

# 2024 Resident Camp Patterson Parent Handbook



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



## Every Summer Has A Story. Find Yours.

# RESIDENT CAMP ADMINISTRATION TEAM



**Dustin Slaughter**  
Youth Activities Director  
Phone: 507-386-2706  
E: [dslaughter@mankatoymca.org](mailto:dslaughter@mankatoymca.org)

- Financial Assistance
- Resident Camp Patterson
- Buddy Requests



**Anna Lieske**  
Teen Program Director  
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- Resident Teen Leadership Camps
  - LIT (Leaders in Training),
  - CIT (Counselors in Training)
  - JC (Junior Counselors).

## Business Office Administrative Assistant

- Contact for questions on Camp Payments.

Susan Lyons  
Phone: 507-345-9800  
[slyons@mankatoymca.org](mailto:slyons@mankatoymca.org)

Dear Patterson Campers & Parents,

Thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Patterson! We are very excited about the upcoming summer and for the experiences we will share together. We aim to provide a safe, fun, educational, and transformational experience for all campers through the YMCA's core values; caring, honesty, responsibility, respect, and faith. We believe camp can have a dramatic impact on the life of a child. Through the relationships built, unplugged from the modern world and with the assistance of our dedicated and passionate team, we hope to provide your child a summer filled with memories and adventures!

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Dustin, Anna and the 2024 Camp Team

## Follow Mankato Family YMCA Youth Programs on Social Media

@Mankato Family YMCA Youth

@mankatoymcayouth



## YMCA Mission

To put Christian principals into practice through programs and services that build a healthy spirit, mind, body, and social well-being for all.

## Camp Philosophy

The purpose of the Mankato Family YMCA Summer Camp program is to create a safe, fun, and inclusive environment where every child has the opportunity to develop and feel valued.

## Program Goals

1. Promote a sense of self-confidence, self-efficacy, and independence.
2. Build positive relationships with peers and other adults.
3. Provide a variety of activities that develop skills in the fields of arts, STEM, and games.
4. Teach character development using the core values; caring, honesty, responsibility, respect and faith.

## Camp Sessions

Patterson 1: Sunday June 9 – Friday June 14, 2024  
Patterson 2: Sunday June 16 – Friday June 21, 2024  
Patterson 3: Sunday June 23 – Friday June 28, 2024  
Patterson 4: Sunday August 4 – Friday August 9, 2024

## Payments

All camp balances must be paid in full by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the camp your child(ren) attends.  
June camps by May 15<sup>th</sup>, July camps by June 15<sup>th</sup>, August camps by July 15<sup>th</sup>  
For questions on camp payments contact Susan Lyons, [slyons@mankatoymca.org](mailto:slyons@mankatoymca.org) 507-345-9800.

## Financial Assistance

YMCA Financial Assistance is granted by need on a first come, first served basis, and made available based on funds donated to the Mankato Family YMCA by Campaigns, Grants, and the Penguin Plunge. The application window will be open starting in January until all funds have been distributed. You will be notified of your application's status and amount awarded via email. Applications may be found at [www.mankatoymca.org](http://www.mankatoymca.org) or picked up at the front desk. **Greater Mankato Area United Way's Connecting Kids** program offers scholarship assistance at <https://www.connectingkidsmankato.org/>.

## Summer Camp Drop Policy

Those who wish to withdraw their registration for a camp must do so no later than two (2) full weeks before the camp is scheduled to start. No refunds will be given after the two (2) week policy prior to the start of camp. The \$25 deposit used to register per session is non-refundable and non-transferable. Membership withdrawal notice: If you are registered for a program and you cancel your membership, you will be billed for the nonmember rate of the program.

## Communication

At the Y, we strive to provide you with timely relevant information regarding summer camp engaging you as apparent in your camper's success. This includes surveys, previews, and daily/weekly communication. Anticipate an email a week prior to your camper's camp session along with a preview of our week the Sunday before your session. Following your camper's session, you will receive a survey via email. We encourage you to complete the survey and offer your feedback so we can improve in the future.

### REMIND- Primary Communication

REMIND is the best resource to use to contact the camp staff directly. They will have access to REMIND from 7:15am to 5:30pm, Monday-Friday. Communication received out of this time period, may be answered but is not guaranteed until the following business day. To enroll into REMIND: please contact our Summer Camp Director, Dustin at [dslaughter@mankatoymca.org](mailto:dslaughter@mankatoymca.org). We **strongly encourage** every parent/guardian to join REMIND. This is our primary form of communication. If not enrolled, you will miss vital information regarding your camper's experience. The Mankato Family YMCA Summer Camp program is not responsible for missed messages due to unenrollment.

