



2023 PARENT HANDBOOK

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the YMCA summer Camp Program! Whether you are returning for another year of camp or signing up for the first time, you and your child will find fun and exciting opportunities offered in this year's summer camp program.

YMCA Camp Lakewood is where kids come to have fun, learn new skills, make new friends, and simply be a kid. Your camper will forget all about television, video games, and smartphones while discovering the ultimate childhood experience, all within a safe and trusted environment.

With a 360-acre lake, over 5,000 acres of forest-covered hills, caves, creeks and more, there are many opportunities for nature exploration and experiential learning at Camp Lakewood. Whether it's campfires, swimming, archery, climbing towers, zip lines, sports, canoeing, cookouts, fishing, kayaking or a multitude of camp games, every camper delights in waking up with a renewed sense of excitement as to what each day at camp will bring.

The health and safety of each camper is our primary concern. All staff are trained in skills that emphasize safety, youth development, and group dynamics. Each counselor is trained in CPR and First Aid, and lifeguard certified staff closely supervise all water activities. A medical professional is always available in our well-equipped camp infirmary, and our local physician is on call to assist in emergencies.

What does it mean when everyone at Camp Lakewood says it's "My Camp!"? It means every one of our campers has a home away from home and a special place where they can try new things without judgment. It means every camper has a place where he or she has friends and where they feel safe, happy, and wanted. It means every camper has a camp - their camp - and they know the camper sitting next to them feels the exact same way. It means they are an important part of YMCA Camp Lakewood. So when asked, "Whose camp is this?" we are excited to hear them say "My Camp!"

On behalf of the YMCA staff, thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Lakewood. We look forward to a great summer with your kids!

Sincerely,

YMCA Camp Lakewood Staff

Our Areas of Focus

Ys offer the programs we do for a reason. Young people need safe and enriching environments to try new things, develop skills, meet new people and show what they're capable of doing. Achieving and maintaining health in spirit, mind and body makes for a rich life. Giving back to neighbors and those in need is our responsibility as neighbors, colleagues and citizens. The Y defines our areas of focus – the programming you're part of everyday – like this:

Youth Development: Nurturing the potential of every child and teen

We believe that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. That's why, through the Y, millions of youth today are cultivating the values, skills and relationships that lead to positive behaviors, better health and educational achievement.

Healthy Living: Improving the nation's health and well-being

In communities across the nation, the Y is a leading voice on health and well-being. With a mission centered on balance, the Y brings families closer together, encourages good health and fosters connections through fitness, sports, fun and shared interests. As a result, millions of youth, adults and families are receiving the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve greater health and well-being for their spirit, mind and body.

Social Responsibility: Giving back and providing support to our neighbors

The Y has been listening and responding to our communities' most critical social needs for more than 175 years. Whether developing skills or emotional well-being through education and training, welcoming and connecting diverse demographic populations through global services, or preventing chronic disease and building healthier communities through collaborations with policymakers, the Y fosters the care and respect all people need, and deserve. Through the Y, 500,000 volunteers and thousands of donors, leaders and partners across the country are empowering millions of people in the U.S. and around the world to be healthy, confident, connected and secure.

CAMP LOCATION

Camp Lakewood is located 10 miles west of Potosi, MO, just an hour and a half south of St. Louis, one hour east of Rolla, and two hours north of Cape Girardeau.

From St. Louis

I-270 to Hwy. 21 south (Tesson Ferry Road)

Hwy. 21 to Potosi (approximately 55 miles)

Turn right onto Hwy. 8 west at Potosi. Drive through downtown Potosi and continue on Hwy. 8 out of town (11 miles on Hwy. 8)

Take a right on AA at Shirley, MO (saw mill on left). Go 3 miles (1 mile past Trout Lodge main entrance), and you are at Camp Lakewood

From Columbia

Highway 63 south to Highway 68 south

Left on 68 south and continue to St. James

In St. James, Highway 68 becomes Highway 8

Drive through St. James and Steelville to AA (25 miles east of Steelville)

At AA, turn left and go 3 miles (1 mile past

ACCREDITATION

YMCA Camp Lakewood is accredited by the American Camp Association. ACA Accreditation means we undergo thorough peer evaluations of our operation - from staff qualifications and training to emergency management. Evaluations are based on the most up-to-date, research-based standards in camp operation.

REGISTRATION

Register Online: All of our registrations are done online. Go to gwrymca.org/camplakewood and click the Sign Up and Parent Dashboard button. Forms are handled through this dashboard as well.

