FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CAMP PATTERSON HANDBOOK

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It's a pleasure to welcome you to YMCA Resident Camp Patterson!

Dear Patterson Campers & Parents,

Thank you for choosing Camp Patterson to be a part of your summer! The camp staff members and I are very eager for the upcoming summer to begin. I anticipate many new experiences that each of us will share.

Camp holds a very special place in my heart; my love for Y camp started in 1999 when I was hired at the MANKATO FAMILY YMCA as a summer camp counselor. I believe camp can have a dramatic impact on the life of a child through the relationships built with other campers as well as the counselors. Your campers will have the opportunity to make lifelong friends, acquire new skills while strengthening the old ones, and have fun in our safe camp environment.

I have designed this handbook to provide parents an introduction to our resident camp program, registration policies and procedures, daily life during a typical camp week, our strategies and expectations for effective parent/staff relationships, along with our policies and procedures for keeping children healthy, safe, and supported while they are away for their week long overnight camp experience. I hope this will answer a wide variety of your questions.

Once again, thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Patterson. I look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,

Karri Olmanson

Youth and Family program Director

The following **INFORMATION IS VERY IMPORTANT**.
If you have any questions please contact me at:
507-345-9808 or kolmanson@mankatoymca.org.

YMCA MISSION

The mission of the Mankato Family YMCA is to put Christian principles into practice through programs and services that build a healthy spirit, mind, body, and social well-being for all.

CAMP PHILOSOPHY

To ensure campers will be safe, have fun, make new friends, gain confidence and self assurance in a positive supervised environment.

PAYMENTS

All camp balances must be paid in full one month prior to attending camp. Session 1 (June Patterson) paid by **May 15th**, 2018 and Session 2 (August Patterson) by **July 15**, 2018 *If full payment is not received by the balance-due date, you child's reservation will no longer be held and your deposit will not be refunded. After this date, we cannot guarantee that space will be available when your payment is received.*

CAMP SESSIONS and TRANSPORTATION TO CAMP

Patterson 1	Departs Monday, June 25	Returns Friday, June 29
Patterson 2	Departs Monday, August 6	Returns Friday, August 10

Monday Arrival and Check-in Procedures:

- Meet in the Mankato West Parking Lot next to the YMCA between 7:00-7:30 a.m. (check-in will not begin prior to 7a.m.)
- Check your child into camp at the registration table.
    - Give the Camp Medical Coordinator all medications in the original prescription containers in a clean Ziplock bag labeled with your child's name and birthdate. Do not pack your child's medication into their luggage. If your child is put on medication just prior to arriving at camp, another Medication Authorization form must be completed upon the check-in process.
- Purchase camp T-shirt for $10.00 (optional).
- Buses will depart at 8:00 a.m. sharp

DEPARTURE FROM CAMP

Friday Return Options:

- Campers will return to the Mankato West Parking Lot at **4:00 p.m.**
  or
- Pick up at Camp Patterson after the **Family Day** performance, program begins at 2:00 p.m. Seating is limited, Please **bring a lawn chair**.

PREPARING FOR CAMP

Campers are encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility while at camp. They take care of themselves and their belongings with counselor supervision. We ask that you encourage your child to help select and pack his/her items for camp. (Don't worry too much about neatness!) One of the greatest things children can learn from this camping experience is how to take care of themselves. Support your child's decision to come to camp, and allow him/her to make choices when planning for camp. Above all, concentrate on the new and positive experiences he or she will have.

ITEMS TO BRING TO CAMP

Since you are better acquainted with his or her habits, feel free to make any substitutions or additions as you wish. Parents should understand that the camp staff will do everything they can to help your camper keep track of his or her belongings, but they are **NOT** responsible for lost or stolen or damaged personal items. **LABEL ALL ITEMS.**

ITEMS NOT ALLOWED IN CAMP:

Campers should not bring: weapons of any kind, radios, electronic games or devices (cell phones, IPOD, IPAD, or any device with internet access), money, toys, trading cards, or anything of value you cannot afford to lose.

Packing list: Do not send new clothing. We may get dirty.