## **Child Abuse Prevention**

At the YMCA, we believe that every child deserves a safe environment to grow. As mandated reporters, we take child abuse seriously and are required to report an incident that may intentionally, recklessly, and/or knowingly cause harm to a child. The counselor team is trained in child abuse recognition and reporting. Additionally, we have guidelines for appropriate interactions with you and among youth in our programs. The lists below provide examples of appropriate and inappropriate behaviors.

- Physical Interactions
  - Appropriate:
    - Side Hugs
    - Handshakes/Elbows
    - High fives/fist bumps
    - Pats on shoulder/back
  - Inappropriate:
    - Full frontal hug
    - Kisses
    - Lap sitting
    - Any form of unwanted affection
- Verbal Interactions
  - Appropriate:
    - Positive reinforcement
    - Appropriate jokes
    - Encouragement
    - Praise
  - Inappropriate
    - Name-calling
    - Secrets
    - Cursing/Derogatory remarks or sexual language

## **Child Safe Environment**

YMCA Staff and Volunteers place great value on creating the most child-safe environment possible. We prioritize being present with the participants, are trained on the Mankato Family YMCA Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Code of Conduct, report all suspected abuse to the authorities as required by law and have all passed criminal & child protection background checks, and completed CPR/First Aid training

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

No person shall be denied the opportunity to participate in the YMCA as a participant, employee, or volunteer based on race, sex and/or gender, or religious beliefs. The Y is made up of all people of all ages and from every walk of life working side by side to strengthen communities. Together we work to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity. Our core values are caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith – they guide everything we do.

The YMCA Summer Camp program is a large-group program designed to foster participant development in a positive manner. In order for participants to be successful, please review the recommended program readiness standards.

## Directions

Directions to Camp Patterson from Mankato: Est. distance: 15 miles

- Take MN-22 North
- Turn RIGHT onto CR-2/490<sup>th</sup> St. Continue to follow 490<sup>th</sup> St.
- Turn LEFT onto CR-104/Ridge Top Rd.
- Turn LEFT onto N. Shore Dr.
- Stay STRAIGHT to go onto PATTERSON Rd./CR-103.

Address: 5050 Patterson Rd. Madison Lake, MN. 56063

## Arrival

Check-In begins is from 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. on the Sunday of your session.

The camp staff are busy setting up for arrival for the week therefore, campers and families will not be admitted into camp before 1:00 p.m. We will have staff monitoring traffic flow so please be patient upon arrival. Safety is our first priority. Contact Camp Administration via REMIND prior to check-in to inform us if your child needs to arrive later than the scheduled check-in time.

## Check-In

Parents and campers are required to check-in together. All payments and forms must be turned in and completed to receive a cabin assignment (Cabin assignments will not be given out early).

- Please park in the lot adjacent to the Main Kiwanis Lodge.
- Report to the registration tables located in the Kiwanis Lodge.
- Drop Off all medications with Medical Coordinator; do not pack medication in child's luggage.
- Purchase a white Camp Patterson T-shirt for tie-dye (optional) \$10.
- Other Camp items (stickers, stuffed animals, patches) will be for sale.
- Drop off any Camp Letters.

Once checked into camp you can follow the signs to their cabin.

- Please do not unpack your child's belongings. Allowing your child to unpack their own belongings and make their own bed is an important step in developing confidence in their ability to care for themselves. The counselors will assist your child, if needed, and use this time to get acquainted.
- We recommend a fairly quick drop off to help ease the separation. Goodbyes are the hardest (especially for parents). We welcome you to have a lengthier visit on Friday when picking up your child and they can show you around.

## Check Out

Check-out is between 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. on the Friday of your session.

- All campers must be signed out by parents/guardians or authorized adults with a Picture I.D.
- If an additional person needs to be added, this must be communicated to the camp staff in writing no later than 48 hours prior to pick up.

## Visitors & Communication with your child at Camp

- Parents/Guardians are required to communicate with camp staff via REMIND. This includes absences.
- Mid-day visits are not recommended. If necessary, contact camp staff to arrange a date and time.
  - Cell phones and watches are not permitted at camp. If discovered, they will be confiscated and kept in a safe place.
  - Campers should not make phone calls without the camp staff's permission.
- In an emergency or to help with a camper's social adjustment, we may need to contact you. We know it is difficult as a parent to not be in touch directly with your camper while they are away. We also know that the camp experience is enhanced when children can unplug from their devices and truly enjoy every moment of their time at camp.

## Cabin Assignments

Camp is a great place to make new friends and share new adventures. Campers are assigned to their cabins before each session begins. Assignments are based on age, gender, cabin mate request, and space. Traditional campers will reside in the newly refurbished cabins consisting of 5 bunks (10 beds) and 1 counselor cot. The bathhouse is nearby and have private individual shower stalls. Some of the larger cabins which are usually reserved for the Teen Leaders are equipped with window air-conditioning units.