Parent Forms: All forms are to be completed at least 3 weeks prior to your camper's arrival. The earlier we get the forms the better. Forms are found on your online registration dashboard.

Health Exam: MUST BE COMPLETED WITHIN 24 MONTHS PRIOR TO CAMP, AND INCLUDE A PHYSICIAN'S SIGNATURE. We will accept your doctor's physical exam; it is not necessary to use our form.

NOTE: SIGNATURE BY A LICENSED PHYSICIAN AND PARENT IS REQUIRED FOR CAMPER TO ATTEND CAMP. For the safety of everyone at camp, campers without the above signatures will be sent home until signatures can be secured.

Changing/Canceling Sessions: Should it be necessary for you to change or cancel your child's session, you must contact Camp Lakewood at least 4 weeks prior to arrival. There is a \$40 charge for any session change.

CHECK IN AND CHECK OUT

Check In Time: 1:30-3:00 pm on the first day of your camp session. NOTE: Please don't arrive before 1:30 pm. Staff will be making final preparations, and we won't be able to focus on checking in campers until 1:30 pm.

Check Out Time: 3:00-4:00 pm on the last day of your camp session. No early pick-ups, please. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO SHOW A PHOTO ID.

Check-Out Location: Camper's cabin before or after closing ceremony; East Camp, LITs and Rangers stay at their cabins. CIT parents will be called and notified where to pick up their camper.

Late Pick Up: Campers should not be left past 4 PM. Camp counselors will be taking a well-deserved day off. However, staff will not leave a child unattended. \$1 FEE PER CAMPER FOR EACH MINUTE AFTER 4:00 PM WILL BE CHARGED TO PARENTS FOR LATE PICK-UP. Please be prepared to pay the late fee prior to departure.

Pick Up Authorization Form: No child will be released to anyone but the person listed on the registration form without prior written notification. We must know if someone other than the named persons on the registration form will be picking up your child from camp. IF SO, PLEASE FILL OUT A "PICK UP AUTHORIZATION FORM" FOUND AT GWRYMCA.ORG/CAMPLAKEWOOD UNDER THE PARENT DASHBOARD.

Presenting ID at Pick Up is Mandatory: Remember that whoever picks up a child MUST present photo identification.

INCLUSION SERVICES

If your child has an IEP or you indicated that he/she has been diagnosed with one of the conditions listed on the registration form, a Section 504 Student Accommodation Plan and/or a Behavior Management Plan must be completed. We are required to have these documents on file, along with some additional information. This paperwork is to be filled out annually. We will use the Online Parent Dashboard to send the following documents to you once we receive your child's registration:

- Inclusion Services Information Form
- Information Release Form
- A Pre-survey
- Medical Verification Form (completed by your child's physician)
- Regional Center/Department of Mental Health (DMH) Verification Form (if applicable, completed by Regional Center case manager)

We are also required to have on file a copy of the complete IEP. This completed packet with supporting documentation is to be returned to YMCA Camp Lakewood office, a copy will be forwarded to our Inclusion Services Department. They will do the necessary support assessment.

Paperwork needs to be turned in FOUR WEEKS IN ADVANCE of your camper coming to camp. Space is limited, so the earlier you turn in paperwork the better chance your camper has to come to camp.

Please note, extra support is not always recommended, but the inclusion paperwork and specialized documents we receive from you will only help make sure your child is successful at our camp.

These documents will help our resident Behavior Specialist in choosing the counselor and cabin for your child or if any behavior or emotional issues arise at camp. We remain in HIPAA compliance, and information is shared on a "need-to-know-basis". Although every effort is made to provide reasonable accommodations, there may be instances where a child's needs may exceed the parameters of the scope of our program. Our physical setting of hilly country and rocky area makes it difficult to have campers with extreme physical limitations.

If you have questions regarding our inclusion services, please call the camp office at 573-438-2155 or the YMCA Inclusion Service at 314-436-1177.

CABIN ASSIGNMENTS

A nice aspect of camp is meeting a new group of friends. We encourage campers to get to know as many campers as possible. Our bunk size gives everyone a chance to create a lifetime of fun memories with new friends. If you already know someone, that's great, because you can introduce each other to other campers. Campers are assigned to cabins (by age) the night before each session of camp begins.

Mutual cabinmate requests are honored whenever possible and are requested through online registration. The campers must be in the same village, program and be within 12 months of each other. Buddy request preferences are limited to one request per camper and each child MUST request each other in order to be placed in cabins together.

