

YMCA CAMP PEPIN:

PARENT INFORMATION

SUMMER 2024



ESTABLISHED IN 1935

YMCA CAMP PEPIN

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YMCA CAMP PEPIN: PARENT INFORMATION

■ - New information for 2024!

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WELCOME TO THE YMCA CAMP PEPIN FAMILY!

As a part of the Red Wing Family YMCA, Camp Pepin is proud to have been serving youth and adults on the shores of Lake Pepin near Stockholm, Wisconsin, since 1935. For years, our staff have been committed to providing fun and safe experiences to campers of all ages in a beautiful outdoor setting.

Attending summer camp is a very exciting time for campers and parents, and it is natural for both to be a bit anxious about the camper leaving the comforts of home, adopting new routines, and meeting many new friends. To ease these feelings, we would like to familiarize you and your camper with our procedures to minimize that "first-day anxiety." This planning guide was designed for you and your camper to use as a reference tool. Please read through it to acquaint yourself with information that you will want to know about summer camp. If you have any further questions, please reach out to the Camp Director, Erik Burton, at eburton@redwingymca.org or call at 651-800-9316.

We feel honored that you have chosen YMCA Camp Pepin for your summer experience and look forward to sharing with you the values and traditions that have been, and continue to be, the foundation of our camp family.



PREPARING FOR CAMP

CAMP FORMS

All camp forms and documents can be accessed, completed, and submitted within your [CampInTouch Dashboard](#). Please have these forms completed at least two weeks before the beginning of your camper's session.

HEALTH FORM:

The Health Form must be completed by a parent or guardian annually, and the information on the form should be as recent as possible. If there are special medical concerns, be sure to indicate them on the form. Under the rare circumstances that medical attention is necessary, you will be billed directly from the medical facility. Accident insurance will not be available to campers through the YMCA. The responsibility for the cost of medical care is assumed entirely by the camper and their parent/guardian. The emergency statement on the form must be signed so that immediate treatment can be given in the event that you cannot be contacted.

AUTHORIZED ADULT PICK-UP FORM:

The Authorized Adult Pick-Up Form indicates which adults are authorized to pick up your camper(s) at the end of their session. We require all adults picking up campers to show an ID to confirm their identity. For safety reasons, campers will NOT be released to an adult that is not on this form. This is to ensure that we are sending your campers home with someone who *should* be taking them home. If there is an emergency or change in plans, you can either call the camp office, email Erik, or update the form online through the Dashboard.

YMCA LIABILITY WAIVER FORM:

This is the Red Wing Family YMCA's standard liability form required to participate in any activity on property.

PHOTO RELEASE FORM:

This document gives us permission for two different things related to photos:

- Use photos that may contain your camper for promotional purposes.
- Post photos online in an album for parents to access. This album is private and can only be accessed using a password that will be unique to each week's families.

CAMPER EXPECTATIONS AGREEMENT:

This form is meant to be completed with both the parent and camper(s) present and covers the expectations that camp staff have of our campers. Use the form as a conversation starter to review and discuss these expectations so everyone is prepared to have an unforgettable time at Camp Pepin.

*CAMPER ACTIVITY PREFERENCES FORM:

This form asks each camper to provide us with their top 5 choices of potential skill classes they'd be interested in, ranked in order of preference. Please help your camper with reading the options, but please don't guide or influence their selections – let them make their list on their own, free from outside influences. (More on why this is important, and how a camper's classes are selected, on page 9.)

***This document will not be available until June, as we will finalize our activity/class list during staff training.**

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

ARRIVAL	DEPARTURE
Sunday 3:00-3:30 PM	Friday 4:30 PM - Closing Ceremony 5:00 PM - 5:30 PM - Camper Checkout

ARRIVAL DAY:

On their day of arrival, campers should check-in at Camp Pepin between 3:00-3:30 PM. They will be greeted by camp staff, who will show them to their cabins and introduce them to their counselors. Please plan on arriving no earlier than 3:00 PM, as our staff will not be available prior to this time.

DEPARTURE DAY:

All adults picking up campers on their day of departure are invited and encouraged to attend our closing ceremony at 4:30 PM. Campers will be checked out and dismissed by their counselors following the ceremony. Campers should not be left past 5:30 PM. Under no circumstances will campers be released to anyone not listed on the Authorized Adult Pick-up Form without prior written notification. Please make sure to bring your ID for pick-up, as the name on the ID will be checked to match the Authorized Adult Pick-Up form.

*In case of an emergency at Camp Pepin due to weather conditions or other circumstances, parents and guardians will be notified by the Red Wing Family YMCA of an alternate drop-off/pick-up time and/or location for their campers.