- € Sleeping bag or Sheets (twin size)
- € Pillow and pillow case
- € Rain Coat or Poncho
- € Sweatshirt (2)
- € Pants (2)
- € T-shirts (4)
- € Shorts (3-4)
- € Pajamas/ Sweats
- € Socks (6 pairs)
- € Underwear (6 pairs)
- € Towels (2)shower & swim towel
- € Swim suit(s)
- € Laundry bag for dirty clothes
- € Water Bottle
- € Flashlight
- € Tennis Shoes
- € Sandals
- € Sun Screen
- € Insect Repellent
- € Toiletries (toothpaste, soap, toothbrush, shampoo, etc.)
- € Comb or Brush
- € White T-shirt for tie dying or $10 for camp shirt
- € Book
- € Stationary/Envelopes/Stamps
- € Chap Stick (optional)
- € Fishing Gear *(optional)*
- € Camera *(optional)*
- € Stuffed Animal *(optional)*

LOST AND FOUND

Articles of clothing or personal equipment not claimed by child or parent upon completion or return from program will be disposed of in the following manner; Lost and found articles or equipment will be held at the YMCA for two weeks. Articles/equipment not claimed within the two-week period will be donated to a local charity.

MEDICATIONS

If your camper brings medication to camp, including over the counter medications, it must be in the original container with the original label and their name on it. Do not pack it in their luggage as it must be turned into the Medical Coordinator upon check-in to camp. We stock routine medications such as Tylenol, Benadryl, throat lozenges, etc. You do not need to send these to camp with your child.

The Medical Coordinator will dispense meds as per the camper's medication schedule. Parents must sign off that information given is accurate. The MC will document the camper's medication schedule.

ACCIDENT/ILLNESS AND EMERGENCY TREATMENT

Camper health and safety are very important to us. All campers are checked daily for any signs of illness by trained staff. In case of an emergency involving inclement weather, staff will find the nearest shelter until it is safe to return to the scheduled camp activity. The Camp Director will contact you if there is an emergency involving your child.

ILLNESS

A sick camper cannot do well in a group setting and it is difficult for the staff to give a sick camper the extra attention they may need. If a camper becomes ill at camp a parent will be notified depending on the illness, we can make the decision of whether your child should stay until the end of the camp session or if you should come to get them.

While we understand the needs of a working family we must protect all of our campers from any and all contagious illnesses. Under no circumstances should a camper be brought to camp if they have a contagious illness. In cases of communicable diseases such as chicken pox, lice, impetigo, and strep, we will notify other parents in writing so they may be alerted to the incubation period and symptoms. Please notify us if your child has contracted or been exposed to any of the above illnesses or diseases.

INJURIES

We would love to think that no child will be injured while in our care, but a few minor injuries can reasonably be expected. All staff members are trained in CPR and first aid. If a child has a minor injury they will be treated and cared for until they feel ready to return to the activities.

In the case of a more severe injury we will:

- Contact you (or your emergency contacts if you're unavailable)
- If necessary, contact professional emergency care providers

BEDWETTING

Bedwetting can be very embarrassing for a child. Please notify camp staff in advance if your child is prone to bedwetting. We are trained in how to handle it discreetly and professionally. Assure your child that he/she should tell their counselor so it can be taken care of right away. Reassure them that the counselor is there for all campers needs and will help them through these types of challenges. Laundry services are available at camp. Any bedding and clothing, wet or soiled due to bedwetting, will be laundered and returned discretely to the camper before bedtime.

VISITORS

Parents are encouraged to visit during the last day of their camper's session to meet the staff and see the camp. Mid-week visits can be very distracting and are *not recommended*. If you feel a visit is necessary, contact the Camp Director to arrange a date and time. Any visitor that comes during the week MUST stop at the camp office.

COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CHILD AT CAMP

Send letters / Packages to: **YMCA Camp Patterson: *(child's name)***
5050 Patterson Road, Madison Lake, MN 56063

Mail items early to ensure they receive it. Do not send candy or food. These items attract bugs and rodents. Packages and letters received after a camper's session has ended will be forwarded to the camper.

Please note: We ask that the telephone be used for business and emergencies only. Campers cannot make phone calls without the camp

director's permission. Of course, in an emergency or to help with the camper's social adjustment, the camp staff will contact you. In general, we find that calls from mom and dad can actually make "homesickness" worse. Please leave cell phones at home. If discovered, they will be confiscated until the end of their session.

HOMESICKNESS

We understand that not every child is meant to be a camper just like every child may not be an athlete or musician. However, campers who are healthy and well rested when they come to camp are less likely to be missing home.

