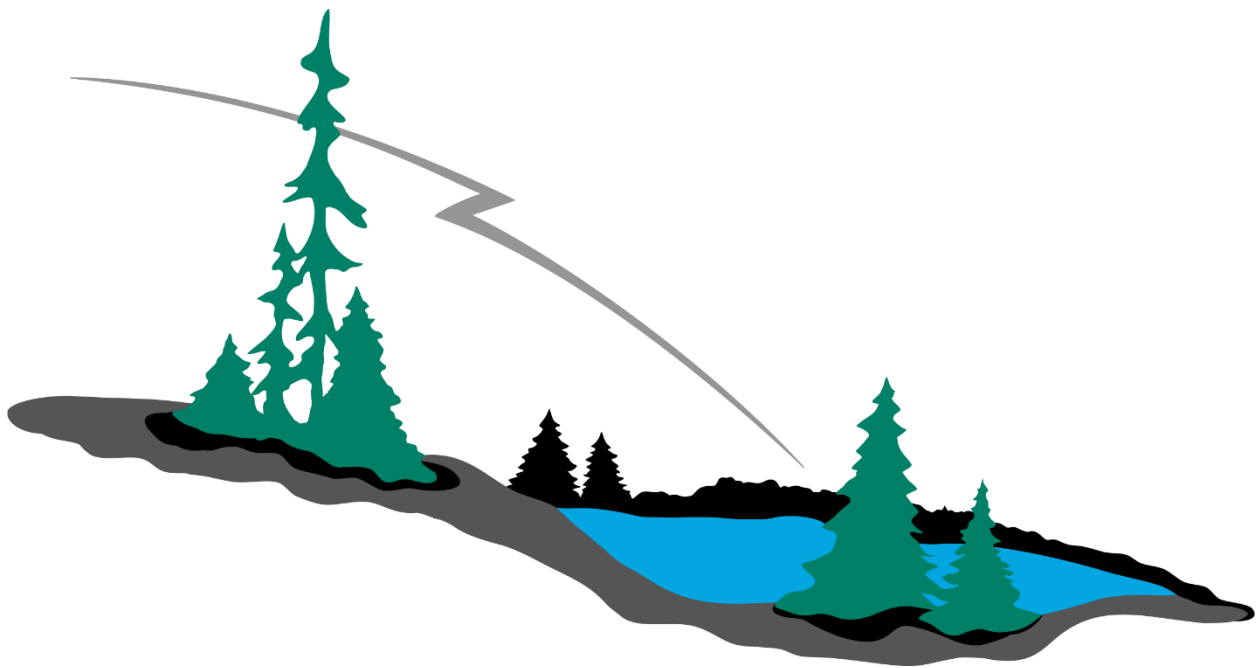




FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# CAMP OLSON YMCA

*Sharing the Spirit of the Northwoods*



## Parent Handbook

## Welcome Letter

### 2023 Summer

Thank you for choosing Camp Olson YMCA. We are thrilled that your child will be joining us for our 69th summer of fun and adventure! Whether this is your camper's 1<sup>st</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> summer at Camp Olson, we look forward to sharing an impactful and fun-filled summer together.

Our 2023 Parent Handbook is a valuable tool to help prepare you and your camper(s) for camp. Please take time to read the information thoroughly, as it changes yearly. There are valuable details, for both new and returning families, about policies and procedures, summer logistics, communication over the summer, packing lists, transportation information, tips for a successful summer and more...including some really fun details about camp too!

As always, we are here to discuss any questions or concerns you may have as we partner with you to help your child have the most wonderful summer possible. We look forward to "Sharing the Spirit of the Northwoods" with your child this summer!

If you have more questions after reading this document, please feel free to contact us at 218-363-2207 or by email.

