



Day Camp Gathering Pines

2024 Day Camp Handbook

About YMCA Day Camps

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

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

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Contact Information

YMCA Customer Service Center.

612-230-9622 or visit online at www.ymcamn.org/contact_us. Contact them about registration, payments, financial assistance etc. Changes and/or cancellations must be completed in writing using the link above.

YMCA Gathering Pines

Phone: 651-309-4414
Email: Gathering.Pines@ymcamn.org
Website: www.ymcanorth.org/adventure
Facebook: YMCA Gathering Pines
Address: 23701 Zane Ave, Lakeville MN 55044
Summer Office Hours: 8:00am-5:00pm June-Aug.

Letter from the Camp Director ~ Nick Dyson

I am extremely excited for Gathering Pines' third summer of Day Camp! Meeting new friends, discovering the wonders of nature and learning new skills all add up to wonderful, lasting camp memories. Our days are filled with activities your child is sure to enjoy. If you love camp, be sure to check out what else Gathering Pines has to offer. Our year round programs include Adventure Days (school release day camps), Horseback Riding Lessons, Retreats and other fun events!

I look forward to seeing everyone this summer!

Communication

While your camper is at camp, all communication should be directed to the Day Camp office. Speaking with your child during camp hours is not encouraged. We encourage campers to learn independence while at camp; communicating with your camper through the office staff will be the best way to communicate with your child. If you have an emergency please call 651-309-4414 or email

Gathering.Pines@ymcamn.org, and a lead staff member will address your situation as necessary.

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

Camp Open House (Family Nights)

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

- Saturday, June 9th 11:00am –2:00pm
- Thursday June 27th 6:00-7:30pm
- Thursday July 18th 6-7:30pm
- Thursday August 8th 6:00-7:30pm

REGISTRATION & FORMS

Registration

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

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

The balance for your session is due 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 relentlessly with out community until all can thrive in each stage of life. At camp, we gladly welcome campers regardless of race, ability, creed, national origin and gender.

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

Camp Store

Details regarding the online camp store are TBD.

Camp store purchases can be made during your child's week at camp. Order forms and instructions will be included within our week before email.

Camp store includes many tie-dye options!

Forms

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

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

The [Camp Store Form](#) may be submitted if you would like your camper to be able to shop at the camp store.

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

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

Scholarships

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

Registration Change Requests

Changes must be received in writing no later than Monday, two full weeks before the start of the session. A \$10 Change fee is assessed for all changes made to the original registration, including transportation.

Cancellations

Cancellations must be made by Monday, two full weeks before the start of the session. A \$50 deposit per session paid at registration is non-refundable; the remaining session fees will be refunded.

PICK UP & DROP OFF

Bus Transportation

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

The bus route times will be published every week online and will be emailed by the Friday before your camp session.

Pro Parent Tip

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

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

Pick Up / Drop Off at Camp

Campers not taking the bus to camp can be dropped off at camp between 9:00-9:15am daily. Pick up is at 3:30-3:45pm.

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

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

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, camp needs that in writing. Please email Gathering.Pines@ymcamn.org.

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

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

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

Bus Locations

Day Camp Gathering Pines—Tentative Bus Details

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

- Have your Photo ID ready for pick up each afternoon.
- Please be flexible as we fine tune our bus operation at YMCA Gathering Pines.
- If early pickup at camp is needed, please email Gathering.Pines@ymcamn.org.