Anytime there is a group living situation (multiple people sharing a space for many days), there are bound to be situations. How campers deal with those issues is important.

## Cabin-Mate Requests

YMCA Camp Patterson welcomes campers who wish to come to camp with a friend. We make every effort to place campers with requested cabin-mates

- Campers may request up to **TWO** campers within a year of camper's age upon registration
- The camp director may spilt up cabin mate requests of groups over three to decrease the impact of cliques.
- Campers must list each other as their cabin mates on the registration form to ensure both parties desire the pairing.
- If you feel we should consider your situation differently, please contact the Camp Director. Please understand that cabin requests cannot be guaranteed due to enrollments or other reasons.
- Keep in mind, campers who are not in the same cabin, still have many opportunities to spend time together within the camp week.

## Packing for Camp

We've found it's beneficial to have your camper help pack their items so they know what they've brought and where to locate it in their bag. The camp staff will do everything they can to help your camper keep track of their belongings, but they are NOT responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal items. Please **LABEL ALL ITEMS** with your child's name.

**Suggested packing list:** We play and get dirty, don't send new clothing.

### CLOTHING:

- Long sleeve shirt
- Jacket with hood or Rain Coat
- Sweatshirts (2)
- Pants (3)
- T-shirts (5)
- Shorts (3-4)
- Pajamas/ Sweats (3-4)
- Socks (6 pairs)
- Underwear (6 pairs)
- Swim suit(s)
- Tennis Shoes
- Sandals

### BEDDING:

- Sleeping Bag or Sheets (twin)
- Pillow with pillowcase
- 2 Towels (1-beach & 1-shower)
- Stuffed Animal (*optional*)

### MISC:

- Sun Screen & Lip balm
- Insect Repellent
- Toiletries (toothpaste, soap, toothbrush, shampoo, etc.)
- White T-shirt for tie dying or \$10 for Resident camp shirt
- Flashlight
- Book/Reading material
- Refillable Water bottle

### OPTIONAL:

- Stationary/Envelopes/Stamps
- Hawaiian Shirt
- Fishing Gear
- Camera
- Hat
- Dirty clothes bag
- Musical Instrument

Items NOT allowed at Camp	
	Cell Phones
	Weapons
	Electronics
	Tobacco/Drugs/Vapes
	Alcohol
	Toys/Trading Cards
	Money
	Inappropriate Clothing

## Cell Phones

Cell phones are not allowed at camp under any circumstances. We want to provide the best experience for your child, help us give them a chance to “unplug” for the week. Cell phones found will be taken and stored with the Camp Director until the end of the camp session.

## Pets

Please leave pets at home. Camp has plenty of animals for campers to enjoy (fish, birds, deer, raccoons, etc.)

## Lost and Found

- The Lost & Found table can be found near the Kiwanis Lodge at the end of your campers session. We advise all families to look through the Lost & Found prior to exiting Camp Patterson
- Items not claimed by camper/parent upon completion of session will be disposed of in the following manner; Items will be held at the YMCA Door A for two weeks. Items/equipment not claimed within the two-week period will be donated to a local charity.
- **Label all your camper’s belongings.** This makes locating the owner much easier!

## Daily Schedule Sample

### Morning:

- 6:45 Rise & Shine with the Fitness Fun Challenge (optional)
- 7:15 Wake-Up Call
- 7:35 Flag Raising / Morning Message
- 7:45 Breakfast
- 8:15 Cabin Clean-up / Cabin Time
- 8:45 Skill Rotation 1 (8:45-9:40)
- 9:45 Skill Rotation 2 (9:45-10:40)
- 10:50 Color Wars Challenge / Waiter Call
- 11:10 Lunch/Announcements/Songs
- 12:00 BOB (Body on Bunk to Rest & Relax)

### Afternoon:

- 1:00 Put Swimsuits & Sunscreen on
- 1:15 Period 1 for Swim Time1 & Free Choice Activities
- 2:00 Period 2 for Swim Time2 & Free Choice Activities
- 2:45 Snack
- 3:15 Period 3 for Swim Time3 & Free Choice Activities
- 4:00 Cabin Time
- 4:40 Waiter Call
- 5:00 Dinner/Announcements/Songs
- 5:45 Change for Evening All Camp Activities
- 6:00 Flag Lowering
- 6:15 Evening Program begins
- 7:15 Change and go to Campfire for Snack
- 8:10 Younger campers dismissed to shower/movie. While older campers continue their campfire.
- 9:00 Younger campers return to cabins for a quiet time of reading and relaxing before bed while older campers are dismissed to shower.
- 9:45 Lights Out

## Christian Emphasis

The Mankato Family YMCA is a Christian organization that is non-denominational and welcome campers from all backgrounds. Emphasis is placed on Christian values from the YMCA of the USA Character Development Program that focuses on the core values of caring, honest, responsibility, respect & faith.