PACKING LIST

The following items are suggested for a comfortable and safe experience at camp. Please pack items in durable suitcases, backpacks, or duffel bags, rather than in plastic bags, which tend to rip easily (causing belongings to become lost). You may also want to include a laundry bag (or purchase one from the camp store!) for dirty clothes, since there are no laundry services at Camp Pepin. Finally, remember to label all the camper's belongings.

GEAR:

- Sleeping bag/bed sheet
- Sleeping pad for campout (camp has a limited amount available if needed)
- Pillow
- Flashlight/headlamp
- Hat
- Rain Jacket
- Water bottle
- Bug spray/sunscreen
- Towel
- Water shoes (to protect against sharp Zebra Mussels)
- Close-toed tennis shoes
- Sandals
- A silly item to wear for Zany Campfire (optional)

TOILETRIES:

- Bag/basket/container for carrying toiletries
- Shampoo/conditioner/body wash
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Anti-itch ointment
- Any prescriptions needed for the week (packed separately, in ORIGINAL packaging, and prepared to turn over to the nurse upon arrival)

CLOTHING:

- Socks and underwear (6-7 pairs)
- Swimsuit (1-2)
- Sweatshirt/light jacket (1)
- Shorts (3-4)
- Pants (2)
- Shirts - short and long sleeve (6-7)
- Sleepwear (1-2 sets)
- Dirty laundry bag
- 1-2 items for tie-dyeing (optional – tie-dye specific items are also sold in the camp store)

SPECIALTY CAMP ITEMS:

Prevailing Winds:

- Water shoes that can be tightly secured
- An additional swimsuit
- 1-2 water shirts (optional)

New Heights:

- Secure tennis shoes for climbing – (boots can often too clunky and heavy)
- 1-2 light, long sleeve shirts for sun protection

Survive and Thrive:

- An extra pair of long pants and long sleeve shirt for added protection from brush and bugs

Ambitious Anglers:

- Sunglasses
- Fishing pole (optional) – If they prefer their own fishing pole, you are welcome to bring it. However, Camp Pepin is not responsible for any lost or damaged equipment. Camp has a supply of poles for any camper who needs one.

WHAT NOT TO BRING:

Summer camp is best enjoyed safe and technology-free. The items below are not allowed during Camp Pepin's summer programs:

- Food, candy, and soda
- Cash
- Cell phones
- Video games or devices
- Knives or firearms
- Fireworks
- Matches or lighters
- Tobacco products, alcohol, or drugs
- Pets

WHEN YOUR CAMPER ARRIVES

OUR STAFF

Upon arrival, your family will be immediately greeted and escorted to your camper's cabin by our young adults and camping professionals who are skilled in making campers feel welcome and at home. To qualify for a position at Camp Pepin, our staff members must go through a rigorous application and screening process (including multiple references and background checks) before they may even be considered for employment. Once hired, they participate in extensive, mandatory training sessions on safety and working with youth.

CABIN ASSIGNMENTS

Your child may request one person to be with them in their cabin. When requests involve campers of different ages, our policy is to have the older camper move down to the younger group (within reason). That said, we strongly encourage siblings to consider bunking with their appropriate age groups. We often see that campers can overcome and grow as individuals when they are on their own. There are still plenty of opportunities for siblings to see each other throughout the day. We will make every effort to accommodate every request, but requests are not guaranteed. Individual beds cannot be reserved and are assigned on a first-come basis on check-in day.

Campers who attend camp with a group of friends should keep in mind that camp is about making new friends and being welcoming to everyone. We're glad that you and your friends decided to spend a week at Camp Pepin but be sure to be welcoming and inclusive to all members of your cabin.

MEDICATIONS

All medications that your child will need while at camp, including over the counter (vitamins, creams, lotions, etc.) must be handed in to the Camp Nurse upon arrival. The medication's container should be clearly marked with the name of the child, the name of the medication, the dosage, and frequency needed. **We cannot dispense any medication that is not in its original container**, and we can only give the dosage in the manner prescribed. If medications are to be dispensed at times or in dosages other than by what is prescribed on the bottle, you must bring a letter signed by your doctor stating the new dosage and/or times to be given.

SWIM CHALLENGE

All campers have the option of taking a swimming challenge on check-in day to demonstrate their level of swimming ability. This helps to establish the safest areas in which the camper may swim. This is sometimes a point of stress for campers but in reality, it doesn't make any difference to what campers can participate in. Campers who are non-swimmers are required to wear life jackets while in the water, although everyone is required to wear life jackets while boating or outside of the swim area – regardless of swimming ability.