There are plenty of opportunities for friends to see each other throughout the day. Individual beds cannot be reserved, and are assigned on a first-come basis on check-in day.

Cabins hold from 10 to 14 children. If you would like to book an entire cabin so that a group of friends may all be together, please inquire about availability.

If your camper stays for multiple sessions, there is a possibility they may move cabins. This is due to the age and number of campers in that session. Counselors will help your camper move and set up their belongings. The office will call you and let you know where you will pick up your camper on check-out day.

PREPARING FOR CAMP

Clothing Lists: Please send appropriate clothing with your child, taking into consideration the weather forecast and camp activities. We encourage you to send old clothing to camp as your camper will be camping out, sleeping on the ground, participating in rugged sports, climbing, and hiking through the woods. Tie-dying is an option for campers to choose as a cabin activity, so please send a white item (example: t-shirt, socks, pillowcase, etc.). We have provided a Clothing List at gwrymca.org/camplakewood to be taped to the inside lid of your camper's trunk or suitcase (available on our website). Please review the list of things that you are sending to camp with your camper so they know what clothing and personal items are his/hers. Luggage should be compact and easy to carry.

Please see the appropriate camper clothing guidelines and go over them with your child. NOTE: There are no laundry facilities at Camp Lakewood. Please pack enough clothing for your child's entire stay (except for CIT campers).

Dress Code: Length of shorts must be mid-thigh. They should not have holes in them, should be worn at waist level and not be overly tight. Shirts should at no time be sheer, low cut, or mesh. T-shirts should cover the stomach and should not contain graphics or language that is vulgar, abusive, or otherwise inappropriate. Tank tops should not be low cut and should cover the stomach.

Swimsuits should be 1-piece or athletic style 2-piece (no string bikinis) and not sheer. Swimsuits should not be tight fitting. The Waterfront Director has discretion to require a change of suits.

What Not to Bring to Camp: Camp is a natural setting to retreat from electronic

technology and to get more in touch with people. Electronic games, cell phones, e-readers, and other electronic devices do not fit into this setting. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Please leave these types of items at home.

Also, please leave food, sports equipment, hair dryers, curling irons, straighteners, firearms, weapons, matches, lighters, knives, tobacco products, expensive items, illegal drugs, money, library books, and bad attitudes at home.

Canned repellent is not allowed at camp. Insect repellent must be in the form of lotion, wipes, or non-aerosol bottles. Aerosol cans become a safety hazard around other children and around the campfire. Unapproved items will be returned at the end of the child's stay.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL

Health Screening During Check In: Everyone entering Camp Lakewood should be symptom-free (without a fever) and pass a health assessment and temperature check at check in. Staff members are required to check your child for illness or injury upon arrival and authorized to deny care for the day if needed. Your child will not be accepted into the site if she/he has symptoms of a contagious/ infectious disease, illness or injury that might require medical attention.

CONTAGIOUS/INFECTIOUS DISEASE GUIDELINES

If a child is sent home from camp with a communicable/infectious disease, the Y may require a child to be examined by a physician if the Y believes the child can infect others. The child will be excluded from camp until a physician provides written authorization determining the child cannot infect others, or until the recommended exclusion period has passed. (Physicians written recommendation may not supersede YMCA policies or director discretion.) Please notify the childcare staff if your child has a communicable/infectious disease.

The following diseases are communicable and/or infectious

- Chicken Pox - If a child has skin eruptions that are not yet scabbed over and with or without a fever.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) - If the eye is red or swollen and has drainage or is oozing. Is highly contagious and must be medically treated for at least 24 hours before returning.

