Rd 105 NW, Byron, MN 55920**
- **Drop off: 9:15-9:30am / Pick up: 3:15-3:30pm**

You will show your ID at the entrance, then continue to the correct zone, where a staff will check in with you to get your camper. Please remember to stay in your car and we will bring your camper to you.

YMCA CAMP OXBOW BEFORE & AFTER CARE SITE

The schedule for pick up/drop off locations & times below are subject to change. Check website one week prior to session for exact bus pick up/drop off times.

Gibbs Elementary: 5525 56th St NW, Rochester, MN 55901

Drop off: 7:00 – 8:55 a.m.

Pick up: 3:50 – 6:00 p.m.

* Late fees will be assessed after 6:00 p.m.

POLICY: Any violation of our posted hours of operation will result in a late pick-up charge of \$1.00 per minute per child for children in our care before or after program hours. Parents/guardians are held accountable for these additional fees. Late fees will be assessed on with the next tuition payment. Habitual lateness or abuse of this policy could result in expulsion from the program.

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 Groups. Campers are assigned to camp groups based on age. Counselors will lead the camp group through a rotation of scheduled camp activities.

In addition to the group rotations, camp often gives campers the opportunity to interact with some of the other groups through large group, all camp, or camper’s choice activities.

Large group interaction will be subject to current COVID protocols as established through the YMCA per the Minnesota Department of Health and the CDC.

Pro 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 & national sex offender check, reference checks, and interview.

They receive 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 Store

Store order forms may be filled out and turned in with payment to your camper’s counselor. Make any checks payable to: **YMCA**

*Items will also be available during Open Houses and Family Nights.

Lost and Found

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, our day camp is limiting items held in lost and found after each camp session ends. We want to be mindful of safe storage space and how to prevent exposure of staff and campers from items, week to week. As such, camp will only hold the following specific list of items:

1. Jackets / Sweatshirts
3. Prescription glasses, durable medical equipment, prescription medication
4. Personal equipment
5. Shoes (not water shoes or sandals)
6. Backpacks

Camp will keep 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 these 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 including swim suits and goggles, hats, t-shirts, pants, shorts, towels, water shoes including sandals, water bottles, sunglasses, toys, cameras, and arts and crafts projects including tie dye. *We highly encourage grown-ups 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. Personal items 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.

Life at Camp

Camp Activities

Campers will experience a variety of activities during their camp experience. 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. Also if necessary, to help us work with your camper, please fill out the Camper **Individual Care Plan**, found on our website.

Pro Tip

If your child is especially prone to mosquito bites, be sure to send long layers (long sleeve shirts/pants) to help prevent future discomfort.

Water Activities

At Camp Oxbow, we are determining what, if any, water activities will occur for the summer of 2023. In the event that water activities do take place, we will adhere to the following policies:

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.

Ages 4-5 (Weebackpackers) always wear PFD's during swim time and stay in the shallow end.

Camper Behavior

Caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and equity are the YMCA's core values and the foundation of our behavior guidelines.

Camp's general behavior rules:

- Campers take **responsibility** for their actions
- Campers **respect** themselves, one another, the environment and camp equipment
- Campers should be **honest** with one another and their counselors
- Campers should **care** for themselves and one another.

Camp Staff are trained to encourage positive behavior and redirect misbehavior. We make every attempt to work with children to teach appropriate behavior. Parents/guardians will be notified if consistent behavior problems occur.

Unacceptable Camper Behaviors

- Fighting & Bullying
- Refusing to follow behavior guidelines & rules
- Use of profanity, vulgarity or obscenity
- Stealing or damaging personal or camp property
- Refusal to cooperate with staff
- Leaving the program area, without permission

Incidences will be addressed in a case by case manner. Camp Oxbow reserves the right to send a camper home, without a refund, if consistent misbehavior affects the experience of other campers and/or camp programming.

Life at Camp

Camper 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. The individual Camper Care Plan can be found here: [Individual Camper Care Plan](#)

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 Ac-

tion 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, endangering the health and safety of themselves, other children, or staff, purposefully hurting themselves, another camper, or a staff, physical violence, or bullying toward another camper or staff. Our Y Camping teams hold a range of compassion and expertise in certain areas, 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 Camp Director.

What to Bring

Traditional Camp/Wee Bees

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 and last name.** This will assist us with claiming lost and found. Camp Oxbow is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. Valuables and meaningful items should be left at home.

Pro 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.

Daily Packing List

- Healthy lunch and snack
- Clothing appropriate for the days weather
- Swimsuit & towel
- Re-fillable water bottle
- Insect repellent and sunscreen (spray kind preferred)
- Backpack/Bag (labeled)—to tote all items
- Folder for all take-home schedules

Pro Tip

If time allows it, please apply sunscreen and bug spray before your child comes to camp.

Do Not Bring

- Electronic Equipment, cell phones, iPods/mp3 players, and smartwatches. Personal sports equipment should remain at home.
- Firearms, pocket knives or weapons
- Alcohol or drugs
- Unregistered friends/family
- Pets/animals

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, Your child may return home wet and muddy! Many times, fun filled activities are held in our rain shelters at camp.

In extreme heat situations, certain activities may be cancelled to keep campers safe. Campers will be monitored and encouraged to drink more water. More water games and shaded activities will be encouraged.

In the case of severe weather, campers will be bussed to a nearby indoor location. The Camp Director will notify the YMCA as soon as possible about camper safety and any bussing delays. Updates will also be posted on our Facebook page, and sent via email and pre-recorded call.

Illness Procedures & Guidelines. 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 phone or email. Sick day refund requests can only be approved with a doctor's note.

If your camper contracts a communicable disease, parents/guardians must notify the Camp Director as soon as possible. The camp director will inform other participants in writing about the communicable disease. Please follow the below guidelines before sending your camper back to camp:

- Fever over 100F: 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: 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: Keep camper home until first completed treatment and no lice and/or nits are visible.

Injury & Illness at Camp. Campers are well looked after. All 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 contact you or emergency contacts, if you cannot be reached.
- 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 illness, parents or emergency contacts are called to make arrangements for treatment or pick-up. If your child is ill and must miss camp, please notify camp by phone or email.

Pro Tip

Don't be alarmed if you get a call from camp. We like to get input on even minor health, homesickness, and behavioral issues.

Medications. Medication will be turned into the director upon arrival. 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.

Child Protection Policy. Your child's safety is our top priority. If you witness or feel that your child is in danger of any type of verbal, physical, sexual or emotional abuse, please report it to our Human Resource Department at 612-465-0551. Parents/guardians may observe the program at any time.

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, 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.