LIFE AT CAMP

RESIDENT CAMP SCHEDULE

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:00 AM		Early Birds Wake Up Call	Early Birds Wake Up Call	Early Birds Wake Up Call	Early Birds Wake Up Call	Early Birds Wake Up Call
7:15 AM		Early Birds Report	Early Birds Report	Early Birds Report	Early Birds Report	Early Birds Report
7:30 AM		Camper Wake Up	Camper Wake Up	Camper Wake Up	Camper Wake Up	Camper Wake Up
7:45 AM		Flagpole	Flagpole	Flagpole	Flagpole	Flagpole
8:00 AM		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:15 AM						
8:30 AM		Cabin Clean-Up	Cabin Clean-Up	Cabin Clean-Up	Cabin Clean-Up	Cabin Clean-Up
8:45 AM						
9:00 AM		Skill Class #1	Skill Class #1	Skill Class #1	Skill Class #1	Skill Class #1
9:15 AM		(Dismiss at 10:10)	(Dismiss at 10:10)	(Dismiss at 10:10)	(Dismiss at 10:10)	(Dismiss at 10:10)
9:30 AM						
9:45 AM		Skill Class #2	Skill Class #2	Skill Class #2	Skill Class #2	Skill Class #2
10:00 AM		(Dismiss at 11:10)	(Dismiss at 11:10)	(Dismiss at 11:10)	(Dismiss at 11:10)	(Dismiss at 11:10)
10:15 AM						
10:30 AM		Skill Class #3	Skill Class #3	Skill Class #3	Skill Class #3	Skill Class #3
10:45 AM		(Dismiss at 12:10)	(Dismiss at 12:10)	(Dismiss at 12:10)	(Dismiss at 12:10)	(Dismiss at 12:10)
11:00 AM						
11:15 AM		Peace Pole	Peace Pole	Peace Pole	Peace Pole	Peace Pole
11:30 AM						
11:45 AM		Lunch/Songs	Lunch/Songs	Lunch/Songs	Lunch/Songs	Lunch/Songs
12:00 PM						
12:15 PM						
12:30 PM						
12:45 PM						
1:00 PM						
1:15 PM						
1:30 PM						
1:45 PM						
2:00 PM						
2:15 PM						
2:30 PM						
2:45 PM						
3:00 PM						
3:15 PM						
3:30 PM	Check In & Icebreakers					
3:45 PM						
4:00 PM						
4:15 PM						
4:30 PM	Swim tests					
4:45 PM						
5:00 PM						
5:15 PM	Prep for dinner/flagpole					
5:30 PM	Flag Pole					
5:45 PM						
6:00 PM	Rules					
6:15 PM						
6:30 PM						
6:45 PM	Dinner					
7:00 PM						
7:15 PM						
7:30 PM	All Camp Activity #1					
7:45 PM						
8:00 PM						
8:15 PM						
8:30 PM	All Camp Activity #2					
8:45 PM						
9:00 PM						
9:15 PM						
9:30 PM	Prepare for Bed					
9:45 PM						
10:00 PM	Taps/Lights Out					

CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES

One of the incredible things about Camp Pepin is the wide variety of activities and skill classes campers can participate in; between the skills and interests from our staff, the waterfront, and our backwoods area, everyone can find something that appeals to them. In fact, there are so many things to do that it will be impossible to do everything one would like to in a single week of camp. We do everything we can to create a schedule for our campers to be able to participate in the things they are most interested in for their skill classes and cabin activities.

How are Skill Classes assigned?

Prior to their arrival at camp, campers will complete the Activity Preference Form. The form asks each camper to provide us with their top 5 choices of potential skill classes they'd be interested in, ranked in order of preference. Having campers complete these selections at home is a new process we are implementing to be more organized and prepared for the week.

That being said, our biggest hesitation with this new approach is that we are worried that parents will guide or influence their campers to participate in activities that they want their camper to take, or that they would find interesting, instead of allowing the campers to select and rank their preferences on their own. This was one of the great aspects of the campers making these selections after they arrive at camp, as campers could sign up for whatever class sounds most interesting to them, free from outside influences. This allowed us to run atypical or unique classes/activities such as American Sign Language, Creating Comics, or the Relaxation Station, with campers who want to be there. We know that campers may need assistance with reading and selecting their activities, but we sincerely request that parents allow their campers to select and rank the activities free from outside persuasion. We encourage campers to try new things, even if they may seem difficult or outside their comfort zone, because it is an important part of personal growth and often results in positive experiences.

When creating each week's Skill Class schedule, we do everything we can to make sure every camper is placed into their first choice of class. After that, we use their next four choices to fill their remaining two classes. It's important to understand that it's impossible to guarantee that all classes will be available. Sometimes, a camper may be the only one to list a specific class that week, and we can't offer a class with one participant. Other times, two choices might conflict with each other's time slots, and they can only be placed in one of those classes. In the case of the High Ropes and Boating classes, they require two of the three time slots and sometimes cause conflicts with other choices. If a camper does not get a class they are interested in, there may be opportunities to still try out the activity during their Cabin Activities or during their Explore time (free time).