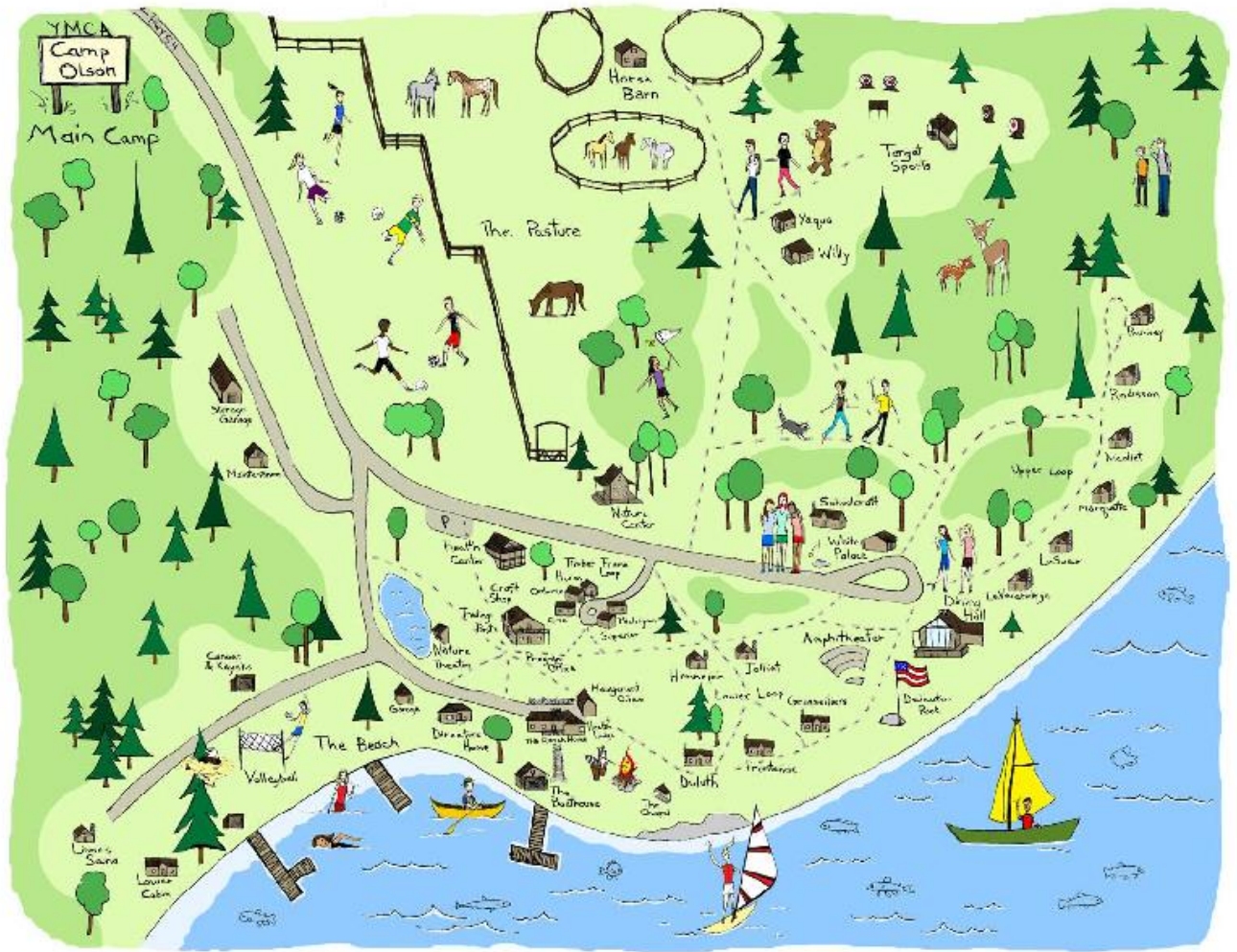
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Demi Kapler – Camp Director – [demi@campolson.org](mailto:demi@campolson.org)

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## **General Info**

### **Goals of Camp Olson**

Our Mission is to share the spirit of the northwoods while preserving a paradise of beauty with youth, families, and their leaders through YMCA programs that build healthy mind, body, and spirit for all. We are guided by our core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and equity.

We aim to provide programs for youth and adults that develop life skills, cultivate leadership, and foster an ethic of land stewardship and environmental responsibility.

### **ACA Accredited**

ACA Accreditation means we follow the health, safety, and program standards set by the American Camp Association. ACA collaborated with experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics, The American Red Cross and other youth service agencies to ensure that camp practices reflect up-to-date research-based standards in camp operation. For more information, please visit

[www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org).

### **Spirituality at Camp**

At Camp Olson, we host campers and staff from most major religious faiths or no faith. Our purpose is not to change or instill upon campers faith or belief. Our goal is to make every child feel comfortable while still including the traditions of the YMCA. Grace is sung before each meal, and each morning (password) and evening (last word) provides thought and inspiration for our campers.

### **Staff**

The foundation of our camp program is our staff and counselors. Each cabin group has a senior counselor and assistant counselor. Many of our staff were campers at Camp Olson. The summer staff is recruited from past campers and staff, alumni, staff referrals, from area and national colleges and high schools, and international counselor programs. Prospective staff must complete an application, provide references, and be interviewed. They are chosen for their interest, experience, and qualifications for working with children. Applicants 18 and older must pass a criminal record check and a check of the National Sex Offender Registry. Staff attend a week-long training emphasizing safety, risk management, social and skill development, and community building.

We typically have an overall 5:1 camper-to-staff ratio, with minimums as follows:

- Day Camp (Ages 5-11), 6:1
- Overnight Campers (Ages 7-16), 8:1
- Leadership Campers (Ages 13-17), 10:1

Russ Link, our Executive Director since 2003, has years of camp administration experience. Demi Kapler has been on Camp Olson's year-round staff since 2019 and has vast knowledge and experience working in youth-serving organizations and with mental health.

## Camper Eligibility

Camp Olson strives to create programming to be enjoyed by as many children as possible. In everything we do, health and safety are our top priorities. As such we need to recognize the limitations of our facility, programs and staff.

All campers must meet the minimum age requirement for their program and must be able to do the following at a developmentally appropriate level for their age:

- Communicate needs and concerns with others at a conversational level of English
- Understand and comply with directions given by staff
- Refrain from unsafe/harmful behaviors towards themselves and others, including self-harm
- Identify and avoid safety risks
- Feel comfortable living in a rustic environment (no air conditioning, presence of insects/animals, etc.)
- Able to maneuver rough terrain and distances
- Manage the sensory stimulation of a frequently large, loud, and energetic group environment (especially during dining hall meal time) \*We do have tools and modifications in place to support a sensory inclusive environment in partnership with [KultureCity](#)
- Assume responsibility of personal hygiene, including the ability to use the bathroom, shower, and change clothes independently
- Manage camp schedule and independent free time (for campers age 9 and older)
- Demonstrate age-appropriate social and emotional skills in managing personal boundaries, relationships, communication, stress, and conflict.
- Ability to participate safely and respectfully within typical group size of 6-10 peers within the camper to staff ratios listed above.

## Forms

All forms should be completed using your Camp InTouch account at least 3 weeks prior to your child's start date. Camp Olson needs to have all the current medical and behavioral information about your camper before they arrive. We keep all forms confidential and share information only on a need-to-know basis with our staff.

## Cabin Mate Request

Cabin mates are typically determined based on the camper's gender (and cabin gender preference if applicable), program type (i.e., Discovery, Pathfinder, Sailing, Horseback Riding, LIT, etc.), and age (ideally, a cabin's age range will be within 1-3 year age span or 1-grade level).