- Fifth's Disease - Child will exhibit a slapped red rash appearance on cheeks. Child is contagious before exhibiting symptoms.
- Giardiasis - is characterized by diarrhea, loose, watery stools, stomach cramps and upset stomach. There is generally a 1 to 2 week incubation period before symptoms appear. Symptoms can last anywhere from 2 to 6 weeks. Doctor's statement required to return to the center.
- Hand Foot and Mouth Disease - Mild fever and sore throat; 1 to 2 days later blisters or ulcers inside mouth, tonsils, gums, tongue or cheek. Blisters or red spots appear on hands or soles of feet. Children usually get sick 3 –6 days after exposure.
- Head Lice - If lice or nits are found in the child's hair, the child may return after they have been treated.
- Impetigo - If infected sores or lesions are oozing and/or crusting. It is contagious and must be medically treated for 24 hours before a child may return.
- Measles - If a child has a rash accompanied by flu symptoms.
- Mumps - symptoms fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, loss of appetite and swollen/tender salivary glands under ears or jaws. Doctor's statement required to return.
- Novel Influenza A (H1N1) - the symptoms are similar to the regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Children must be fever free without fever reducing medications for at least 24 hours before re-admittance to the program.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough) - Cold like symptoms, mild cough possible fever with severe coughing that creates a "whooping" sound after 1-2 weeks. Doctor's statement required to be readmitted to the center.
- Pinworm or Ringworm - If a child is itching in the rectal area, especially at night (pinworm). If a child has a raised itchy spot resembling a hoop (ringworm).
- Rash - If the cause of the rash is unknown.
- Rosella - Child has a high fever for 48 hours followed by small red spots
- Scabies - If a child has red, itchy areas in finger webbing, on the wrist, or under the armpit and says it also itches at night.
- Shigellosis - Will develop diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps. Diarrhea is often bloody. Shigellosis usually resolves in 5 to 7 days. Some persons who are infected may have no symptoms at all, but may still pass the Shigella bacteria to others. A lab test confirming non contagious will be required to return to the program.
- Strep or Possible Strep - Maybe no more than sore throat or fever, tonsils, swollen neck glands, lack of appetite or tiredness.

- Thrush/Candida - If the child has creamy white spots or patches on the inside of the mouth (gums, cheeks or tongue).
- COVID-19 - Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar in adults and children and can look like symptoms of other common illnesses such as colds, strep throat, or allergies. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 in children are fever and cough, but children may have any of these signs or symptoms of COVID-19: Fever or chills, Cough, Nasal congestion or runny nose, New loss of taste or smell, Sore throat, Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, Diarrhea, Nausea or vomiting, Stomachache, Tiredness, Headache, Muscle or body aches, or Poor appetite.

A parent/guardian will be notified when a child displays any of the above symptoms. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency party designated by the parent/guardian on the enrollment form will be contacted. The ill child will be isolated from the other children. **Child must be picked up with-in one hour of the call.** The late pickup policy will apply at the end of the one hour grace period. Failure to have your child picked up per guidelines will result in immediate dismissal from the program. Sign-out is required.

Medications - Please Read Carefully:

ALL PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION BROUGHT INTO CAMP MUST BE EITHER IN THE ORIGINAL PRESCRIPTION CONTAINER OR ACCOMPANIED BY WRITTEN ORDERS, SIGNED BY A PHYSICIAN. THEY MUST INCLUDE THE CAMPER'S NAME, DOSAGE, AND TIME. ALL MEDICATIONS, INCLUDING OVER-THE-COUNTER ITEMS (VITAMINS, MEDICATED CREAMS, LOTIONS, ETC.) MUST BE IN ITS ORIGINAL CONTAINER AND TURNED IN AND DISPENSED BY THE CAMP NURSE AS REQUIRED BY MISSOURI LAWS.

If your camper takes over-the-counter medications on a regular basis, please provide enough of each medication to last the entire stay. At camp, give medications directly to the Nurse.

Please make sure the camper's name is on all items. DO NOT PACK MEDICATION IN LUGGAGE. It is our policy for the TLC (infirmary) to keep campers' inhalers/EpiPen during camp. The TLC is always open, and inhalers can be obtained at a moment's notice. However, if a parent requests in writing that the inhaler/EpiPen is kept with the camper, we will honor that request

Illness: It has always been our policy not to keep sick campers more than 12 hours in our camp infirmary. We may keep a child if he/she might get better soon,

but a call will be made after an extended stay at the TLC. We ask that parents of campers who are ill for more than 12 hours care for their child at home and see their family doctor. Transportation is not provided for campers returning home due to illness. A child who is sick before camp should be kept home. Many communicable diseases begin with cold-like symptoms. It is also our policy to refund pro-rated camp fees to any child who becomes physically sick and returns home for care (see "Refunds.") If a child is sick before camp begins and is unable to attend, contact the camp office regarding a session switch or refund. A doctor's note must be provided to receive a refund.

Please refer to COVID Protocol section of our website for the most up-to-date protocols. provided the camper can demonstrate responsibility for the use and possession of the inhaler/EpiPen. The inhaler/EpiPen must be labeled with the child's name. Parent must provide a locked container (i.e., trunk, suitcase, etc.) for the inhaler. Any misuse or misplacement of the inhaler/EpiPen during the camp session will be cause for the inhaler/EpiPen to be kept by the counselor.

Routine medications are distributed at mealtimes or before bed/shower time unless otherwise directed.