- We carry on the long-standing tradition of offering prayers of thanks before meals. Campers choosing not to participate in these activities must be respectful to those that are.

## Emergency Procedures

- All staff are trained in the emergency action procedures (EAP) to keep all campers safe.
- Camp staff will contact you if an emergency situation arises via REMIND.

## Mail

- Mail via USPS takes several days. We advise you to bring your letters to Check In
  - Letters should be placed in an envelope with your campers name on it and the day in which you want it delivered. A table will be available at check in to write your child a letter. Receiving positive and encouraging notes from you helps campers feel secure during their stay with us.
  - We suggest writing a letter, no care packages please. We also advise you to ask questions about camp and though we know you do, avoid telling your child how much you miss them. This can encourage homesickness. Use words/phrases such as "We're so proud of you," "We love you," or "See you soon!"
  - Do not send candy or food. These items attract bugs and rodents.
  - Packages and letters received after a camper's session will be returned or forwarded at the senders/campers expense.
- Send letters to:  
YMCA Camp Patterson c/o: (child's name)  
5050 Patterson Road Madison Lake, MN 56063

## Camp Activities

**Fitness Fun:** Instead of making exercise a chore, we make it fun! Campers are offered the opportunity to participate in Yoga, Road Runners Club, Polar Bear Swim, Fishing, and Book Club.

**Morning Skill Rotations:** Mon-Thurs, Traditional Camp (designed for grades 3-8) is all about exploration and discovery. Campers rotate with their cabin unit between four specialized program areas of Canoeing, Arts and Crafts, Archery, and Outdoor Education. Each program area will expose campers to new things and explore personal interests in different activities. Focus is placed on learning through fun and games while promoting opportunities to develop a wide range of memories and experiences.

**Afternoon Free Periods:** For many Traditional Campers, this is the first chance at experiencing independence. All campers have the opportunity to pick what they want to do based on their own interest. The activities are announced daily at lunch time from the counselors leading the program areas. Campers will choose where they would like to go for each period: arts and crafts, archery games, field and court sports, GAGA ball, swimming, water craft sports (canoeing, paddle boarding/kayaking), fishing, or games of air hockey, ping pong, billiards or board games in the Rec Room.

**Evening Programming:** It's a time when we participate in the all camp wide evening activity and come together as one large group:

- Sunday Night: Code Names
- Monday Night: Camp Olympics
- Tuesday Night: Capture the Flag or Sand Castle Building
- Wednesday Night: Skit Night
- Thursday Night: Patterson Party



## Theme Days

Each camp session will include our traditional evening programs where campers enjoy dressing up for: Capture the Flag, Skit Night and the Patterson Party.

Capture the Flag color teams include red, blue, yellow and orange. Campers will receive their team color at the time of check in. Don't worry about packing the right color shirt for your child, they will receive a team bandana and many enjoy tie-dying their purchased Patterson camp shirt or a pair of socks to match their team color. We want each child to shine and have their moment in the Color War Challenges. There will be points awarded for camp participation, drama, singing, nature, arts and crafts, spelling, geography, and carrying out the core values. The Patterson Party is filled with carnival games and music. We encourage campers to wear bright colors or Hawaiian shirts on Thursday.

## Jobs and Awards given at Camp

- Waiter Call: Cabins are assigned to the task of WAITER CALL. They will assist camp staff with meal set up/clean up, wash/dry/put away dishes, take out the trash, and clean up the floors.
- Cleanest Cabin Award: each day, campers and counselors will return to their cabin and tidy up. This includes making their beds, putting away their clothes, sweeping the floor, etc. The Camp Admin team will go evaluate each cabin and award the "Cleanest" cabin with our amazing Rocky the Raccoon for the day.

## Progressive Archery Program

Archery Levels	# of Arrows	Distance	Score
Junior Bowman	30	5 yards	30
Bowman	30	5 yards	50
Pro Bowman	30	5 yards	100
Junior Archer	30	10 yards	50
Archer	30	10 yards	100
Archer 2	30	10 yards	150
Pro Archer	30	15 yards	175
Master Archer	30	15 yards	200
Elite Archer	30	15 yards	250
Elite Archer 2	30	15 yards	300
Chief Archer	30	20 yards	200
Chief Master Archer	30	20 yards	250
Chief Master Archer 2	30	20 yards	300

Our archery program utilizes various distances and goals to challenge the youth through their levels of accomplishment. Year after year this is one of our most popular activity areas where children work towards being the next Master Archer.

## Swim Test & Evaluations

Camp Patterson is located on the shores of Lake Washington. Due to the lake's uncertain conditions, camp lifeguards tend to be a little stricter (compared to a pool's standard).

