

South Wood County YMCA



Parent Handbook

**Parent's Note:
New Day Camp Hours
9:00am-5:30pm
Still with free pre-
care offerings**

Camp Alexander
6410 Hwy 13 S
Wisconsin Rapids, WI
(715) 325-5179

South Wood County YMCA
211 Wisconsin River Drive
Port Edwards, WI
(715) 887-3240

Camp Alexander

YMCA Camp Alexander is located on 33 acres of mostly wooded land on the south side of Nepco Lake. YMCA Camp Alexander was created in 1940 with money from the Alexander family, central Wisconsin's paper industry pioneers. The camp, operated by the John E. Alexander South Wood County YMCA, features 14 buildings including 8 bunk houses, a nature center, camp office/game room, main lodge and 4800 square foot Lester Hall which is used by campers and their families for large gatherings and activities staged during camp. Lester Hall is also available for reunions, wedding receptions and other large group functions.

YMCA Camp Alexander is a State of Wisconsin licensed recreational and educational camp. YMCA Camp Alexander has 17 paid staff members and 8 volunteer staff. For more information or other questions please call the YMCA at 887-3240 or camp at 325-5179.

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Dear Parents:

Welcome to YMCA Camp Alexander! Thank you for choosing to send your camper to YMCA Camp Alexander. We know there are so many choices, but truly believe you have chosen the best. This booklet will help you understand the procedures and policies regarding your child's stay at YMCA Camp Alexander. A careful reading will answer many questions and help you prepare your child for camp. Together we can work to give your camper a positive growing experience that will last a lifetime.

To save you time and frustration please remember:

1. All balances and forms are due 14 days prior to your child's camp date.
2. Make sure that all forms are properly completed, read and signed in the appropriate locations.
3. All medications and vitamins must be in the original container, listed on the Health/Medication Form and given to the Camp Director upon arrival.
4. Put your campers name on EVERYTHING. YMCA Camp Alexander assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.
5. Please remember to send a lunch and water shoes every day for Day Camp. Also read carefully the "What to Bring" section to make sure you have everything for your child.

Please review the above items. Take note of when balances are due and carefully complete all forms. Should you have any additional concerns, please feel free to call our Camp Director, Travis Fontaine at 715-887-3240 or 715-325-5179. Again, welcome to the YMCA Camp Alexander family. We are looking forward to providing your child with a safe and happy outdoor experience.

In the Spirit of Camp,

Gumball

Travis Fontaine
Camp Director

CAMP LIFE

DAY CAMP

Day Camp is for ages 5-11 and runs from 9:00am to 5:30pm daily. If these hours are difficult to manage, YMCA Camp Alexander offers FREE pre care. Pre care is offered from the hours of 7:30am to 9:00am daily. Day Camp includes many exciting outdoor adventures and activities. On Theme Day Thursday, all of our games, activities and skits reflect the theme of the week. This day will offer a change of pace and activities that are not part of the typical day camp schedule. Cabin groups select weekly goals and have fun doing projects and challenges together. Campers get an opportunity to enjoy skits, special events and ceremonies along with the traditional activities of canoeing, swimming, crafts, fishing and more.

RESIDENT CAMP

Resident Camp is for ages 8-14. Campers arrive at camp on Sunday afternoon and depart on Friday evening. Resident Camp allows each camper to make new friendships and renew old ones by living in one of our cabins with their counselors. Camp truly becomes one big family as all join in sharing the responsibilities and fun of group living. Each cabin group participates in some of the traditional events of camp together, such as canoeing, swimming, campfire songs and skits, and each camper is allowed to choose other activities such as the low ropes course and nature hikes. Drop off is Sunday between 4:00-5:00pm. Pick up is Friday between 3:00-4:00pm (arrangements can be made for late pick-up if needed)..

DAY CAMP FAMILY NIGHT

Parent's Night is a tradition at Camp Alexander that brings parents together to enjoy an evening of camp activities with their children. We gather around the camp fire to sing songs, enjoy skits and learn what it's truly like to be a part of the camp community. Then you will have the opportunity to head out with your children and explore camp. Our friendly staff will be on hand if you have any questions. Day Camp Family Night is held on Wednesday from 6-7:30pm. We will offer 2 overnights for Day Camp. Campers 8 years and older will have the option of staying overnight on the Thursdays of sessions 4 and 8. This is a special time for these campers to enjoy an evening at camp.

MAIL

Campers love to get mail. You have two options:

Option 1: Bring it with you to Check-in

We will have boxes marked for each day, Monday-Friday. You simply mark each piece of mail with your camper's name and cabin (will be given at check-in) and place it in the box marked with the day you want him/her to receive it. We will then deliver it to the cabin on the assigned day. So simple and saves you postage!