Please don't leave medications behind. When you check out your camper at their cabin, you will also pick up their medication there.

FEE INFORMATION

Fees: CAMP FEES ARE DUE MAY 1. Your entire deposit has been applied to your child's camp session. The balance of the camp fee is due May 1. Failure to make payment could cancel the registration and advance another camper from the waiting list. IF YOUR DEPOSIT WAS PAID BY CREDIT CARD, THE BALANCE WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE CHARGED TO YOUR CARD ON OR AFTER MAY 1. Payment in full may be made earlier by check to eliminate credit card charge. Please allow five (5) business days for mail.

Financial Assistance: Financial assistance is available for those who qualify. The application is available for download at gwrymca.org/financial-assistance. Those in St. Louis can inquire at your local branch of the Gateway Region YMCA for details, or call the YMCA Camp Lakewood office at 573-438-2155. Apply early to allow time for processing. Those who wish to contribute to our camp scholarship fund may do so by contacting YMCA Camp Lakewood directly.

Multiple Child Discount: A \$35 multiple child discount will be applied against the balance due for your 2nd, 3rd, etc., child, at the time of registration only. Children must be from the same household. Parents must request a discount at time of registration.

YMCA Member Discount: YMCA members receive great camp discounts. Ask us or refer to our website at gwrymca.org/camplakewood.

Refunds: The registration deposit is not refundable under any circumstances. No refunds will be issued unless cancellations are made at least four weeks prior to arrival.

When campers are unable to attend a program due to physical problems, fees for programs will be refunded if a doctor's note is provided. Refunds after a camper has already arrived at camp will be made on a pro-rated basis for the unexpired portions of the session, minus any transportation costs. Refunds are of nights, not days. If the camper has received a scholarship or discount, this will apply to the remaining days of the camp session.

Children sent home for homesickness or disruptive behavior are not eligible for refunds. Campers with psychological problems that, in our opinion, deem a child unfit for the camp experience will not receive a refund.

Returned Check Fee: There will be a \$25 charge.

MEALS/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

Meals: Meals are well-balanced and are served by our professional food service staff. An abundant supply of well-cooked, wholesome food, a never-ending supply of cold milk and fruit, approved spring water, adequate sleep and rest, and constant supervision are all combined with vigorous activities to promote healthy habits.

The meals we serve offer simple but nutritious choices, and can accommodate dietary restrictions such as vegetarian, sugar-free and gluten-free. We use the meal-time experience to teach campers the importance of manners and food conservation.

Dietary Restrictions: Our camp Dining Hall can serve limited special diets, if your camper has uncomplicated dietary needs (e.g., if he/she is a vegetarian or has

certain food allergies). Please inform the Camp Lakewood office in writing of any special needs at least 4 weeks prior to arrival.

PICTURES AND VIDEOS

Photo Service "Waldo:" Camp Lakewood offers a service for photo-sharing, called Waldo. Please read on to learn more about Waldo and how you will access your pictures. Remember to keep your access code private - only parents and other people you approve should be given access. Please guard every child's privacy.

Frequently Asked Waldo Questions: Need help? Waldo's here. You can also email campsupport@waldophotos.com any time you have a question!

Who's Waldo? A photo-finding phenom who uses facial recognition to find all your camper's photos in the camp album and then delivers them to your phone via the Waldo App, with notifications for new photos.

How does Waldo work? You submit a photo of your camper's face and enroll in the service. Waldo does the rest - matching that photo to all the photos in our camp album and sending you all YOUR camper's photos to your phone via the Waldo App.

How do I sign up? Contact the Camp Lakewood office for more information.

Will I get to see all the camp photos in addition to the ones of my camper?

Yes, you will! When you download the free Waldo app, you can toggle between "My Photos" and "All Photos." To see all the camp photos, just click on All Photos and scroll to your heart's desire.

Can I easily share all the photos with my family? Great news for you! The Waldo app allows you to invite up to 6 family members to your camper's photo stream. That means they can get the same photo alerts and see your camper's photos, too.

I'm not signing up for the photo delivery service but I still want to see the camp photos. Possible? You betcha. While Waldo loves to find and send you photos, he also provides a free web gallery for you to view the photos online. You can view, download, and share photos from the web gallery. You can find the gallery here: www.waldo.photos/galleries. Call Camp Lakewood for the join code.