Homesickness is a natural feeling experienced by many campers, for most, it passes after a day or so. Remember, because your child will be missing you, the first letter from camp may not be glowing. Occasionally, a camper will send a "distress letter" the first or second night of camp before they are really into the full swing of the program. These letters are common and are usually followed by a brief "Camp's great" postcard, or no letters at all because they are busy having a great time. If you do receive a letter from your child expressing homesickness, we encourage you to contact the camp directors for more information. We will check with your camper's counselors and let you know how things are progressing.

Camp staff members are trained to help your child if he/she becomes homesick and will make every effort to help ease their fears. If necessary, we will call for your input on the situation and as a last resort, and may ask you to pick up your child.

There will be campers who despite all efforts will need to come home. If your child is so miserable and upset that he/she is virtually unable to participate in activities, the Camp Director will contact you to discuss the situation, together you will make the decision if it's time to pick up. If you do pick your child up, try focusing on the success of how long they lasted. Let them know how proud you are of them and make it a baseline from which the camper can grow in the future.

ADDRESSING HOMESICKNESS BEFORE GOING TO CAMP

Talk with your child about the likelihood that they will miss home before he/she goes off to camp. Remind them that they may not enjoy every single moment of camp and that it is ok and normal to miss home, mom/dad, siblings or pets. Let them tell you how they think they might feel while away. Offer reassurance and support. Communicate confidence in them and their coping skills to get through these times. Keep in mind that if your child perceives you as doubtful or anxious, it will only heighten their concerns. Reassure and prepare yourself for the separation.

Discuss with your child how you plan to keep in touch, keeping in mind and respecting camp policies regarding phone calls and communications. You can send a letter or care package the week ahead of time so it is waiting for your camper when they arrive*. In your letters use words such as "love" instead of "miss." Keep in mind if your child is having a hard time adjusting, to receive a letter that only talks about how much you are missing them and how quiet the house is without them will only make them feel worse. Instead, try to ask questions about camp, keep your words supportive and enthusiastic. Campers will have time to write you during BOB (Body on Bunk) time. *send pre-addressed stamped envelopes.

Resist telling your child "If you don't like camp call me and I'll come pick you up". Instead, show your faith that they will enjoy themselves and have a positive experience. Use positive messages about camp as "You're going to have such a great time!" If you do get a call from your child or the camp staff try to resist the urge to "rescue them." Instead, acknowledge their feelings and support their efforts. Remind them of the commitment they made to camp and that this is a growing experience.

Please note: *Campers who leave early due to homesickness will not receive a refund.*

Typical Daily Schedule

The schedule below should be used as a guide, circumstances sometimes call for changes in times and/or activities.

7:20am Fitness Fun (optional)
7:40 Morning wake-up call
2:45 Free Swim 2/Choice Activity
3:30 Afternoon Snack

8:00 Flag Raising & Waiter call
8:15 Breakfast/Announcements
8:45 Morning message (core values)
9:00 Cabin clean-up
9:20 First Rotation period
10:40 Second Rotation period
12:00 Lunch/Announcements/Songs
1:00 BOB time (Body on Bunk)
2:00 Free Swim 1/Choice Activity
3:45 Free Swim 3/Choice Activity
4:30 Cabin Time
5:15 Dinner/Announcements/Song
6:00 Cabin Time
6:45 Flag Lowering
7:00 Evening Activity Program
8:30 Campfire/Snack
9:15 Calm in the cabin before bed
9:30 Lights out

FITNESS FUN

Campers will have the choice in participating in morning fitness programs to get their bodies moving. Programs include: Yoga, Running, Boot Camp and Polar Plunge.

MORNING ROTATION PERIODS

Campers will attend four specialized activity lessons (Archery, Arts and Crafts, Canoeing/Kayaking, and Outdoor Education Adventure) during their week at camp. All activities emphasize skill development, appreciation of the activity, non-competitive instruction, and fun!

EVENING ACTIVITY PROGRAM

EAP'S are all-camp events that are the camper's favorites. They include; Capture the Flag, Skit Night (talent show/lip sync performance), Patterson Party with music, games, and a final campfire.

MORNING MESSAGES AND EVENING REFLECTIONS

At the beginning and end of each day the cabin group shares "devotions" to close the day. The cabin counselor guides the group in discussing an inspirational reading or discussion on one of the core values, and how they can apply it to their own lives. They may choose to discuss a related topic such as bullying or making friends as well. This is also the time for sharing the joys of the day and allows the cabin counselor to ask if there is anything that the campers need. It's a wonderful part of the bonding that happens within a cabin group.

GRACE

Campers have a moment of reflection and give tanks at the beginning of each meal when the sing of say a "Camp Grace".