Note: For safety reasons, certain activities have an age cut-off of 6th grade and up. This includes our Ropes Course and Zip Line course, which requires a certain height for safe use. The Boating skill class is another activity that has an age cut-off, because of the strength and skill required to participate in some the higher-leveled techniques (such as different strokes, covering longer distances, righting an overturned canoe, etc.) with a watercraft on Lake Pepin. Boats can be used during Explore time and during cabin activities by campers of all ages, as the more difficult skills are not taught at that time, they are contained within the boating area, and there are additional supervisors present to assist campers.

How are Cabin Activities assigned?

On the first day of camp, each cabin gathers for a cabin meeting to discuss expectations for the cabin, get to know each other, and to select their cabin activities. Counselors talk the cabin through the different options for cabin activities, and gauge interest through voting. That said, counselors are trained to recognize when voices are frequently getting outnumbered and are intentional about including activities for everyone in the cabin. This also allows for the campers in the cabin to try things they might not initially think they would find interesting, and step outside their comfort zone. In the end, each cabin submits a ranked list of 15 potential activities and will be scheduled for 10 of them throughout the week.

We believe in giving campers a significant voice in the structure and scheduling of their activities here at Camp Pepin. We want the classes to be something they are interested in and passionate about, so we offer a wide range of classes and interests and don't assign activities arbitrarily. However, in reality it is incredibly difficult to get *every* camper into *every* activity they want to do during their time at camp. Please help your camper to understand this sentiment if they express disappointment at the end of their time at camp. Instead, focus on all the things they *did* get to do, and help them look forward to all the things to do during their next time at camp.



MEALS

We recognize the importance of meals as part of the summer camp experience and design our menu options to be both delicious and healthy. In addition to each meal, a salad bar is provided at lunch and dinner, and a cereal, bread/bagel, and fruit bar are provided at breakfast. Our kitchen staff can accommodate most food allergies and restrictions. Please make sure to list any dietary needs on your camper's health form and application.

Below is an example of a menu from last year. This year, the menu may be different, but this will give you an idea of what the week could look like.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast - A bread/bagel bar, oatmeal, yogurt, and fruit are provided each day.		Breakfast Burritos Mixed peppers and onions, sausage, eggs, cheese Breakfast Potatoes	Pancakes & Sausage Buttermilk pancakes Sausage links Breakfast Potatoes	Biscuits/Gravy Buttermilk biscuit Homestyle gravy w/ sausage Scrambled eggs	French Toast French toast Bacon Scrambled eggs	Cinnamon Rolls Cinnamon roll Scrambled Eggs Sausage Links
Lunch - Every lunch has an extensive salad bar available.		Sub Sandwiches Sliced turkey or ham, cheese, lettuce, tomato Potato Salad Carrots/dip	Sloppy Joes Sloppy Joe Sandwich Sweet Potato Tots Roasted Zucchini	Chicken Sandwiches Breaded Chicken Sandwich Roasted Carrots Kettle Chips	Tacos Beef or chicken tacos with assorted toppings Tortilla chips, salsa, cheese	Grill Out Grilled hamburgers, brats, or chicken breasts Corn on the Cob Baked Beans
Dinner - Every dinner has an extensive salad bar available.	Pizza Pepperoni, Sausage, and veggie pizza Broccoli Cookie	Lasagna Sausage or Veggie Lasagna Garlic Breadsticks Roasted Zucchini Brownie	Fajitas Peppers, onions, grilled chicken Cilantro Lime Rice and Beans Churros	Mac & Cheese Macaroni & Cheese Garlic Bread Broccoli Ice Cream	Orange Chicken Orange Chicken Stir Fry Veggies Rice Fortune Cookie	

*** Please do not send candy, cookies, snacks, drinks or any type of food with or to your camper or cabin group. ***

Food in the cabins will attract mice, ants, and other critters, and cause "sharing problems" within the cabin. We would appreciate your understanding and cooperation. The camp menu provides a well-balanced diet, and snacks are available at the Camp Store. Food packages sent to camp are held until the last day of the session and then given to campers as they check out.

CAMPOUTS

Returning this year is one of Camp Pepin's most cherished traditions – campouts! One of the highlights of a week at Camp Pepin is the unforgettable campout experience. On one of their five nights spent at camp, each cabin group will head out into the backwoods to spend a night at one of our designated campsites. This special night not only brings the thrill of sleeping under the stars but also offers campers the unique opportunity to bond with their cabin mates in a new setting.

Campers will be actively involved in planning and setting up their camp-out. They will work together to select their campsite, pitch tents, and arrange their sleeping areas. This hands-on approach fosters teamwork and responsibility, as they learn the essentials of outdoor living. A key part of the camp-out is the outdoor cooking experience. Each cabin will choose to prepare either dinner or breakfast at their site. This not only teaches practical cooking skills but also ensures that all dietary needs are met, making the meal both enjoyable and safe for everyone.

