

YMCA Camp Christmas Tree 2022 Family 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 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 Christmas Tree

Phone: 952-472-1018 (Summer Only)

Email: Camp.Christmastree@ymcamn.org

Website: https://www.ymcanorth.org/camps/day_camp_christmas_tree

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

Address: 6365 Game Farm Rd E, MN 55364

Summer Office Hours: 8:00am - 5:00pm

Max Ostenso, Camp Program Coordinator.

763-230-6549

Email: Maxwell.ostenso@ymcamn.org

Kit Swanson, Camp Director.

952-582-8242

Email: Kit.swanson@ymcamn.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_christmas_tree/forms_publications

Camp Open House & Family Nights

Pre-Camp Open House: Thursday, June 9th

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 a Family Open House each Thursday (weather permitting). Hot dog/Brat meals are available for purchase with proceeds going towards our scholarship fund. Families will also be able to do some camp activities like canoeing and archery.

Family Open Houses are from 5:30-8:00pm.

Communication

While your camper is at camp, all communication should be directed to the Camp office (952-472-1018). 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 our Camp office first then call Max Ostenso at 763-230-6549. 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 Christmas Tree is excited to present an outstanding program this summer. I am very privileged to be a part of a camp family that hears the need for some semblance of normalcy and provide an opportunity for youth to engage in the outdoors! We are committed to bringing our families, staff and community a FUN and SAFE camp experience. THANK YOU for taking the time to learn more about what we are doing to accomplish this! We look forward to hearing from you and hopefully seeing you and your camper at camp this year!

- Kit Swanson, Director



Registration and Forms

Registration

Registration can be completed online at https://www.ymcanorth.org/camps/day_camp_christmas_tree

or by downloading a registration form from https://www.ymcanorth.org/camps/day_camp_christmas_tree

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 www.ymcanorth.org/camps/day_camp_christmas_tree under the 'forms and publications' 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 **Teen Release Waiver** is for campers (12+) in our teen programs, that when filled out and submitted allows teens to check themselves out from the bus.

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.

Personal Pricing Plan

The Personal Pricing Plan is a needs-based scholarship fund. Day Camp scholarships can be applied toward a maximum of two weeks per child. To apply for personal pricing, download an application at: ymcamn.org/summer. Enter the key words: Personal Pricing in the top right corner and follow instructions. Please submit application with, registration form to the Customer Service Center.



About Camp Christmas Tree

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 8:30-9:00am daily. Pick up is from 4:10 - 4:30pm.

Directions

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.

From East- Travel West on 394. Continue onto Hwy 12. Turn left at Cty. Rd.83/Halgren Rd. Continue onto Cty. Rd.110. Keep left at the fork. Turn right on Game Farm Rd. E.

From West- Travel East on Babcock Blvd (Hwy 12). Turn right at County Rd 83/Halgren Rd. Continue onto County Rd 110. Keep left at the fork. Turn right at Game Farm Rd E

From South- From Arboretum Blvd (Hwy 5). Turn left at County Road 13/Rolling Acres Rd. Turn left at MN-7 W. Turn right at County Rd 44. Turn right at Bartlett Blvd/ County Rd 110. Continue to follow Bartlett Blvd. Continue onto Commerce Blvd/County Road 110. Continue to follow Commerce Blvd. Turn left at Game Farm Rd E.

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 (emergency contacts) and carrying their photo ID.

If you need to add an authorized pick up or change a pick up location, camp needs that in writing. Please call our office at 952-472-1018 and email camp.christmastree@ymcamn.org to make any changes or additions.

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.

Pro Tip

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



YMCA CAMP Christmas Tree 2022 Bus Information

Ridgedale YMCA (for before/after care kids only)
<i>12301 Ridgedale Drive, Minnetonka</i>
Interfaith Outreach (IOCP)
<i>1605 County Road 101, Plymouth</i>
Wayzata Community Church
<i>125 Wayzata Blvd, Wayzata</i>
Eisenhower Elementary School
<i>1001 Hwy 7, Hopkins</i>
Excelsior Elementary
<i>441 Oak Street, Excelsior</i>
Glen Lake Elementary
<i>4901 Woodridge Road, Minnetonka</i>
Northern Tool & Equipment
<i>17505 Hwy 7, Minnetonka</i>
Ridgedale Shopping Center SE Lot
<i>12431 Wayzata Blvd, Minnetonka</i>
Northern Tool & Equipment
<i>17505 Hwy 7, Minnetonka</i>
Orono Intermediate School
<i>685 N Old Crystal Bay Rd, Long Lake</i>
Lakewinds Food Coop
<i>17501 Minnetonka Blvd, Minnetonka</i>
Chanhassen Recreation Center
<i>2310 Coulter Blvd, Chanhassen</i>
Chaska Community Park
<i>1151 Hundertmark Rd, Chaska</i>
Southview Elementary
<i>225 W 4th Street, Waconia</i>
St. Bonifacius School
<i>8801 Wildwood Avenue, Street Bonifacius</i>
Park Spanish Immersion
<i>9400 Cedar Lake Rd, St Louis Park</i>

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

- When registering, if you selected “No Bus Needed,” you can drop and pick up directly at camp. Camp Drop Off is between 8:30 - 9:00am. Camp Pick Up is between 4:10- 4:30pm.
- Please note, you are not able to register your child for a different morning and afternoon bus stop locations. Please contact camp if you need to make special arrangements.



YMCA CAMP CHRISTMAS TREE BEFORE & AFTER CARE SITES

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.

Ridgedale YMCA: 12301 Ridgedale Drive, Minnetonka

Drop off: 7:00 – 8:00 a.m.

Pick up: 4:30 – 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 and program choice (i.e. Specialty/ Traditional Camp). 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.

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.

Campers registered for Specialty Camps will spend a portion of each day in their specialty area—weather permitting. If weather makes it unsafe to run a specialty activity, camp staff will lead alternative programming. In addition, they will do their best to make up activity time lost later in the week **if the schedule allows**.

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

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.
- **Campers should be equitable...**

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 participate in activities or cooperate with staff
- Leaving the program area, without permission

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



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 Heritage is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. Valuables and meaningful items should be left at home.

Daily Packing List

- Healthy lunch and snack
- Layers 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
- Face Mask & Hand Sanitizer

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, *except when requested for specialty camps.*
- Firearms, pocket knives or weapons
- Alcohol or drugs
- Unregistered friends/family
- Pets/animals

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.

Specialty Camps

Please bring the items on the Traditional Camp packing list. The following are additional items specific to the specialty program.

Water Sports Camps (Canoe Camps & Water Adventure Camps)

- Swimsuit and towel each day
- Footwear that can get wet

Fishing Camps

- Poles, bait and life jackets provided by camp
- Campers may bring a personal fishing pole and tackle box to be left at camp until Friday. **Please remove all hooks for bus ride and label all personal equipment.**
- Bait is provided by camp
- Footwear that can get wet

Archery Camps

- Bows & arrows provided by camp. Personal bows and arrows are prohibited.

Climbing Camps

- Closed toed shoes **required**



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.