We think it's great to come to camp to make new friends. However, if your camper has a friend or group of campers they would like to bunk with, please make the request during the registration or by completing the Cabin Mate Request form in your Camp InTouch account. You may list up to 3 requests. **We make every effort to honor cabin mate requests, but they are not guaranteed.**

## Health History Form

Each year a completed, up-to-date Health History Form must also be received 3 weeks prior to your camper's session. A parent or authorized guardian must sign the authorization section of the Health History Form. **It is mandatory that we have a current Health History on file for every camper 3 weeks prior to their session! Please go to your CampMinder account and submit a Health History for your Camper. All campers must be independent in personal hygiene.**

Depending on your camper's health history and medical needs, you may also be asked to complete an Asthma Questionnaire, Asthma Action Plan, or Diabetic questionnaire.

## MESH Form

The MESH form collects information related to your camper's mental, emotional, and social health. Completing this form helps us to better support your camper in the camp environment. This form is not required but is highly recommended to give your camper the best experience.

*Disclaimer: Your answers will not jeopardize your camper's placement, though may warrant a follow-up from our Camp Director or Assistant Camp Director. Share as much or little as you'd like.*

## Parent/Camper Compact

Each camper must be able to perform and agree to the expectations in this document to attend camp. Any camper who displays behavior at camp that goes against this agreement is subject to disciplinary action and/or dismissal.

## Camper Photo

Please upload a current photo of your camper. This photo allows us to recognize your camper and will assist us in the case of emergencies.

## Transportation Form

Please complete the transportation form to indicate how your camper will arrive and depart from camp. You will also indicate authorized adults that have permission to pick up your camper. If this form is not completed correctly, your child may not be permitted to leave with an unlisted adult. This is also the place to reserve your bus transportation (more bus information below). You are encouraged to complete this form early as spaces on the bus are limited. **All bus registrations must be made at least two weeks prior to the start of session.**

## Trading Post

Complete this form to load money into your child's Trading Post store account. You will also indicate if and how you would like any remaining amount to be refunded. You can always update the amount of money in your camper's store account through your Camp InTouch account.

## Transportation

### Private Transportation

Campers arriving by personal vehicle should be dropped off between 2:00–3:00 pm the day the session begins. Campers returning home by personal vehicle at the end of the session must be picked up between 8:00 – 10:00 am on the last day of the session. **Arriving before 10:00 am is essential** due to the fact that our staff time off begins then, and no supervision will be available after 10:00 am. *Note: Drop-off and pick up times may differ for our short week Voyageur Camp.*

We cannot provide overnight accommodations for parents/guardians/family, so please plan travel accordingly. There are many resorts in the area that can provide nearby lodging ([www.longville.com](http://www.longville.com)).

### Chartered Coach Service

Transportation is available to and from Camp Olson by chartered coach for an additional charge. The coach stops in Rochester, Owatonna, Minneapolis, St. Cloud, and Brainerd/Baxter. Each coach is complete with a restroom and air conditioning. Camp Olson staff members accompany the coaches. A sack lunch will be provided for the bus trip home. You will need to send a lunch with your child for the trip to camp.

<u>CITY/COACH STOP</u>	<u>DEPARTS TO CAMP</u>	<u>ARRIVES FROM CAMP</u>	<u>ONE-WAY COST</u>	<u>ROUND TRIP COST</u>
<b>ROCHESTER</b> FORMER YMCA PARKING LOT	9:00 am	4:15 pm	\$73	\$116
<b>OWATONNA</b> SUPER 8 HOTEL 1150 FRONTAGE RD W, OWATONNA	10:00 am	3:00 pm	\$69	\$108
<b>TWIN CITIES</b> SOUTHDAL YMCA 7355 YORK AVE S. EDINA, MN	11:30 am	1:45 pm	\$67	\$104
<b>ST. CLOUD</b> FAMILY YMCA 2001 STOCKINGER DR, ST. CLOUD	12:45 pm	11:45 am	\$63	\$96
<b>BRAINERD/BAXTER</b> REICHERT BUS COMPANY 8342 INDUSTRIAL PARK RD, BAXTER	2:00 pm	10:30 am	\$59	\$86

**Transport Procedures TO Camp Olson:** A Camp Olson staff member takes attendance at all points of departure. If possible, Camp Olson staff will attempt to contact campers who have not arrived at the bus before departing to the next stop. Camp Olson is responsible for campers while they are on board the coaches. Camp Olson YMCA is not responsible for supervision of campers while they are



awaiting transport to Camp Olson, regardless of the timeliness of the charter coach. Parents and guardians are responsible for their campers until the time the campers board the coaches.

**Transport Procedures FROM Camp Olson:** Camp Olson is responsible for campers during the trip by chartered coach to the predetermined drop-off location until the campers are turned over to their parents or guardians. Campers will be released to a parent or guardian if one is present. If no parent or guardian is present, the coach will wait a reasonable amount of time for the parent/guardian to arrive and claim responsibility for the camper. Parents/guardians will be contacted if possible. If, after a reasonable amount of time, a parent or guardian has not arrived to claim responsibility for a given camper, that camper will re-board the bus and continue to the next stop ending at the Rochester YMCA. Parents/guardians are responsible for transportation to and from Rochester in such an event. We will try to contact you by phone if the bus will be more than 30 minutes late.

**Please, arrive to the Chartered Coach stops on time.** If you are running late, and cannot get to a chartered coach drop-off or pick-up point on time, call the Camp Olson Office at 218-363-2207. It is very difficult to get a hold of the bus once it is in route, but we will attempt to contact our staff aboard the bus to let them know you are coming.