Why Do Campouts?

Enhanced Teamwork: Collaborating on tasks like setting up camp and cooking meals strengthens camaraderie.

Skill Development: Campers learn practical outdoor skills that enhance their independence and self-reliance.

Connection with Nature: Spending a night in the woods helps deepen campers' appreciation for the environment.

Memorable Experiences: The camp-out often stands out as one of the most impactful and memorable parts of camp, filled with stories and adventures that last a lifetime.

Safety Procedures and Important Information:

Preparation: Before heading out, staff will remind campers to use the bathroom facilities. For any needs during the night, campers can use designated natural areas for minor needs or wake a counselor for assistance to the main facilities.

Protection Measures: We strongly encourage the use of bug spray and appropriate clothing to protect against insects. Our staff will also instruct campers on safe camp procedures, including proper food storage and cooking practices to ensure a secure environment.

Wildlife Safety: Although there are no dangerous animals in our camp area, we educate all campers on how to maintain a safe and clean campsite.

Sleeping Arrangements: We understand that sleeping outdoors is different from a night in the cabin. While it might not be the most restful sleep, the experience is incredibly rewarding. Campers may bring a sleeping pad or mat if possible; the camp also has a limited number available for those who need them.

We invite our campers to embrace this adventure, understanding that while it's a departure from the comfort of their cabins, it's a night that could be the most memorable of their summer. Camp Pepin is committed to making this experience safe, educational, and, most importantly, fun!

CAMP STORE

Camp store money may be deposited in your child's account through your [CampInTouch dashboard](#). Campers can purchase healthy snacks and drinks, along with camp merchandise such as T-shirts and sweatshirts, hats, stuffed animals, and miscellaneous Camp Pepin souvenirs to commemorate their time at camp.

There are three general approaches when parents consider the camp store:

1. Load an amount online beforehand or on drop-off day, and that is how much the camper gets for the entire week.
2. Only load a few dollars at a time, so your camper can't blow through their whole fund in a day. Then you can add funds throughout the week as you monitor their accounts.
3. Only load enough for a snack each day and explain to your camper that you can visit the store at the end of the week, at pick-up.

Parents can track camper purchases throughout the week, as well as add more funds if needed. Your child will be informed of his or her account balance at each visit to the camp store. The camp store will be open on Friday at Pick-up if you want to purchase a sweatshirt for yourself!

We have a variety of items available for purchase in our Camp Store, including T-shirts, sweatshirts, beach towels, personal fans, laundry bags, sunglasses, journals, hats, and much, much more. We will put out something that shows what we are stocking this summer once we finalize our orders.

While we don't have the exact prices for items for the 2024 season, here are the prices of some items from the camp store in 2023:

- Accessories (carabiners, stickers, stuffed animals, and more): \$3 to \$10
 - Nalgene water bottles: \$16
 - T Shirts: \$15
 - Sweatshirts: \$34
 - Jogger Sweatpants: \$20
 - Gatorade: \$1
 - PopCorners: \$.75
- We also sell a variety of items for tie-dye at different price points:
- White bandanas \$5
 - Pillowcases \$8
 - T-shirts \$10
 - Long sleeve, hooded shirts \$14

All remaining camp store balances will be donated to the Camp Pepin Scholarship Fund.



CAMPER EXPECTATIONS

TRYING NEW THINGS

One of the biggest goals of YMCA Camp Pepin is encouraging campers to step outside their comfort zones and try new things. We believe that this is an essential part of personal growth and development, and we encourage all campers to embrace this mindset while they're here.

When your camper arrives at camp, they may feel nervous or uncertain about some of the activities we offer. That's completely normal! However, we ask that all campers approach these new experiences with an open mind and a willingness to give them a try. This could mean trying a new sport, taking a creative arts class, or even just making friends with someone they've never met before. We also understand that sometimes things don't go as planned, and it's easy to get discouraged. That's why we encourage our campers to be persistent and not give up right away. If they don't excel at something the first time they try it, that's okay! We want them to keep trying and practicing until they feel more confident and comfortable.

By trying new things and persisting through challenges, your camper will gain many benefits. They'll develop a growth mindset and a sense of resilience, which will serve them well both in and out of camp. They'll also have the chance to discover new talents and interests they may not have known. Plus, trying new things can be a lot of fun and lead to some truly memorable experiences. We hope you'll encourage your camper to embrace the spirit of trying new things while they're here. We're excited to see all the amazing things they'll accomplish!

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

At Camp Pepin, we believe that every camper has a role to play in making our community a better place. We encourage all our campers to take shared responsibility for the well-being of themselves, their fellow campers, and the environment around us.