- Campers participating in swimming/boating activities\* must take part in a swim test to determine their ability. Campers are not be forced to take the swim test however, it is highly recommended.
- On Sunday, campers will report to the waterfront with their cabin unit to test.
- Campers will be separated into beginner/non-swimmer, intermediate, or advanced swim levels and will be restricted to how deep they may swim based on the level received.

\*All boating activities require the use of life jackets which are provided for us by Camp Patterson.

- **Beginner:**

Test: Refusal to take the swim test and failure to pass the intermediate level. Campers can enjoy swimming and water activities in the zero-depth area while wearing a life jacket. Indicates campers demonstrated a limited ability to swim. Other considerations include:

1. Fear associated with open water, seaweed, or drowning.
2. Inability to float on the back and/or stomach for 10 seconds.

- **Intermediate:**

Test: Enter the water from the end of the dock and swim the entire width of the swimming area with the front crawl, breast stroke, or side stroke. Indicates campers demonstrated a limited ability to swim. Other considerations include:

1. Ability to go underwater without plugging the nose.
2. Having no fears associated with open water, seaweed, or drowning.
3. Ability to tread water and maintain an identifiable swimming stroke for short distance.

- **Advanced:**

Test: Enter the water from the end of the dock and swim one lap around the floating raft using the front crawl, breast stroke, or side stroke. Can touch ground or tread water for 1 minute. Indicates campers demonstrated the ability to swim efficiently and reliably.

## Teen Leadership Programs

A Leader-In-Training (LIT) camper is one who is still a camper, but desires to learn skills pertaining to leadership and collaboration in a supportive, fun, outdoor environment conducive to self-discovery. A LIT is excited to help create an unforgettable camp experience for other campers. He/she is inclined to make new friends and learn new skills to facilitate his/her new adventure. Most importantly, however, LIT's are ready and willing to give back to camp. In return, camp will provide an unforgettable experience that will continue to benefit them for years to come. (Entering grades 9-10)

A Counselor-In-Training (CIT) camper is one who is transitioning from learning about leadership to applying their leadership skills. A CIT will work on developing their individual abilities while discovering the person s/he desires to be. He/she will participate in designing and creatively managing camp activities of interest to them. He/she will often participate in an enthusiastic leadership capacity; however, a CIT will not be responsible for supervising campers alone or sleeping in a cabin unit with them. (Entering grades 11, 12)

A Junior Counselor (JC) is in pursuit to be a YMCA Cabin counselor in the upcoming years. While leading others, a JC wants a unique volunteer internship experience that will allow for self-development that enhances job performance and is willing to work a little to get it. A JC looks forward to embracing new approaches and discovers ideas to create a better participant experience.

Because of the intimate social and educational nature of our leadership programs; LIT, CIT and JC campers who consistently exhibit behaviors that are disruptive to the learning of the other campers may be removed from the program, even if their behaviors would be tolerated in traditional camp programs. Furthermore, because our teen leadership programs are co-ed, maintaining camp-appropriate social relationships is paramount for success in the program and is taken extremely seriously by camp staff. There is no refund if a camper is expelled from the program due to such issue.

## **Inclement Weather & Rainy Days**

- Camp will operate outdoors for the majority of the time.
- In the event of inclement weather, activities will be modified and a message will be sent via REMIND.
  - Shelter will be taken in the presence of lightning, thunder, high winds and high heat index.
- Campers must be prepared for rainy days by having the appropriate clothing (sweatshirt/rain jacket).

## **Injuries, Illness & Diseases**

- In the case of a minor injury, first aid will be administered until camper is ready to return to activity.
- In the case of severe injuries, we will contact the Parent/Guardian/the emergency contacts if you're unavailable.
  - If necessary, an Emergency Action Plan will be initiated and 911 will be contacted.
- If a child becomes ill at camp, we will notify you immediately to pick them up. Please do not send your camper to camp if they are not feeling well.

## **Food**

The Kiwanis Lodge dining hall has been updated with a new deck, expansion, and the addition of air-conditioning units. Camp serves three healthy meals each day (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner ) along with an afternoon and evening snack. Campers will enjoy eating their meals in a family style format with their cabin peers.

## **Dietary Restrictions/ Allergies**

- Upon registration, list all dietary restrictions & allergies that your child has
- Camp is able to accommodate reasonable restrictions & allergies. In some situations, you may be asked to send your camper with their own allergen-free foods. Our kitchen team does well with gluten-free, vegetarian, nut free, and shellfish allergies. We will do as much as we reasonably can to accommodate picky eaters, but allergies take priority.