## Camp Store

Camp Olson provides campers the opportunity to purchase snacks and souvenirs. Campers have the opportunity to visit the store twice daily. We recommend Trading Post funds of \$40-\$100 per session (lower end of the range if your camper does not plan to buy clothing or souvenirs). Camp Olson does not sell caffeinated beverages. Only juice, sport drinks and water along with ice cream and other healthy snacks are available. Campers should not bring cash to camp. Please make a deposit into your child's account before their camp session. Approximately two weeks after the session, we will issue a refund check of balances over \$10. Balances under \$10 are automatically donated to our scholarship fund unless you specifically request a refund. You can view a preview of our Trading Post offerings at [www.campolson.org/trading-post](http://www.campolson.org/trading-post).

## Lost & Found

Lost and found items will be displayed on picnic tables in front of the Nature Center. When you check your camper out, please feel free to check here for any items lost. **All lost and found items not claimed within two weeks will be donated to a local charity.** You will be charged for the return shipping for lost and found return requests unless you can arrange a local pick-up. To help avoid unclaimed items, please mark your camper's belongings with their first and last names. If items found are labeled, we will not typically contact families directly to claim – you are responsible for contacting us if you would like the item returned.

## Pictures

We do our best to take pictures of your children at camp. Below are a couple of FAQ's regarding pictures.

- "Where do I go to get pics?" Pictures are posted almost daily on Camp InTouch. You can access these from your personal Camp InTouch account.

- “My child isn’t smiling. Are they having a good time?” Well, most people aren’t smiling 24/7! If you’re truly concerned, give us a call, and we’ll give you a quick update on your camper.
- “I don’t see a photo of my camper!!!” During our busy camp days, we strive to capture as many moments as possible, but we cannot capture everything. Some campers also are fantastic at spotting our camp photographer and hiding. If you do not see a photo of your child after day three, please email us at: [demi@campolson.org](mailto:demi@campolson.org)
- Our waiver states, “I also authorize Camp Olson YMCA to have and use photographs, slides, video, and audio of the camper named on this registration as needed for promotional purposes, including social media.” If you’re not OK with the previous statement, please send us a written note that states otherwise.

## Mail & Communication

Campers enjoy receiving mail! There are several ways to communicate with your camper.

### Mail & Care Packages

You may want to mail your camper letters from home before they leave for camp, as it normally takes up to 3 days for mail to reach Camp Olson. Mail (USPS, UPS, FedEx, and Speedy) is delivered to campers daily, Monday – Friday. Letters sent by campers are mailed within one day of the time they are put in the camp mailbox.

Any letter or package sent Next Day Air or Priority is not guaranteed to arrive within the allocated time. Please plan for an extra day or two for all shipments.

Please include your camper’s name on all mail and packages sent. Our mailing address is **4160 Little Boy Rd NE, Longville, MN 56655**. Mail can also be dropped off at our camp office during business hours, or at your camper’s check-in and marked appropriately (Example: “Deliver Wednesday”).

### Email (eLetters)

Parents, guardians and other friends or family members can sign up to send eLetters through their Camp InTouch account using CampStamps. These eLetters are printed and delivered to campers daily Monday – Friday.

CampStamps are credits parents/guests can use to facilitate and enhance communication with their camper(s). Parents/Guests can add CampStamps to their account by clicking the link at the top of the Email page. CampStamps are offered in the following packages: 10 for \$10, 15 for \$14, 20 for \$18, and 30 for \$25. **Note: while we do not refund parents for unused CampStamps, they carry over between seasons, so any unused stamps will be available for future use.**

If you are hoping for a handwritten reply, you can enable an eLetter reply, which will print a blank page for your camper to write a reply on that can be directly uploaded to your account. However, **we cannot guarantee that your camper will actually write you back. Campers are often busy engaging in all the fun things camp offers, and sitting down to write a letter isn’t always on their agenda.**

## Telephone

Campers are not allowed to use the phone to call home unless there are extenuating circumstances as determined by our camp director or nursing staff. \*Campers are required to turn in cell phones and other electronic or communication devices after arrival (see our Electronics Policy).

If there is an emergency at home and you need to contact your camper, please contact our camp office at 218-363-2207. After hours, please follow the voicemail prompts and contact Russ Link, Executive Director, or Demi Kapler, Camp Director, on our cell phones.

*A note on cell phones: We want your child to make new friends, not spend camp time talking to friends back home. Also, the "photo" option on phones today poses a privacy risk to kids living together in a group setting. Cell phones also tend to make the traditional "homesickness" problem worse. We welcome communication in the camp office, and we will call you if there is any significant problem.*

## Severe Weather

At Camp Olson, safety is our priority – especially regarding our response to the weather. On days when it is raining lightly and there is no thunder or lightning, camp goes on as usual, with the occasional "puddle-jumping" fun always a possibility. Campers will participate in alternative indoor programming in the case of heavy rain or thunder and lightning. With our Dining Hall, Nature Center, Corral, Art Center, and cabins, there is indoor space to accommodate individual groups. Campers and staff will be moved to a storm shelter if the weather becomes severe, and parents/guardians will be notified via email. On days when there is excessive heat, we alter our schedule, so campers have more access to water activities, encourage hydration and make special deliveries of some cool treats!

## Health & Medical

All campers will be checked in by our health care staff upon arrival. They will review any pertinent health information, medication, and perform a lice head check (we encourage everyone to have a lice check before arriving at camp).