One way that campers can do this is by helping with cleaning and organizing the cabin. This could involve sweeping the floor, making beds, or picking up any clutter. We expect campers to work together to maintain a clean and comfortable living space for everyone. We also expect campers to have a positive approach to the activities and events that the cabin might want to do, even if it's not something they're personally interested in. This means being respectful of others' opinions and being willing to compromise and find a solution that works for everyone. Looking out for the safety and well-being of fellow campers is also an important part of shared responsibility. We ask that all campers take an active role in preventing accidents and injuries by being aware of their surroundings, following the rules and instructions from staff, and reporting any potential hazards to staff members. Finally, we encourage our campers to consider the conservation and protection of the natural world around us. This could mean picking up litter, being mindful of water usage, or being respectful of wildlife and their habitats.

By taking shared responsibility for the camp community, campers will gain many benefits. They'll learn the importance of teamwork and collaboration, which are valuable skills in all aspects of life. They'll also develop a sense of ownership and pride in their living space and learn how small actions can have a big impact on the world around them. We hope you'll talk to your camper about the importance of shared responsibility at camp. We're excited to work together to create a safe, positive, and sustainable community!

ACCEPTANCE OF DIFFERENCES

RED WING FAMILY YMCA'S EQUITY STATEMENT:

"The uniqueness of every individual is valued and celebrated at the Red Wing Family YMCA. We are committed to advancing equity for all so that everyone, regardless of age, gender, income, faith, national origin, race, gender-identity, sexual orientation, or diverse abilities, have the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity and live life to its fullest."

It is guaranteed that your camper will meet, interact, and befriend people who are different than themselves, which is one of the most amazing aspects of camp. We want everyone to feel and believe that Camp Pepin is a safe, positive, and encouraging place – a place they can call home. Any behaviors not conducive to this environment will not be tolerated and addressed promptly. We suggest that parents/guardians have a conversation with your camper about the tolerance and acceptance of everyone, with the final goal of building a strong sense of community.

BEHAVIOR ISSUES

In the rare event that a camper exhibits problematic behavior, our staff will document it and address it appropriately. We take any behavioral issues seriously, and if they persist or are serious enough, we will communicate with the camper's parents or guardians. In extreme cases, we may need to ask parents to pick up their camper prematurely. We also want to emphasize that any physical damage to camp property due to inappropriate camper behavior will be the financial responsibility of the camper's family. We hope that everyone at camp will treat our facilities with respect and care, so that everyone can continue to enjoy them.

We understand that it can be difficult to talk to your camper about potential behavioral issues, but we hope you'll emphasize the importance of respect, kindness, and responsible behavior while they're at camp. We're looking forward to creating a fun and safe environment for everyone!

HOMESICKNESS

Temporary homesickness is a normal reaction, particularly among new campers. Our staff makes a concerted effort to help campers overcome homesickness by helping them learn to accept the natural feeling of missing family and friends. We welcome the opportunity to help youngsters grow in this area and train our staff to handle homesickness in constructive and caring ways. With proper handling by staff, campers, and parents, it can be overcome, and the camper can make a big stride in growing up.

Campers look forward to hearing from their parents while at camp. It is suggested that letters or emails be upbeat in such a way that they will not make the camper homesick. Encouraging your campers and letting them know that you are very proud of them for going to camp and trying new activities will contribute greatly to staving off homesickness.

HEALTH AND SAFETY WHILE AT CAMP

SPECIAL EMOTIONAL/PHYSICAL NEEDS

Campers with special emotional or physical needs should be called to the attention of the Camp Director, Erik Burton. We will make every attempt to serve campers who have physical or special emotional needs. We have a policy not to enroll campers beyond our training or capabilities. Our outdoor setting can sometimes make it difficult to host campers with significant physical limitations.

BED WETTING

Our staff is trained to deal with bedwetting discreetly, working with your child one-on-one. Please notify your camper's counselor at check-in if your camper may wet the bed. Campers should be instructed to ask their counselors for help, and every effort will be made to prevent accidents. Please send a plastic sheet and extra bedding if you think they will be needed.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND HEAD LICE*

We will not require COVID testing prior to camp arrival for the Summer 2024 season. However, we kindly ask that parents check in with their campers before camp and refrain from sending them if they are feeling unwell. We will have tests available on-site if a camper begins to show symptoms.

To prevent an epidemic, a camper that has a communicable disease or head lice may not attend camp until the condition has been fully treated (verified by a physician) and can no longer be transmitted to others. If a camper is diagnosed as having a communicable disease or head lice while at camp, the camper will be discreetly removed from camp activities and parents will be asked to pick up their camper as soon as possible. Any camper that leaves camp for such reasons may only return by undergoing a readmission check by our medical staff.