## **Medications**

- All medications must be given to the Medical Coordinator upon Check In. The Medical Coordinator will review medications and clarify questions if necessary.
- Parent/Guardians must send all medications in the original container with the original pharmacy label. Medications brought to camp, not in its original container, **will not** be accepted.
- All medications will be collected by the camp staff at the beginning of each week of camp and administered as prescribed by the label.
- Unused medications will be returned to the parent/guardian on the last day of the camp session.
- Campers who use asthmatic inhalers or medications for allergic reactions (i.e., an Epi-Pen for bee stings) may keep the medication on them but can only administer it to themselves under supervision of our Medical Coordinator.
- Do not pack medications in your camper's luggage
- General over-the-counter medications are available at camp. The Medical Coordinator will contact you if your camper may need these.
- YMCA Camp Patterson reserves the right to send a camper home if our Medical Coordinator or Camp Director advises. If you plan to be away for any length of time during your camper's week, arrange for a relative or friend to be able to pick your camper up should they become ill. Ensure this information is included in your campers emergency contact section at registration.

## Bedwetting

We want you and your child to be at ease while at camp. Bedwetting can be very embarrassing even if he/she commonly wets the bed or if it happens only once in a while. We pledge to discreetly and modestly help campers through this process. Notify staff if your child has a history of bedwetting and send protective apparel so we can be proactive with placement and bedtime routine. Assure your child that the staff is there for their needs and will help them through these types of challenges.

## Camper Mental Health

A lot has happened in the past few years within the world. Our campers are resilient, but sometimes may need extra encouragement, someone to talk to, or just a friendly ear to vent. At Camp, we have the perfect setting for campers to find comfort and ease talking about their struggles and to find ways to take their mind off of the tough things they face each day.

YMCA Camp Patterson has partnered with the YMCA of the USA to incorporate mental health activities during our evening cabin time. These activities include mindfulness and self-reflection. These short activities are intentional and meant to solely improve the camper experience.

## Homesickness

Feeling a little anxious and homesick is a normal and healthy part of this camp experience. For most campers, this feeling passes after a day or two. Campers who are healthy and well rested when they come to camp are less likely to be missing home for an extended period of time. Homesickness is most common during “down time” at camp such as BOB (Body on Bunk) time and before bed. Most campers who experience this are fine during the day and are truly enjoying their time at camp.

As a strategy to keep homesickness under control, camp staff are trained to help campers ease their fears, normalize their homesick feelings, and keep them busy/engaged with activities. If a camper is homesick for a consistent 24-hour period, we will call for your input in handling the situation. As a last resort if your child is so miserable and upset that he/she is virtually unable to participate in activities, then it’s time to pick him/her 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. Campers who leave early due to homesickness will not receive a refund.

The camp phone will be used for business and emergencies only. Campers should not make phone calls without the camp director’s permission. In general, calls from mom and dad can actually make “homesickness” worse. Cell phones should be kept at home. If discovered, they will be confiscated. We know it is difficult as a parent to not be in touch directly with your camper while they are here with us. We also know that the camp experience is enhanced when children can unplug from their devices and truly enjoy every moment of their time at camp.

## Realistic Expectations

- YMCA Camp Patterson focuses on self-discovery, self-confidence, and self-esteem—all through positive reinforcement, encouragement, and acceptance. For many years, campers have been allowed to create a special community focused on friendship, inclusiveness, and independence at Camp.
- Talk with your child about the likelihood that they will miss home before they go off to camp.
- Remind them that they may not enjoy every single moment of camp
- Assure them it is ok and normal to miss home, mom/dad, siblings or pets.
- Ask them how they think they might feel while away.
- Encourage your child to have a reasonable / realistic view of camp. Discuss both the ups and downs your child may experience. Your child should not feel pressured to succeed at all areas of camp.
- Convey confidence in them and their coping skills to get through these times.
- Discuss how you plan to keep in touch with letters. They have time to write you during rest times.

- You can send a letter 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.
- Try to ask questions about camp, keep your words supportive and enthusiastic;
  - “I’m so proud of you and I can’t wait for you to tell me all about the awesome things you’re doing at camp this week. What has been your favorite part so far?”
- Prepare for the separation, if they perceive you as doubtful or anxious, it will heighten their concerns.
- Refrain from telling your child “If you don’t like camp just call me and I’ll come pick you up.” This may set your child up to fail, as the first time something does not go exactly as planned he or she will want to go home and lose any motivation to try to succeed at camp.

## **Accommodations**

- The YMCA Summer Camp program will provide reasonable accommodations if needed to make physical, emotional, and social development successful. The Camp Director will gather information from the campers family to determine what accommodations can be provided. Honesty and transparency of the family is crucial for the camper’s success and inclusion in the program. Camp’s goal is to provide a safe and inclusive environment for each participant and staff. Consistent efforts will be made to meet the needs of each camper. Parent/Guardians are expected to work collaboratively with program staff to encourage growth and development with their camper.