Despite our best effort to keep campers and staff healthy throughout the summer, illnesses can spread quickly in camp communities. We will contact you should your camper become ill or acquires an injury that requires them to stay overnight in the Health Center, if your camper needs to be seen by an outside practitioner (either in a scheduled appointment or emergency) or if we have a general medical concern or question about your camper's health or medications. You will not be contacted for routine visits to the Health Center. Our healthcare staff will make every effort to ensure campers in the Health Center are comfortable, resting, and able to rejoin their groups and camp fun as quickly as possible.

## Health Care Staff

Two healthcare professionals (M.D., RN, and/or EMT) are available 24/7 onsite during the camp season. Our health care staff work closely with the Cuyuna Regional Medical Center Longville Clinic and our on-call physician Dr. David Laposky. Most of our summer staff are also certified in CPR and First Aid.

## Medication

Any medications (prescription and/or over-the-counter) sent to camp with your camper must be turned over to the staff member riding the bus or turned in to the Camp Nurse upon arrival. Your signature in the parent/guardian authorization section of the Health History Form gives Camp Olson permission to administer the medications listed on the Health History Form. Please ensure all prescriptions are up-to-date and there is enough to last the time your camper will be at camp. Medications are distributed at mealtimes and after campfire (or as scheduled in the Health Center). **All medications must be in their original labeled container from a pharmacy. We are required to dispense medication from that container.** Camp Olson cannot administer homeopathic medications without a written prescription and directions from a physician.

## COVID-19 Information

In light of our current reality, knowing COVID-19 is still present and a real threat to many, we have reviewed and updated our medical protocols and practices using recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), American Camp Association (ACA), and with guidance from our Board of Directors. We recognize that recommendations and guidelines will change and commit to updating our programming and protocols accordingly. The below policies and procedure are up to date as of March 2023. Visit our website, [www.campolson.org/covid-19-info](http://www.campolson.org/covid-19-info) for updated information.

- Campers and staff are STRONGLY encouraged to be fully vaccinated, if eligible.
- Campers and staff, regardless of vaccination status, are REQUIRED to attest to having a negative COVID-19 test completed within 72 hours of their arrival at camp.
- Campers and staff who receive a positive COVID-19 test or have known exposure with symptoms of COVID-19 within 10 days of arrival, please contact us immediately.
- Campers and staff that display COVID-19 symptoms will receive a COVID-19 test onsite by Camp Olson Healthcare staff (if tests are available). See below for procedures for positive tests while at camp.
- Masks are not currently required as transmission rates are low risk, though all individuals are welcome to wear masks if they choose to. Masking policies are subject to change based on current community transmission rates in Minnesota or within Camp.
- Campers who test positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, will be isolated from the community and given temporary care by healthcare staff. The camper's parents or guardian will be contacted and expected to pickup the camper within 12-24 hours.
- If a camper tests positive for COVID-19 while at camp, parents and guardians of cabinmates will be notified. Exposed campers will be monitored for symptoms of COVID-19 and will only be tested if symptoms are present.
- Campers will only be tested for COVID-19 while at camp, if symptoms are present. Parents and guardians are welcome to send additional tests with their camper if they wish for them to be tested on a more regular basis.

## Activities Offered at Camp

Camp Olson offers a variety of activities. In the mornings, cabin groups participate as a group (along with their counselors) in a rotation of activities. All of our campers (excluding Day Campers, Pathfinders, and some Leadership Development Campers) will enjoy free-choice activities each afternoon, supervised by program staff and counselors. Campers are free to travel between activities and select activities based on their preferences (some activities require campers to sign up during announcements after lunch). There may be times when campers are not directly supervised when they travel between activities. To ensure we know where all campers are during free-choice time, our campers are taught to travel with a buddy, use the Buddy Board, and update each time they visit a new program area. Pathfinder and Day Campers (age 5-9) do not participate in free-choice activities and instead travel as a group with their cabin mates and a counselor to scheduled activities. If there are any activities your family prefers your camper not participate in, we ask that you please discuss this with your camper before their arrival and please notify in writing our Camp Director, Demi Kapler: [demi@campolson.org](mailto:demi@campolson.org).

Our activities include (but are not limited to):

- Horseback Riding (must be 11 or older to trail ride, any age for ring rides)
- Mountain Biking (must be 11 or older to ride)
- Arts & Crafts
- Nature Activities
- Target Sports (including archery, riflery (must be 9 or older), hatchet throwing, and slingshots)
- Swimming (all campers will undergo a swim evaluation to use the deep end)
- Sauna
- Sailing
- Fishing
- Athletic Field Games
- Paddle Sports (canoe, kayak, stand-up paddle boards)
- Wilderness Skills & Campfire Cooking
- Overnight Tent Camping

## Bedwetting

We can accommodate children that wet the bed on occasion. Your child should provide their own pull-ups, and they can change into that at night however they are comfortable. Some children keep them in their suitcases and change into them in the bathroom when brushing their teeth. Other children can keep their pull-ups in the health lodge and change into their pull-ups in their private bathroom. We often urge children to wake up a staff member and a buddy in case of a late-night bathroom visit. If they have an accident, our staff follow a specific protocol for the child's privacy and wash their bedding in the health lodge.

## Bathrooms/Showers & Privacy

None of our cabins have plumbing. Campers walk to one of two bathhouses for bathroom and shower use. All showers and bathroom stalls have doors or curtains. It is a good idea to pack a shower caddy that is carried from the cabin to the bathhouse. Each cabin has access to a private changing space.

## Tips for First-Time Campers

Going to an overnight camp is a big growth step for both the parent and the child. For a child, independence is a thrilling experience combined with the opportunity to make new friends and learn many new outdoor skills. It can also be one of their biggest challenges. Over 10 million children go to summer camps each year, often with mixed feelings. Frequently, excitement can turn into anxiety. Here are a few tips to ensure a positive experience for everyone involved.