I signed up for the service but I'm not getting any matches yet. What's Waldo doing? Waldo is stressing. No photos can mean a couple things: 1) There are no photos of your camper yet in the album or 2) Your submitted selfie is blurry, dark, or unclear and Waldo is having a hard time matching it. Email campsupport@waldophotos.com for quick help or submit another selfie inside the Waldo App.

Will Waldo share my selfie or matched photos with the world? No way! Waldo respects your privacy! Your photos will only be accessible by you. (And you had to enter your camp join code and pin code verification to access the photos.) It's up to you whether you want to share your photos with the world.

Can I order prints? Yep! You can order prints from the Waldo app or the web gallery.

About Our Pictures: Every parent wants to see their child having a great time at camp, and we have a Media Team whose job it is to take pictures and videos of campers in action. Prior to the start of camp, parents will receive further information on how to obtain photos and view Daily Wave videos placed under Parent Resources on our website.

Because we get such a varied reaction, a few words on these pictures are in order: These pictures are unaltered and usually candid (especially the activity pictures), so your child may or may not have the perfect facial expression at the moment the picture was taken. That's all part of the spontaneous effect of catching children enjoying the moment.

These are random pictures and your child's inclusion is based on where the photographer is when the pictures are being taken. They try their best to catch all of the highlights of each day, but just can't be everywhere at once.

Please do not read more into the pictures than there is. There are millions of variables when taking an impromptu picture. Some kids run to the camera and others hang back. Please refrain from asking questions such as "Is that a scratch on my child's elbow?" or "Why isn't my child smiling?"

Please be assured that if there was an issue with your child, we would already have spoken to you about it. Your child is having an AWESOME time!

COMMUNICATION

Mail - Please Allow 5 Days: Campers love to receive mail! Please write to your child at least once before camp begins. This will guarantee that your camper will receive at least one letter from home while he/she is at camp. Parents can also deliver mail/packages to the camp office during check-in, to be delivered throughout the week. Please address mail this way:

CAMPER'S FULL NAME
SESSION NUMBER
C/O YMCA CAMP LAKEWOOD
13528 STATE HIGHWAY AA
POTOSI MO 63664

Campers will be encouraged to write one letter home each week. Do not be alarmed if the letters are brief as the youngsters are busy, and "no news is good news" as far as campers are concerned. Also, early letters may sound upsetting, but usually by the time you receive the letter, the camper has adjusted and often forgotten what he/she wrote.

MAIL FROM ST. LOUIS TO POTOSI CAN TAKE UP TO 5 DAYS, so some may be received after the camper is home.

Email: You can email your camper at campermail@gwrymca.org. Include camper's FULL name, cabin and session number in subject line. Emails must be received before noon on the last full day of camp in order to be delivered.

Campers Love Mail: Whether it is your child's first or tenth summer at camp, mail call is an important part of every camper's day. Here are some hints to make corresponding with your child more successful.

Do's

- Send frequent letters. They do not have to be long. Postcards are great.
- Send a photo of family and/or pets.
- Have a grandparent write a letter.
- Have pets send messages (paw prints)
- Send stickers, jokes, etc.
- Ask a few questions and you are more likely to get a response.
- Provide your child with self-addressed, stamped envelopes.

Don'ts

Don't encourage homesickness by emphasizing how much you miss your child. Don't write how much fun you are having on vacation while your child is at camp. Don't dwell on negative happenings. You can discuss real problems with your camper when he/she returns home.

Care Packages: Camp Lakewood has a policy that food care packages will not be allowed due to health and cleanliness considerations. Non-food care packages are welcomed and encouraged.

Example of a Good Letter

Dear Sallie:

How was your bus ride? Have you made some nice friends? I enclosed a picture of Spot so you can show your cabin mates how pretty he is. Write soon and tell me about your counselors, cabin mates, and favorite activities. Remember to take pictures so you can show me what you are doing. Love, Mom

Example of What Not to Write

Dear Johnny,

We are having a ball at Disney World! You would love all the things to do here! I guess you know Grandma isn't doing too well, we may have to put her in a nursing home soon. Well, gotta run - the line is moving for Space Mountain! Love, Mom
P.S. Your turtle died last week.

Daily Wave Videos: Our Daily Wave videos will be posted on the Parent Resource page of our website. Our home page is gwrymca.org/camplakewood.

Visitors and Telephone Calls: At Camp Lakewood, 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 permit phone calls or visits 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 call home. Parents will be contacted in the case of an emergency or illness. We do not allow cell phones at camp. All cell phones will be confiscated until check out. Please make all non-emergency calls to camp between regular office hours 8:30-4:30 pm, Monday – Friday only.