## **Program Readiness**

The Mankato Family YMCA Summer Camp program uses best-practices for our readiness standards. Campers should be developing social-emotional learning skills through self-management, social awareness, relationship building, self-awareness, and responsible decision making. YMCA school-age child care programs are not designed for one-on-one care. Therefore, evaluate if the program is appropriate for your camper.

- Camper can model independence (Transition to and from locations, ability to dress, eat, and maintain hygiene independently).
- Camper demonstrates the ability to regulate emotions, thoughts, and behaviors
- Camper can express and recognize their emotions and thoughts
- Camper exhibits the ability to empathize and respect others including those of diverse backgrounds.
- Camper displays the ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships. This includes effective communication, listening, cooperation, and resisting inappropriate actions.
- Campers shows the ability to make safe, healthy, and respectful choices for themselves and others.

## **Behavior Expectations**

Behaviors that are considered inappropriate at the YMCA include:

- Behavior that directly or indirectly threatens the safety of participants or staff
  - Forms of aggression such as hitting, kicking, pushing, biting, choking, throwing objects, verbal threats, disrespectful language, inappropriate gestures, inappropriate touching, sexualized behavior, etc.
- Behavior that intentionally causes destruction to YMCA property.
  - Graffiti, malicious destruction of property, intentional misuse of equipment, etc.
  - Parent/Guardians are financially responsible for any damages caused from destruction
- Behavior that results in a consistent disruption to the YMCA After School Adventures environment
  - Leaving the program area/building without permission, refusal to follow directions, inability to stay on schedule or transition to and from activity.
- Any additional behavior that does not align with the Mankato Family YMCA Core Values
  - Caring, Honesty, Responsibility, Respect, & Faith

There will be no refund of any amount if a participant is sent home because of behavior problems.

## Grounds for Immediate Dismissal

There will be no refund of any amount for campers sent home due to cigarettes, tobacco or vaping tools, alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons, sexually explicit material, and/or behavior.

## Behavior Management

The goal of the Mankato Family YMCA Summer Camp program is to provide a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for its campers and staff. The YMCA teaches the core values of caring, honesty, responsibility, respect, and faith. The campers who attend the program are expected to follow the behavior guidelines and to interact appropriately in a group setting. On the first day of camp, the Camp Director will go over the ground rules to make camp successful. Campers will get the opportunity to ask questions and get clarity in order for camp to run as smoothly as possible.

### Behavior Guidelines

- Campers will care for themselves and those around them
- Honesty is the basis for all relationships and interactions
- Campers are responsible for their actions
- Camper must respect others, themselves, and the environment
- Campers have faith in themselves and others to overcome challenges and incidents

### Zero-Tolerance Policy

The Mankato Family YMCA Summer Camp program has a zero-tolerance policy for serious behavior issues. The behaviors listed below are grounds for immediate removal from camper for the remainder of the day, week, month, or year. Each incident is evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the best course of action.

- Any kind of physical assault, such as hitting, kicking, pushing, or biting
- Endangering the health or safety of themselves, other campers, staff, members, etc.
- Inappropriate touching of themselves/others or sexual misconduct
- Theft, damaging, or destruction of YMCA property
- Leaving the YMCA Summer Camp program without permission
- Using profanity, vulgarity, or obscenity frequently
- Acts or threats of physical harm, mental harm, or bullying
- Possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, weapons, or explosives

In the event of a behavior incident, the following behavior management strategies may be used:

- Redirection
  - Participant and staff will discuss the behavior and why it is deemed inappropriate. Staff use situations as learning moments for participants to understand the impact of their behavior and healthy ways to react in the future
- Modeling
  - Program staff will model positive behavior, provide praise, and encourage acceptable behavior

If behaviors escalate and safety is a concern, parent/guardians will be contacted for an immediate pick-up. Documentation will be collected on the incident.

In the event of multiple incidents or extreme circumstances of inappropriate behavior, the YMCA Summer Camp program will implement the follow policy:

### Altercation Policy for Mankato Family YMCA

This policy is to define what an altercation is and how the Mankato Family YMCA will handle each situation to better serve our members, guests, community and staff. The following is a basic guideline and is not all encompassing, the below lists what an altercation is defined as and a minimum consequence to be given for violating the policy. This policy covers the majority of incidents, but it is also not limited to the below incidents or consequence guidelines and are subject to change based on the severity of the incident.

- Physical Altercation definition: An act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or the intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict mental or physical harm upon another.  
MN Statute 609.02 Subd. 9.6 subd. 10 to comply with MN guidelines.

The above covers the following but is not limited to the list: Hitting, Punching, Slapping, Pinching, Kicking, Spitting on, Biting, Pushing, Grabbing, Throwing objects at or around someone, Tripping, etc.