1. Set up a calendar and count down the days until camp begins and how long your child will be gone. Spend time talking to your child about camp and listen to any fears and concerns. Remind your child that apprehension and homesickness are perfectly normal feelings. For the younger camper, let them bring a special stuffed animal or item from home. For the younger camper who is used to taking a bath and has never taken a shower, have them take a shower at home before camp. If your child has never spent a night away from mom and dad, it is often a good idea to have the child spend 1 or 2 nights at a friend's home.
2. Before camp, try to avoid dwelling on the "I'll miss you" feeling and focus on the excitement and anticipation of learning about your child's camp experience when they return. Please do not make promises to your camper, such as picking them up early if they are not having a good time. Remind your child to ask questions if they don't understand or are concerned about something at camp.
3. Get excited with your child! Make a big deal of developing a checklist of items for camp, and pack together. Encourage your child to bring a favorite book, stuffed animal, or photos from home.
4. Brainstorm with your camper about what positive and realistic goals they have. Try to list 5 specific goals about what they want to do during summer camp. For instance, shoot a bow and arrow, make friends from another country, or learn a craft.
5. Don't buy a brand-new wardrobe. While one or two new items are fine, camp life can be rough on clothing. Children, especially first-timers, will also find "old favorites" reassuring when away from home. Label all camp clothing and gear with your first initial and last name. Send a laundry bag and expect some beach sand to come home in their luggage.
6. To maintain that family connection, send a few letters several days before arrival to camp, so your child has mail on the first day. Pack fun paper, pre-addressed and stamped envelopes or postcards, and writing utensils so your child can easily write back. Compose a few letters, seal them, and pack them in your child's luggage to be opened after arrival.

## Common Camp Jargon

**AF:** Athletic Field

**Bannock:** Bread made over a campfire during an overnight campout.

**Bell:** The "Bell" is our emergency signal when it is heard ringing non-stop. When it is rung just a few times, that indicates it is time for a meal or to announce a game.

**Buddy Number:** A number assigned to each camper represented by a physical tag that can be moved on a buddy board to designate where at camp you are during free-time.

**Bug Juice:** Fruit-flavored juice served at mealtimes. It's not actually made of bugs!

**CampMinder or CampInTouch:** Online account to access all things camper related such as health forms, transportation, photos, camper emails, etc.

**Castle:** Bathroom and shower location near the Craft Shop underneath the Health Lodge. Also used as a storm shelter during severe weather.

**CC:** Counselor Coordinator – the direct supervisors to our counseling staff.

**CIT:** Counselor in Training

**Dining Hall:** Where all meals are served.

**Free-Time:** Afternoon time for our older campers to select their choice of afternoon activities.

Pathfinders will continue to participate in scheduled fun activities with their counselors.

**Health Lodge:** AKA Health Center or Nursing Station.

**Homestead:** Cabin built by campers and where a counselor brings their campers for the Homestead Hike/Wilderness Skills activity. To get to the Homestead, you follow the trail just past the corral.

**LIT:** Leader in Training

**O-Ro:** Orientation Rotation, a Sunday evening activity to introduce all campers to learn about the rules and activities of each program area at camp.

**Overnight:** A campout experience on one of Camp Olson's lakes. Campers will hike and paddle to a nearby campsite, set up a tent to sleep in, and cook dinner and breakfast over a campfire.

**(White) Palace:** Bathroom and shower location near the Dining Hall. Also used as a storm shelter during severe weather.

**Power Up:** A time between the first and second half of free-time when campers come to the trading post (camp store) to purchase snacks and drinks.

**Ranch House:** Home of the Camp Director. The Ranch House Basement is also a storm shelter during severe weather.

**Regatta:** A boat race.

**Siesta:** Quiet time or rest-hour in the cabin after lunch, before activity time.

**Slopy Slope:** Steep hill leading to the lake that is covered in poison ivy and off-limits to campers.

**Shurds:** Private lakes, trails, and campsites across the main highway that is used for camp outs and trail rides.

**Stayover:** A camper that is at camp for more than one week and spends the weekend at camp.

**Trading Post:** Camp store for souvenirs, clothes, and snacks (you don't actually trade). This is also the location to meet at in case of an emergency (when the bell rings non-stop).

## **Policies**

### **Electronics**

Cell Phones, iPods, CD/DVD Players, Tablets, Nintendo/Gameboy or any handheld video games or electronic devices are **NOT** allowed to be used by campers at camp. The devices are allowed to be used on the bus. Camp Olson reserves the right to confiscate such devices after check-in and return them to campers at the end of the session in which they are enrolled.

### **Payments & Cancellation**

We ask for a non-refundable \$200 deposit for each week of camp you sign up for (for example, a two-week leadership program would require a \$400 deposit), due at enrollment.

Camp fees are due 4 weeks before camp. We will do our best to contact you if you are within those 4 weeks to finalize any balance that may still be in effect. However, we cannot reserve space in any program if we do not receive the full program payment within 4 weeks.

You may cancel up to four weeks before the start of your session for a full refund, minus your deposit. If you need to cancel within four weeks of the start of the program, no refund will be issued. We will provide a full refund, including deposit, for illness or medical reasons with a doctor's note.

## **Behavior Management**

Our staff goes through a week of training to work with your campers. We train our staff to work with a wide variety of behavioral challenges. Campers should feel safe at camp. Campers are to respect themselves, others, and the camp as outline in the Parent/Camp Compact. We recognize that many behaviors exhibited by children are a result of an often-unidentified external stressor or social dynamic. Our staff take great measures to identify underlying causes of conflict and help campers restore or rebuild relationships.