Option 2: Standard Mail

For the United States Postal Service, Fed EX or UPS use the camp physical address:

Your Camper's Name and Session
Cabin (will be given at check in)
YMCA Camp Alexander
6410 Hwy. 13 S
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

HOMESICKNESS

Homesickness is usually a result of the discomfort of being in strange surroundings. The Camp Staff is trained to deal with homesickness by providing extra patience and attention and by keeping the camper active. Most campers quickly recover because they are having so much fun. You will be contacted if there is a problem that cannot be resolved by the staff.

Before your child leaves for camp, DO familiarize him/her with camp. Read our brochure about the camp. DON'T act lukewarm about camp, let your positive attitude and excitement show him/her that camp will be a grand experience. DO acknowledge that you will miss each other, tell him/her you will write and that you hope he/she writes back (two or three notes is sufficient and one tucked into your campers toiletries is great). DO let your child's counselor know if your child is having problems.

During his/her stay, ask about new friends, experiences, etc. when you write. If you receive a letter about how your child is struggling to adjust to camp, try to remember that children can get caught up in a moment, then be back to all laughs and smiles in 5 minutes. If you receive a letter like this we ask that you call the camp director to discuss it so we can then have a casual discussion with your camper and his/her counselor about how things are going and get back to you. This will allow us time to observe your camper and how he/she is interacting with others. Our goal is to help each camper and parent have a positive camp experience; therefore, we ask that you help us as much as possible by acting in a calm, rational matter when dealing with your child.

TELEPHONES

Phone calls to or from campers are not recommended as they tend to defeat a sense of independence and interrupt the camp environment. They can also cause homesickness as well as unspoken hard feelings. Please do not send cell phones with your campers. Staff members are not allowed to have or use cell phones while on duty or in the cabin area, unless given explicit permission due to location of activity. Please help us keep camp a special place by being “Camp Unplugged.” Remember you will always be contacted by a Camp Alexander Staff Member if there is the need, never by your child directly. If you do receive a call from your camper, please remind them that they should not be using the phone and call camp immediately. If your child is homesick, remember that talking directly to him/her will only worsen the situation. By notifying Camp, we can work with your child and the counselors to improve the situation.

Emergency messages will be taken at Camp, at (715) 325-5179 or at the YMCA, at (715) 887-3240.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

The YMCA recognizes that positive discipline teaches and encourages the healthy development of a child’s self-esteem. The YMCA does not allow the use of corporal or physical punishment at YMCA’s. Instead, caregivers employ positive discipline techniques, which include praising, calling attention to appropriate behavior and acting as positive role models to influence and reinforce positive behavior. The staff sets limits that are developmentally appropriate and consistently enforced.

Camper Commitment: I want to be at YMCA Camp Alexander. I understand I may not possess or use tobacco products, alcoholic beverages or non-prescription drugs while at camp. I will do my best to follow instructions, remain in designated areas and keep others and myself safe. I will do my best to make this a good experience for my fellow campers and myself. I understand that failure to live up to this promise may result in my dismissal from camp without a refund.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of our campers is our number one priority. On Opening Day the Camp Director will ensure that campers are in good health and check in any medication that campers bring. Over the counter and/or prescription medication must be turned into the Camp Director with the medication form filled out. All medication and vitamins **MUST BE IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER and LABELED WITH THE CHILD'S NAME.** Prescriptions must be in the original container with the child's full name, date, physician's name and complete directions written in English. A written, signed statement must accompany all medication from the parents with the dosage, time and date for the administration of the medication.

HEALTH HISTORY AND IMMUNIZATION FORM

All forms must be turned in 14 days prior to the start of your camper's camp session including your camper registration and immunization records. State law REQUIRES that new forms be filled out each year even if you've filled out a form in the past.

The operation of our camp is governed by rules and regulations established by the Wisconsin Administration Code. The code is enforced and regulated by the State's Department of Health and Social Services- Division of Community Services.

Please make sure the camper registration and immunization record is filled out completely, this is a state law.

EMERGENCIES

Parents will be notified in the event of a serious camper illness, injury or emergency. If you need to contact your child in an emergency, call the Camp Office at (715) 325-5179 or the YMCA at (715) 887-3240.

EMERGENCY PICK UP PROCEDURES

Anytime an emergency occurs and a child must be picked up by someone not listed on the child's registration form, Wisconsin State Law requires the following:

1. Parents must call the office (715-325-5179) giving the following information:
 - Name and physical description of the person who will be picking up the child.
2. The person picking up the child must:
 - Present an identification card with a picture when picking up the child.