Incident Investigation In the event of a violation of this policy the YMCA will conduct an investigation into the matter. While the investigation is ongoing the individual/s who are involved will be suspended from the Mankato Family YMCA facilities and all programing until the conclusion of the investigation. There will be a minimum suspension of 48 hours or 2 standard business days to conduct the investigation, following that 48 hours or 2 standard business days those who were involved will get an update via phone call or email with either the results of the investigation or informed more time is needed to conduct the investigation.  
2 Standard business days are Monday – Friday 8am-5pm

If the incident happens on a Friday anytime the offender/s will not be allowed in/on the Mankato Family YMCA properties or in any program at minimum until Wednesday, the following week. Monday and Tuesday would be the 2 standard business days after the altercation.

Each altercation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the consequences are determined by a panel of 3 individual directors (full time staff) 1 of the area where the incident occurred, that person's direct supervisor and 1 individual from the safety committee (rotating).

The 3 will determine the severity of the altercation, history of past events and other extenuating circumstances that lead to the altercation.

- First Consequence violation results in a minimum 48 hour (2 Standard business days) for the investigation.
- After the investigation process the consequences can vary, based on the severity of the include but are not limited to 2 days, 1 week, 1 month, 1 year, until the age of 18 (for minors), permanent suspension (adult and minors) from the Mankato Family YMCA properties and programs.
- Should the offender/s not be in a program the following week but in subsequent weeks following the offence, this consequence will be imposed on the next registered program. This will be communicated to the member/members guardians via phone or email.

#### Reinstatement

For reinstatement a letter of apology must be given to the affected areas director and a meeting must be held between the director and a member of the investigation committee assigned to the incident. In this meeting there will be a code of conduct signed and given to the members along with a copy retained by the YMCA. Any further incidents (if not already permanently suspended) can lead to permanent suspension from the Mankato Family YMCA and all properties/programs.

If asking for reinstatement to the Mankato Family YMCA see below for different incident types:

- Permanent Suspension- If under the age of 18 when suspension is levied depending on the suspension reason a letter can be sent for consideration after the age of 19 is reached. This matter will be reviewed by the safety committee within 5 business days, and a letter will be sent with the determination. There is no guarantee of reinstatement.
- Two day, One week - Follow regular reinstatement protocol listed above. A meeting must be held with the director of the area and a member of investigation committee. A code of conduct must be signed and understood any further incidents can lead to but are not limited to permanent suspension from the Mankato Family YMCA.
- One Year Suspension – A letter of apology and a meeting with the affected area director, member of the investigation committee and executive director must take place. A signed code of conduct must also be received at the end of the meeting. The 3-person committee will then render a decision within 2 business days of the meeting, a letter will be sent to the member seeking reinstatement along with a phone call with the determination.
- If it at any point the member cancels the membership, the already mentioned will still apply for reinstatement of the membership. A meeting will need to be held along with a letter of apology to reinstate the membership.

## Disciplinary and Dismissal Process/Intervention

If negative behavior continues the following steps may be instituted:

1. Staff will redirect the camper to more appropriate behaviors.
2. The camper will be reminded of behavior guidelines and the Camp rules.

3. If behavior continues, parents will be notified. Parent/guardians will be told what the behavior is, what's been done in regards to the behavior, and how the behavior is affecting camp as a whole.
  4. If the behavior continues, staff will schedule a meeting with parent/guardians, the child, staff, and the director to discuss the camper's behavior and expectations moving forward.
  5. If the behavior continues, camper will be dismissed from YMCA programming.
- Although the above steps may be implemented in sequential order, YMCA administrative staff retains the right to take immediate action if the child's behavior poses a threat to their own safety or the safety of other children/staff.

## Bullying

The YMCA Summer Camp program prides itself on providing a safe and inclusive environment for each and every child. If you feel as if your child is being bullied or struggling within the environment, please follow the grievance procedure below.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among individuals that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. In order to be considered bullying the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An imbalance of power: Those who bully use their power- such as physical strength, access to private information, or popularity- to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and be different in each situation even if they involve the same individuals.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. It is behavior that is repeated over time, not just a one-time incident.

If bullying is suspected, an investigation will be conducted by the Summer Camp lead staff and by the Camp Director. If confirmed, enrollment within the Summer Camp program may be terminated.

## Grievance Procedure

If you have a grievance or concern, please follow the procedures below:

1. Contact Lead Staff via REMIND for more information regarding the concern OR talk with Leadership Staff upon parent pick-up.
2. If not resolved, please contact the Camp Director via REMIND or email to discuss the concern. A phone call or meeting may be necessary to address the concern.
3. If still not resolved, please contact the Senior Program Director via phone call or email.
4. Finally, if your concern is still not address or resolved, please contact the Mankato Family YMCA Executive Director via phone or email.

## Camp Map