Two of our common responses to disruptive behavior include:

### **General disruptive behavior:**

- Profanity, verbal abuse, a generally uncooperative attitude, etc.
- 1. Counselors will have a discussion with camper to modify the behavior.
- 2. Counselor Coordinators and/or Assistant Camp Director will help with the process.
- 3. We will contact you to work jointly to modify the behavior.
- 4. If these attempts fail, the camper may be sent home.

### **Dangerous and overly disruptive behavior:**

- Theft, damage of property, assault of any kind, ongoing bullying or extreme disrespect, possession of weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, etc.
- 1. The camper will be brought immediately to the Camp Director or Assistant Camp Director.
- 2. The Camp Director or Assistant Camp Director will contact the parents to discuss the issue.
- 3. At the Camp Director's discretion, the camper may be sent home.

If a camper is dismissed, parents are responsible for transportation, and no refunds will be issued. We reserve the right to dismiss campers from the program without warning.

## **Communication & Social Media**

We discourage staff contact with campers outside of camp via social media networks, telephone, email, snail mail, or other forms of communication. If staff or campers wish to communicate outside of camp, we ask that be done through official camp channels. Please mail or email communication to Camp Olson and if appropriate, the communication will be reviewed and forwarded to the appropriate person. We want to maintain the privacy and safety for our staff and campers alike. We



also encourage parents and guardians to be aware of their child's online behavior, and monitor contact they have with fellow campers and staff.

## **Gender Inclusion**

We provide safe, affirming spaces for all campers and staff, including those that identify as LGBTQ+. It is important for us to support all in our community regardless of their sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender identity. We rely on our trained staff to support age-appropriate conversations and guide discussions when they arise. We also recognize that our community includes gender identities that do not fit neatly into binary (girl/boy) gender categories, and we strive to create inclusive spaces for all campers and staff. As we work to provide as inclusive of a camp experience as possible, we offer our campers the opportunity to stay in a gender-expansive cabin while guaranteeing a boy-identifying or girl-identifying cabin for anyone that prefers this. Staff and campers may choose to share their pronouns with the camp community.

Our full LGBTQ+ & Gender Inclusion Policy can be found [here](#).

## **Safe Place for All**

Camp Olson welcomes all participants. Our goal is to promote kindness, good manners, and consideration for all people in the camp community. Camp Olson seeks to create an environment that is free from discrimination and devoid of violence, intimidation, or harassment based on race, creed, color, national origin, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. We strive to be a place that embraces and celebrates diversity in all aspects of humanity.

All participants are expected to respect other people, including campers, family members, guests, and Camp Olson employees. Participants must be responsible for themselves and their own actions. It is not acceptable in our community to mock, bully, harass, intimidate, or attempt to exclude people. Participants and guests are expected to practice respect, cooperation, and compromise within camp. For the protection of every participant, we reserve the right to deny or cancel the enrollment of any participant who cannot behave appropriately within the camp community.

We will not tolerate emotional or physical abuse or sexual harassment. For the protection of all participants, we reserve the right to immediately dismiss any participant or guest, without refund, as a result of any behavior which affects another participant's or guest's ability to enjoy the community of camp, or seriously disrupts our program. Parents, legal guardians, or group leaders will be notified of our decision to terminate a minor's participation at camp.

Our full Policy Against Violence, Harassment and Assault can be found [here](#).

## Overnight Camp

### Arrival and Departure

#### Check-In

Camper check-in runs from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Please do not arrive early, as staff will not be available to check you in.

Upon arrival, please follow signs to our parking area (located on the athletic field). Please leave all luggage in your vehicle until you complete the check-in process and receive your camper's cabin assignment. **Please DO bring any medications with you for the check-in process.**

A parent or guardian should accompany their camper through the entire check in process:

1. COVID-19 Attestation of Negative Test Result
2. Registration and Cabin Assignment
3. Health Checks

After visiting the above stations, you may also stop by the Trading Post to drop-off any funds for store accounts. Then it is time for campers to move into their cabin! A staff member will accompany you to your vehicle to help move luggage to cabins.

Once the check-in process is complete and parents or guardians say their good-byes, campers will participate in games and activities on the athletic field until the bus arrives! At this time, all campers and staff will gather in the amphitheater to review camp rules and meet their counselors and cabin mates!

#### Check-Out

Check-out runs from 8:00 to 10:00 am. All campers must be picked up by 10:00 am. Please follow the signs to the parking area (athletic field). Please ensure you check-out with a staff member (with a clipboard or tablet) before departing camp! You must be on the authorized pick-up list to pick up your camper. Luggage will be sorted on the athletic field by cabin for you to pick up. Lost & Found is located in front of the Nature Center. Please check for anything that belongs to you camper.

As campers finish breakfast, they will disperse onto the athletic field to say their goodbyes to new friends and cabin mates. This can look a little like herding cats, so good luck! Campers should have received any remaining medications and electronic devices at breakfast, so please make sure they have them before departure.

#### Early or Late Arrival/Departure

If you need camp to accommodate a late arrival (after 4:00 pm on Sunday) or an early departure (before 8:00 am on Saturday), please contact the camp office at 218-363-2207.