Location	Address	Morning Pick-Up	Afternoon Drop-Off
Linden Hills Park <i>Grape & Strawberry</i>	3100 W 43rd St Minneapolis, MN 55410 (42nd St & Zenith Ave)	8:20 AM	4:20 PM
Kenny Community School <i>Apple & Coconut</i>	1203 W 57 th Street Minneapolis, MN 55419	8:20 AM	4:15 PM
Pearl Park <i>Pineapple & Kiwi</i>	414 E Diamond Lake Rd Minneapolis, MN 55419 (Hampshire Drive & E 54th St)	8:20 AM	4:15 PM
Yancey Park <i>Plum & Raspberry</i>	5520 Hansen Rd Edina, MN 55436	8:20 AM	4:20 PM
Southdale YMCA <i>Watermelon & Dragonfruit</i>	7355 York Ave S, Edina, MN 55435 (Stop is in the back of the lot behind building.)	8:20 AM	4:20 PM
Eden Lake Elementary <i>Banana</i>	12000 Anderson Lakes Pkwy Eden Prairie, MN 55344 (Lot in BACK – near playground and ball fields)	8:20 AM	4:15 PM
Century Middle School <i>Blueberry</i>	18610 Ipava Ave Lakeville MN 55044	8:40 AM	4:10 PM
New Prague Middle School <i>Cherry - Stop One</i>	721 Central Ave N New Prague, MN 56071	8:30 AM	4:10 PM
Eagle View Elementary <i>Cherry - Stop Two</i>	25600 Nevada Ave Elko New Market, MN 55020	8:50 AM	3:50 PM
Dred Scott Playfield <i>Pear - Stop One</i>	10820 Bloomington Ferry Road Bloomington, MN 55431 (Old Shakopee Rd & Bloomington Ferry Rd.)	8:20 AM	4:25 PM
Red Oak Elementary	7700 Old Carriage Ct Shakopee MN 55379	8:35 AM	4:10 PM

LIFE AT CAMP

Our Camp Community

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

Pro Parent Tip

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

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

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

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

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

Camp Activities

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

Water Activities

All swimming and watercraft activities are supervised by Certified Lifeguards.

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

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

BEHAVIOR POLICY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHAT TO BRING

Packing for camp

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

Bring

- Mask & Hand Sanitizer
- Lunch and 2 snacks (*AM & PM*)
- Layers appropriate for the weather of the day
- Re-fillable water bottle
- Insect repellent and sunscreen*
- Swimsuit & Towel
- Backpack/Bag (labeled)—to tote all items

Pro Parent Tip

Please apply sunscreen and bug spray before your child comes to camp.

Specialty Camps

Please bring these items in addition to what is on the above packing list. The following are additional items specific to the specialty program.

Horse Camps

Sturdy closed-toe riding shoes (boots with a heel are recommended)

- Loose fitting long pants—avoid capri pants, *no shorts for riding.*
- Bring shorts for time spent at camp if weather is appropriate
- **Note: Safety helmet—HAS-approved helmets are provided by camp. Bike Helmets are not allowed for riding.**

Do Not Bring

- Electronic Equipment, cell phones, iPods/mp3 players, cards/games, personal sports equipment *except when requested for specialty camp*
- Firearms, pocket knives or weapons
- Alcohol or drugs
- Unregistered friends/family

Lost & Found Policy

To support lost items being returned to campers, we highly encourage that campers be sent to camp with their personal belongings labeled. Camp will keep to these items for no longer than two weeks from the end of the session. After this time, these items will be donated or thrown away. Please note that all items will be held at the discretion of camp staff. Items that are soiled, damaged, or otherwise deemed not able to be safely stored will be disposed of. The list of items camp will not hold on to includes but is not limited to: socks and underwear, all toiletries and toiletry bags, all swim gear, hats, t-shirts, pants, shorts, towels, water shoes, water bottles, sunglasses, toys, cameras, arts and crafts projects including tie dye. We highly encourage parents to label all items with their camper's name to help our staff identify items during the camp session. Many items look similar and it can be confusing for both staff and campers. As a reminder, please do not send your camper with anything that is irreplaceable. Things like jewelry or favorite stuffed animals can be easily lost or damaged. Electronics, including phones, are not permitted at camp. Phones may not be used at camp and will be confiscated and returned to families at the end of the day. Camp is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items—including confiscated phones.

Health & Safety

Risks at Camp.

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

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

Child Protection Policy.

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

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.

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. Camps only provide a refund for sick days, with a doctor's note.

If your camper contracts a communicable disease, including but not limited to COVID-19, parents must notify the camp 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:

Injury & Illness at Camp.

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

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

- Call 911, perform immediate first aid and 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.

Health & Safety

Inclement Weather.

Camp is held rain or shine. Please make sure your camper dresses for the weather, with appropriate rain gear. On rainy days, many time fun filled activities are held inside our rain shelters. Your child may return home wet and muddy!

Updates regarding bussing delays and inclement weather will also be posted on our Facebook page and by email and text, when available.

Heat Waves

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

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

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

Air Quality

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

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