PROGRAM NOTES

Horseback Riding: Mini Camp will have the opportunity for pony rides.

Campers confirmed for Equestrian programs, Horsemanship Elective & Trail Rides are required to bring long pants and hard-sole shoes with a heel to wear while riding (tennis shoes are acceptable).

Overnights/Camp Outs: Campers will go on an overnight with their cabin group during their stay. Campers and counselors canoe or hike to the other side of the lake to a remote campsite, cook their own meals, and sleep on tarps under the stars.

Waterfront: All campers will be required to wear life jackets while on the water (including while on boats, playing on the inflatable water park, and in the swimming areas.)

Camp Store: An account can be set up through the Online Parent Dashboard. Do this in advance to speed up the check-in process. Campers are not allowed to have or use cash at camp. The Country Store has a wide variety of items including t-shirts, hoodies, water bottles and much more. Prices range from \$2 -50. Campers will be allowed to visit the Country Store at a specified time during their camp stay to make their purchases.

The Country Store is also open during check-in and check-out days.

YMCA World Service contribution (\$2) will be deducted from this account as well. This money is used as a part of our commitment of support to mission work in partnership with YMCAs in Belize, Ukraine and Colombia.

Participation in the Country Store is purely optional. Please be aware that if no money is deposited into your camper's account, they will not be allowed to purchase any items.

Any unspent money from your child's camp store account will be donated to our Campership fund.

Birthdays at Camp: We celebrate birthdays by having the counselors perform a special ceremony called "The Order of the Spoons," and the camper's cabin shares a fresh-baked cookie.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Lost and Found: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are limiting items held in lost and found after each camp session. 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:

Jackets / Sweatshirts

Sleeping Bags, Blankets, Pillows

Prescription glasses, durable medical equipment, prescription medication

Personal equestrian riding equipment and helmets

Shoes (not water shoes or sandals)

Backpacks

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 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 swimsuits and goggles, hats, t-shirts, pants, shorts, pajamas washcloths and towels, water shoes including sandals, water bottles, sunglasses, flashlights and headlamps, toys, cameras, arts and crafts projects including tie dye.

Daily cabin cleanup helps campers maintain their belongings and help staff identify misplaced items during the camp session. 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 session. Camp is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items—including confiscated phones.

Emergencies: Emergency calls to campers should be done through the Camp Lakewood office at 573-438-2155. If there is a situation where our phones are down, call the Gateway Region YMCA at 314-436-1177 during office hours. Routine scrapes, cuts, and minor illness 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. After office hours, you may reach us at 573-438-2154.

Homesickness: In one camp study, a whopping 83% of the campers reported homesickness on at least one day of camp. 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 this opportunity to help youngsters grow in this area and we train our staff to handle homesickness in constructive and loving ways. With proper handling by the staff, campers, and parents, it can be overcome, and the camper can make a big stride in growing up.

Here are some things you can do to lessen homesickness:

Keep frequent letters or emails cheery and newsy in such a way that they will not make your camper homesick. Don't say you can't get along without them, or ask about homesickness.

Try having your child do overnights at friends' houses before coming to camp.

Pack a personal item from home.

Don't tell your child that you will come and pick him/her up if it isn't fun.

Don't bribe your child by promising something valuable if he/she makes it through camp; this sends the wrong message! Going to camp fosters confidence and independence and can be an important developmental milestone.

If there is instability at home or the child is very anxious, please contact us so that we may prepare the counselors and our resident Behavioral Specialist.

Help your child think of things they can do to cope with feelings of missing home.

Bed Wetting: Our staff is trained to handle bedwetting discreetly, working with your child one-on-one. Please notify us in advance 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. Camp does not have a laundry facility, so if clothing or bedding needs consistent laundering, a deduction will be made from the Trading Post account. Please send a plastic sheet and extra bedding if you think they will be needed.

Discipline: Camp Lakewood uses a behavior management system that is based on the four core principles of the YMCA - caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. In all areas requiring discipline (which literally means, "to teach"), it is our primary aim to help children educate themselves, so that they learn to make better choices in the future.

Our trained counselors and dedicated Behavior Specialist try to help campers genuinely help themselves and make restitution for any harm that has been caused. Problems are an opportunity for children to grow. In the event of any

serious problem, parents will be promptly notified. If behavior problems exceed our capacity or guidelines, campers will be sent home. Contact us before camp to discuss known, significant issues. There are no refunds for children sent home due to behavioral or psychological issues.