ILLNESS*

It is the policy of Camp Pepin not to keep sick campers for more than 12 hours in our camp Health Center. Therefore, we ask that parents of campers who are ill for more than 12 hours to care for their child at home and see their family doctor. Transportation is not provided for campers returning home due to illness. A child sick before camp begins should be kept at home for his/her own and other campers' sake. Many communicable diseases begin with cold-like symptoms.

EMERGENCIES*

Emergency calls to campers should be made through the Camp Pepin office at (651) 800-9316. Routine scrapes, cuts, and minor illnesses will be treated by our medical staff. In the case of serious illness or accident involving your child, the medical staff will contact you directly. In the event you cannot be reached, your authorization signed on your Health Form allows us to secure prompt treatment.

INSURANCE

Camp Pepin does not carry accident or sickness insurance on summer youth campers. In the event of serious illness or accident, the parents/guardians will be notified at once. Parents/guardians are responsible for prescriptions and charges incurred for outside medical treatment of their child, should services be required while in attendance at camp. Services rendered by the camp medical staff are at no additional charge.

**It is our policy to refund pro-rated fees to any child who becomes sick and returns home for care (see "Refunds").*

COMMUNICATION

LETTERS

If you would like to send a letter to your camper during the week, the address at camp is:

Your Child's Name
Session Attending
YMCA Camp Pepin
W10915 East Lake Dr.
Stockholm, WI 54769

Unfortunately, if you mail your camper's letter after the Tuesday of the week they are there, it is possible they will not receive it in time. Therefore, try to mail one the Saturday before they leave for camp, and then one early in the week. Be sure to put your camper's name on the envelope. Also include a complete return address. Please do not send packages of food or candy - it will not be delivered to the camper until checkout day (see bottom of page 7 for an explanation).

EMAILS

At Camp Pepin, we're always looking for ways to streamline our processes and enhance communication. This year - instead of using a traditional email address - we will be using a simple form, accessible through [this link](#) (which will also be posted on our website). This system is designed to make communication smoother and more efficient during your camper's stay.

Link address: <https://forms.office.com/r/Ly1rJc74QM>

[This link](#) directs you to the form where you'll start by providing some basic info to help us accurately identify your camper. Once your camper is identified, you'll have the opportunity to type your message, whether it's a word of encouragement, an update from home, or a special reminder.

We believe this new procedure will greatly improve the way we communicate with our camp families, making your experience—and your camper's experience—as smooth and enjoyable as possible. Thank you for your cooperation in adopting this new system, and we look forward to staying in touch during the exciting camp season!

PHONE CALLS

At Camp Pepin, we strive for campers to develop independence. An integral part of the growing process is the extended experiences away from home. In keeping with this, we do not recommend phone calls to campers unless there is a family emergency. Also, please do not ask your child to call home. There are no public phones available for campers to use. Parents will be contacted in case of an emergency or illness. If you have an emergency, please call camp at (651) 800-9316, and ask to speak to the Camp Director.

AFTER YOUR CAMPER LEAVES

LOST AND FOUND

Items that are lost during each camp session and not clearly labeled with a camper's name are set on a table outside the Lower Dining Hall during check-out. Please check the table before leaving camp. Items remaining at camp after your camper's session will be kept for two weeks after the last day of summer camp; all unclaimed items will be donated to a welfare agency. It is the owner's responsibility to pay for shipping or to make pick-up arrangements for reclaiming lost items. Camp Pepin is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal items, clothing, or equipment.

PARENT AND CAMPER EVALUATION

To best serve our camp families, as well as continue to grow as a camp, your feedback is incredibly valuable. At the end of each session, we will send out a parent evaluation via email. We would sincerely appreciate it if you took the time to complete the survey – to show that appreciation, we use your survey response as an entry into a random drawing for a free week of camp for the following summer!

Additionally, we appreciate your immediate comments and feedback about our staff and program. If you see or hear of a problem with any part of our program or staff, please contact the Camp Pepin office so immediate corrections can be made. Erik Burton, our Camp Director, will be available to answer your questions or concerns. Please do not hesitate to call or email.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

REFUNDS AND CANCELLATIONS

The registration deposit fee is not refundable under any circumstances. Cancellations after June 1st cannot be refunded, due to fixed expenditures which will have already been paid for by the camp. Fees for programs will be refunded only when campers are unable to complete that program due to an illness or medical issue requiring the documented attention of a physician. Homesickness and disruptive behavior are not conditions for refunding. Refunds after a camper has arrived will be made prorated for the unexpired portion of the session, or campers will be offered the chance to return to another camp session for the days they missed. Parts of a camp session supported by a grant/scholarship or discounted are ineligible for refunding.