STAFFING

One of the most important components of a good camp experience is the staff. We are very proud of our outstanding staff that provides leadership in the cabin and program areas. Staff members are carefully selected for their character, commitment to youth development, and skills.

CABIN ASSIGNMENTS

Cabins are equipped with 10 bunkbeds per unit.
Cabin assignments are based on camper age, gender and cabin mate request. Camp is a great place to make new friends and have new adventures. Please keep in mind as you request cabin buddies when registering your child. Cabin mate requests (2 only) must be within 1 year of age of your camper and reciprocated by your camper's choice of cabin mate. We do not guarantee placement of multiple cabin mate requests, but will make every effort to honor them.

BEHAVIORAL POLICY and MANAGEMENT

The staff of The Mankato Family YMCA works proactively with your camper to instill the YMCA principles of Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Faith. We expect all campers to treat others with these principles in mind. If a camper makes a poor decision, we will respond appropriately with those same principles. Most issues can be resolved with a few respectful words and then we can get back to the fun of camp.

The Mankato Family YMCA recognizes differences in children and will use a variety of discipline methods to deal with situations that may arise. We do not use physical, emotional punishment, or any other type of technique that would harm the campers. The Mankato Family YMCA has staff in place to deal with behavior concerns. Parents will be notified if their camper has been in a situation involving inappropriate language and/or touch, disruptive behavior, profanity, blatant disrespect or violation of rules, or other behavior deemed unsuitable for camp. As a last resort, the Camp Director or Program Director will intervene to determine a camper's level of participation in camp activities.

The Mankato Family YMCA does not tolerate physical fighting or illegal activity. If this should occur, parents will be notified and may be asked to pick up their child, dependent on the circumstances. Refunds will not be given if a child is sent home because of a behavioral problem.
We want every camper's experience to be as safe, wonderful, and as much fun as possible. We will do our best to ensure that everyone is treated equally.

PROPERTY and EQUIPMENT DAMAGE

Parents are financially responsible for intentional damage to equipment and facilities caused by their camper. This includes graffiti on cabin walls as well as elsewhere on the grounds, malicious destruction of property, intentional misuse of equipment, etc.

BIRTHDAYS

We'll be happy to recognize your child's birthdays if it falls while he/she is in camp. We'll recognize your child's birthday during a meal and have the entire camp community join in wishing him/her a wonderful birthday.

FRIDAY FAMILY DAY

Come join your camper and the staff for a fun filled program at Camp Patterson. The campers will perform a song / skit with their cabin mates then be recognized individually for the awards received throughout the week. After the performance you will have time to meet your camper's counselor/cabin mates and are welcome to enjoy our camp setting; however we encourage your departure by 4:00PM for final clean up.

If you are unable to attend the program our bus will return to the Mankato West Parking lot at 4:00pm.

NOTES FROM "EXPERIENCED" CAMP PARENTS:

- "Send self-addressed stamped envelopes if you want to hear from your camper. Don't be surprised if you do not receive a letter. They are out being kids and having fun."
- "Send old clothes. Camp is not a fashion show and your camper's stuff will get dirty."
- "Label everything"

- "Send two suits since campers are in and out of the water. This helped my child prevent chaffing."
- "Seeing your child interact with their cabin mates on Family Day is priceless"

Mankato Family YMCA
1401 S. Riverfront Drive
Mankato, MN 56001
507-387-8255

SIGN OUT PROCEDURES:

On the last day of camp, parents must "sign-out" their camper. A photo I.D. is required to "sign-out" your camper. If someone other than the parent/guardian plans on picking up your child, that person must be listed on the Parent-Camper Confidential Health Form and/or the parent/guardian must provide a signed permission letter on check-in day.

Mailing address:

YMCA Camp Patterson
5050 Patterson Road Madison Lake, MN 56063

Driving Directions to Camp Patterson from Mankato:

- Take MN-22 North
- Turn RIGHT onto CR-2/490th St. Continue to follow 490th St.
- Turn LEFT onto CR-104/Ridge top Rd.
- Turn LEFT onto N. Shore Dr.
- Stay STRAIGHT to go onto PATTERSON Rd./CR-103.
- End at 5050 Patterson Rd. Madison Lake, MN. 56063

The Estimated Distance: 15 miles from Mankato.

YMCA Youth Activity Program Director/Resident Camp Director:
Karri Olmanson
507-345-9808
kolmanson@mankatoymca.org