Property and Equipment Damages: Parents are financially responsible for intentional damage to equipment and facilities caused by their camper.

Insurance: Camp Lakewood does not carry accident or sickness insurance on campers. Parents/guardians must include their personal health insurance information on the Camper Health Form.

This information will only be used to facilitate outside medical treatment if required. In the event of serious illness or accident, the parents 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.

Program Philosophy

Mission Statement: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

Our Goals

- To develop positive character traits including caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith.
- To improve family relationships through better intra-family understanding, and appreciation of each other's needs and abilities.
- To develop life-long recreational skills and knowledge for wholesome use of leisure time. This includes the ability to take safe risks.
- To develop awareness of one's body, its functions, and positive health practices one might use in daily living.
- To foster an understanding of international cultures. By fostering this international understanding, we hope campers will gain appreciation of our country, and a desire to make an impact on other countries around the world.
- To develop an understanding, appreciation and stewardship towards the natural world.
- To increase appreciation for living in a healthy community.

- To foster self-confidence & independence.

Spiritual Emphasis: We welcome campers of all faiths to our camp, with the understanding that assemblies, campfires, and graces at meals are non-denominational. Evening Embers provide opportunities for campers to discuss spiritual, moral, and introspective matters on an informal basis.

Summer Staff: Camp Lakewood employs over 100 staff for the summer camp program. Through a rigorous selection process, we offer our campers the best role models from around the nation and around the world. While about 50% of our counselors return each year, others graduate from college and take full time jobs, spend a summer abroad, or take summer sessions at school. We spend our winters recruiting the remaining 50% of the staff at colleges in Missouri and surrounding states.

Also, through international camp counselor programs, we select a number of international staff from all over the world who share our mission.

Once the applications are in, the selection process begins: studying applications, giving interviews, and performing state and national screening processes. It is this rigorous and competitive process that guarantees campers a fun, educational, and very safe summer camp experience. If you know of an exceptional young adult who loves working with children, please feel free to refer them to us!

Shared Responsibilities: Personal responsibility and group cooperation are important elements of the camp experience. Mature, caring counselors work with campers on the importance of caring for one's personal area and belongings, assisting in daily cabin clean up, and pitching in on general camp tasks known as Shared Responsibilities. We strive to imprint these characteristics on each youngster so they will carry over this industriousness to home and school. Once a week, as cabin groups, children pick some way in which they want to improve camp. For an hour a week, the cabin works together to make camp a better place. Please note that for horsemanship, cleaning saddles and stalls is part of regular horse care. For Ranger Programs, cleaning and carrying camp supplies and equipment is part of the camp experience.

PARENT EVALUATIONS

We appreciate 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 Lakewood office so immediate corrections can be made. You can email us at camplakewood@gwrymca.org.

Our Program Director is available at any time to answer your questions or concerns. Please do not hesitate to call or stop by the Lakewood office. Also, shortly after the camping session, you will receive a Parents' Evaluation Form via email. Your sincere response is requested and appreciated.

HOW TO SUPPORT CAMP LAKEWOOD

Volunteering: Camp Lakewood needs help from groups of enthusiastic adults or teens in preparing for the coming camp season. Consider bringing a group for a weekend of painting, raking leaves, building bunks, cleaning boats, or a multitude of other tasks. We will provide your group with overnight accommodations, meals and a special evening campfire at a reduced rate.

Charitable Contributions: No tipping of individual staff members is permitted, but your appreciation may be shown by selecting a project or fund to receive your tax-deductible support:

World Service: Support developing YMCAs in other countries

Program Equipment, new or usable: Help us to expand our programs and services.

We continue to look for "sunfish" style sailboats, kayaks, & tents.

Annual Campaign: Help send a child in need to camp

Staff Appreciation

YMCA TROUT LODGE

Situated adjacent to YMCA Camp Lakewood on a 360-acre lake and 5,200 acres of forest-covered hills, Trout Lodge has become a timeless destination for family adventures, getaways for all ages and group retreats. Guests choose from hotel-like rooms in the lodge or cabins. Lodging, meals and most activities are included.

Activities include archery, arts & crafts, campfires, canoes, hiking, horseback riding, mini golf, pontoon rides, rope swings, zip lines and more. Visit gwrymca.org/troutlodge or call 888-FUN-YMCA.

YMCA CAMP LAKEWOOD

13528 State Highway AA

Potosi, MO 63664

W gwrymca.org/camplakewood

E camplakewood@gwrymca.org

P 573-438-2155 **F** 573-438-3913