## Packing Lists

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping Bag or Bedding*  | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimsuit   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pillow & Pillowcase*  | <input type="checkbox"/> Underwear  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bath & Beach Towel*   | <input type="checkbox"/> Raingear*  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shampoo/Conditioner/Soap*   | <input type="checkbox"/> Headlamp or Flashlight* ( <i>optional</i> )  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comb or Brush*  | <input type="checkbox"/> Insect Repellent*  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush & Toothpaste*  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen*   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deodorant   | <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry Bag ( <i>optional</i> )  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Socks, Shoes & Sandals  | <input type="checkbox"/> Rest Hour Activity* ( <i>optional</i> )  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Footwear is required everywhere at camp</li> <li>○ Sturdy, close-toed shoes are required for horseback riding*</li> </ul> | (I.e. Book, Diary, Pre-addressed stamps and letter writing materials) *Postcards and stamps are available for purchase at the camp store  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> T-Shirts & Sweatshirts*   | <input type="checkbox"/> Medication   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pants & Shorts*   | (All medications must be sent in their original containers from the pharmacy). Camp Olson YMCA is not able to administer homeopathic medications without a written prescription from a physician) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Long pants are required for horseback riding</li> </ul>   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball Cap or Hat*  |   |

*\*If your camper forgets or does not have access to any of the above items, let us know and we can provide these for your camper.*

**We recommend that campers be sent with clothes to play and have fun in! Things will get dirty, things will get broken, and things will get lost! We do not recommend bringing anything valuable or brand-new for this adventure.**

- *Horseback Riding Campers should pack 2-3 pairs of pants and sturdy closed-toed shoes for riding.*
- *Sailing Campers should pack an extra swimsuit.*
- *Mountain Bike Campers should pack comfortable and quick-drying shorts.*
- *Leadership Campers will be sent a special packing list before their session.*
- *Details on packing lists for ALL programs can be found on our [website](#).*

## Typical Daily Schedule

7:30 am	Rise & Shine	3:30 pm	Power-up (Snack Time)
7:45 am	Flag Raising	4:00 pm	Free-Choice Activities
8:00 am	Breakfast	5:45 pm	Flag Lowering
8:45 am	Camp Beautification	6:00 pm	Dinner
9:00 am	Cabin Activities	7:00 pm	Evening Game
12:15 pm	Lunch	8:00 pm	Trading Post (Snack Time)
1:00pm	Afternoon Announcements	8:45pm	Campfire
1:15 pm	Siesta	9:30 pm	Quiet Reflection
2:00 pm	Free-Choice Activities	10:00 pm	Lights Out

## Meals

Meals are a very important part of camp. Our food service manager takes great pride in serving well-balanced, nutritious, and filling meals. Meals are served buffet-style. Campers will find plenty to choose from, and a salad bar is offered at least once daily. If your child has severe food allergies or restrictions, we encourage you to talk with the office staff before starting your child's camp session. Meals at camp vary each day. Below are some typical offerings:

- Breakfast: Cereal, Pancakes and Sausage, Biscuits and Gravy, Breakfast Pizza
- Lunch: Burgers, Chicken Patties, Corn Dogs, Tacos
- Dinner: Pasta Bar, Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Burrito Bowls

\* Specialty diets, including vegetarian, gluten-free, and many others, can be accommodated. Please ensure you notify us on your camper's health form of any dietary restrictions or food allergies!

## Stayovers (Staying for Multiple Weeks)

Campers staying for a multi-week session or who are registered for multiple back-to-back sessions are welcome to travel home by bus or guardian between sessions or stay onsite at camp. Campers that stay onsite are considered a "stayover" for the weekend between sessions. We do not charge a fee for campers staying between sessions.

Weekends are a relaxing 24 hours for campers to enjoy camp with a smaller group. They will have 2-3 counselors and a management staff member to supervise them all weekend. Throughout the weekend, we will have a nurse on duty 24 hours a day to help with medications and camper needs. All meals will be provided. Your child will enjoy selected programming like swimming, sailing, craft shop, etc. Campers are allotted time with their electronic devices to contact family and friends. After dinner, there are more fun and relaxation options, such as a game night, movie and popcorn, or night hike. Campers with us for three weeks or more are allowed laundry privileges while at camp. Please call our main office for special circumstances.

## Day Camp

### Arrival and Departure

#### Check-In & Check-Out

Day camp is Monday - Friday of each week. Please plan to arrive around 8:45 am each morning, and pick-up is at 4:00 pm at the end of the day. Our Day Camp Counselors will greet you each morning on the athletic field. Pick-up will be at that same location. On the first day, campers will check-in with our Nurses (please bring along any medications your child may require during their time with us. Please make sure medications are in their original bottles).

#### Early or Late Arrival/Departure

If you are running behind schedule or need camp to accommodate an alternative pick-up or drop off time due to special circumstances, please contact the camp office, 218-363-2207.

## Day Camp Packing Lists

Please bring a day pack each day with the following items.

- Sack Lunch
- Towel
- Swimsuit
- Water bottle
- Change of clothes, including a long pair of pants and a sweatshirt
- Raincoat if rain is in the forecast
- Both a closed-toed shoe and a sandal

## Meals & Snacks

Day Campers must bring their own sack lunch and snacks. We can store these in our cooler. Campers will also have the option to visit our Camp Store daily at 3:30 pm before departing for home. At this time, they can purchase snacks such as ice cream, juice, chips, etc. We recommend \$20.00 for their camp store accounts. If you would like to purchase a camp T-shirt or other souvenir item, you can visit the camp store when you pick up your camper at the end of any day.

## Typical Day Camp Daily Schedule

8:45 am	Check-In	1:00 – 2:00	Nature-Play or Quiet Time
9:00 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Activity	2:00 pm	3 <sup>rd</sup> Activity
10:30 am	2 <sup>nd</sup> Activity	3:30 pm	Camp Store/Snack Time
12:00 pm	Lunch	4:00 pm	Check-Out

**If you have any other questions or concerns, please  
contact us at:**

**Camp Olson YMCA**

**218-363-2207**

**info@campolson.org**