Persons not listed on a child's registration form will be allowed to pick up the child only in an emergency situation and only after the above procedures have been followed.

In non-emergency situations, parent's/guardians must send a written and signed note for their child to leave camp with someone other than those listed on original registration form.

Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to leave camp with an unauthorized person.

WHAT TO BRING

Please MARK EVERY ITEM with the camper's full name. Do not bring expensive items (jewelry) or nice clothes to camp. Pack all items in a suitcase or duffel bag. Please bring a separate bag for dirty laundry. Understand that this is a suggested list, please pack according to your camper's needs.

Resident Camp:

- Sleeping bag
- Pillow and pillow case
- Towels
- Soap
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Socks (please send plenty of extras)
- Extra clothes (undergarments, pants, t-shirts and shorts; please make sure all clothing is appropriate)
- Swimsuit
- Sweatshirt
- Extra shoes
- Water shoes
- Raingear
- Flashlight
- Brush/comb
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen SPF 15 or greater and water/sweat proof

Optional

- Cap or hat
 - Books/cards
 - Sunglasses
 - Camera and film
-

WHAT TO BRING - CONTINUED

Day Camp:

- **Bag Lunch Daily**
- Change of clothes
- Swimsuit
- Towel
- Water shoes
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen SPF 15 or greater and water/sweat proof
- Sleeping Bag/blanket optional
- Pillow optional
- Hat or sunglasses optional

Please don't forget to mark your child's name on everything!

WHAT TO LEAVE AT HOME

Please do not bring any of the following to camp. If found, these items will be taken, stored and returned at the end of the week. Staff and/or campers will not be allowed to wear offensive or inappropriate clothing.

- Flip flops
 - Glass bottles or jars
 - Money
 - Any electronic devices (see the next section "Keeping Camp Alexander Unplugged" for our policy)
 - Fireworks
 - No weapons or objects that could be perceived as such
 - No inappropriate materials or practical joke devices
 - No illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco of any kind
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KEEP CAMP ALEXANDER UNPLUGGED

Camp is a time for your child to enjoy the true feeling of childhood. It's a time for them to build strong friendships, create lifelong memories, learn from their peers and counselors, experience nature and all of the joys of camp!

Please help us by not allowing your camper to bring the following items (or similar items) to camp:

- Cell phones
- Mp3 players/iPods
- Video games
- Tape players
- CD players
- Radios
- TVs
- DVD/Video players
- Any other electronic or media devices

Please know that our camper policy and staff policy are consistent. Our staff is also not permitted to use the listed items in the cabin area. With permission, counselors may use one radio or boom box for appropriate music during cabin free time/rest time.

Again, to reiterate our telephone policy, phone calls to or from campers are not allowed. They tend to defeat a sense of independence and interrupt the camp environment. They can also cause homesickness as well as unspoken hard feelings. Please do not send cell phones with your campers. Staff members are not allowed to use their cell phones while on duty or in the cabin area, unless given explicit permission from the Director.

Unplugged cont. on next page...

KEEP CAMP ALEXANDER UNPLUGGED

Books, magazines, playing cards, board games, crosswords and other similar activities are not only suggested, but highly recommended for rest time and before lights out.

Please help us keep camp a special place by being “Camp Unplugged.” We are looking forward to giving your camper an experience of a lifetime...unplugged!

TRADING POST INFO

Again this year, YMCA Camp Alexander will be offering a Trading Post. Besides selling the usual items such as camp t-shirts, we will also be selling powerade, ice cream, a small assortment of Coke products, healthy snacks, a small assortment of candy and other wonderful items. To avoid campers carrying money on them throughout the day or week at camp we are ask that you deposit money into a trading post account in your child’s name. Your child will then be able to spend that money without having to carry actual money on them, decreasing the risk of loss or theft. If you’d prefer restrictions put on how your child can spend their trading post money, let staff know when you deposit the money.

Resident Camp Trip Days:

If you’d like your child to have extra spending money on their resident camp day trip, deposit it into their trading post account designated especially for the trip and the counselors will take care of the rest.

IMPORTANT NAMES AND NUMBERS

Bryan Bailey
CEO, Executive Director
(715) 887-3240

Travis Fountaine
Camp Director
(715) 887-3240 YMCA
(715) 325-5179 Camp

Lynn Mlodzik
Camp Registrar
(715) 887-3240

South Wood County YMCA
211 Wisconsin River Drive
Port Edwards, WI 54469

Camp Alexander
6410 Hwy 13 South
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

YMCA Mission: To put Christian Principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all through love, respect, honesty, responsibility and service.



YMCA

We build strong kids,
strong families,
strong communities.