FINAL SUGGESTIONS FROM EXPERIENCED PARENTS

While we hope that the information in this handbook is helpful to you, nothing beats advice from those who have already gone through it. Here are tips from experienced parents/guardians on the camp experience:

Pre-Camp

- Complete all your forms and payments well in advance. If you have questions about the forms, payments, or anything else, ask these well in advance, too. It will save time at check-in.
- Don't help them pick their activities. It gives them such freedom and control that builds self-confidence. Camp Pepin is amazing! The camp experience is magical and can get your kids to do things you never thought possible.
- Make sure they can shower and get dressed on their own.
- Flip through photos and videos from past sessions (on Facebook) with your camper to get them excited for camp.
- For the younger ones, you need to walk them through what to expect. They also need to be taught to keep track of their belongings. Take them on a tour of their suitcase if they don't pack it all so they know where everything is.
- Give your camper a few suggestions on how to approach new cabinmates friends to introduce yourself.

Packing

- LABEL EVERYTHING!
- Involve your children in the process of packing so they know they have more than one pair of socks and should actually change them each day. :)
- Duffel bags or suitcases are easier to store under bunks instead of totes.
- Tuck a note in their bag to read when they unpack.
- Send old clothes the campers will recognize as being theirs, rather than a lot of new clothes they won't remember owning. Don't send expensive clothing or other valuable items.
- Send a few plastic bags for wet clothes and sandy shoes and dirty clothes.
- Be sure to send some warm clothes even though it's summer.
- Send lots of bug spray!
- Shoes are not allowed in the cabins, so easy on/off options are a good idea for younger campers.
- Make a list for kids to check off the items they brought with them to take home.
- We found it helpful to bring a fitted bed sheet to cover the mattress.
- It is perfectly fine to bring a stuffed animal, no matter what age you are. Most kids bring them!
- A journal to write in daily to remember all the fun things they did was super handy.
- In addition to a shower towel, if your child signs up for any of the swimming activities - pack a beach towel!
- Invest in real lake shoes/swimming shoes (not Crocs) - the zebra mussels can be killer on the feet.

Drop-Off

- Make drop-off brief - if you linger too long; there will likely be more tears.
- Leaving them for a week will be harder on you than on them. They will have a blast and think the week went by way too fast!
- There's really no need to put a lot of money in their account at one time - you can fill it throughout the week.
- Your child may cry when you leave them. You may cry when you leave them. It is okay! They are in great hands and when you pick them up at the end of the week they will be filled with stories and lifelong memories.
- You'll miss them way more than they miss you! That's how you know Camp Pepin does an awesome job, and you'll have so much fun getting to hear all their new stories at the end of the week.

During Camp

- There are more activities at camp than your child could possibly do during one camp session. If your camper did not do all the activities they wanted, encourage them to look forward to next year.
- Follow YMCA Camp Pepin on social media (Instagram & Facebook) to see pictures during your kids' stay and get a taste of what activities they might be participating in. It helps to see their happy faces while away at camp!
- A sketch pad or diary helps an overwhelmed camper get some quiet, alone time.
- Share the camp's messaging link with extended family so they can send notes to the kids.
- I was worried about my child being homesick, but he was so busy and made himself at home, I don't think he even thought about his family until it was time to be picked up. Great life experience for children.

Reassurances

- It's ok to be away from your kid while they are safe and having fun.
- Relax, your kids are being well-cared for, and you don't need to stress or worry about them.
- Don't stress, they are in good hands. The week flies by.
- Trust that your kids are in amazing hands!
- Enjoy your time at home with them at camp.
- Most kids will love camp after the 2nd day. My oldest didn't want to go her first time, but the counselors were amazing and helped her through her anxiety. She ended up going for 4 yrs. Camp helped her with separation anxiety after camp, as she was able to spend the night at a friend's house without me going to get her at midnight.
- It's hard not to talk to your child for a week but it also helps in independence/growth for your child and you as a parent.
- They will likely have an amazing time and you will miss them more than they miss home. Trust you've prepared your kiddo to get along without you, they are going to have a blast learning new things and getting a chance to be independent.
- Don't worry, your child is going to have a blast and is in very competent hands.

Post-Camp

- Expect your camper to be tired- they've been busy!
- Camp Pepin is a place where kids are encouraged to be silly and weird, discover new talents, learn new skills, and meet counselors from all over the world. This camp has been an integral part of childhood for our family for the last 33 years.
- Yes, your kid will get dirty, and hot, and sleep (probably not very well) on a bunk bed, and probably wear the same pair of underwear all week but they will also unplug and have fun and just get to be a kid the whole time and come back all the better for it!
- Allow your kids to be a little uncomfortable, expect that they will come back with some bruises and scratches. They will be well taken care of, and those scratches and bruises will lead to stories and memories in future.