



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**BEST SUMMER EVER**  
**YMCA CAMP LEIF ERICSON**

**2024 Summer Camp Parent Handbook**



# WELCOME! BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS

**Dear Summer Guardians/Parents,**

On behalf of the Summer Camp Staff, I would like to thank you for allowing YMCA Leif Ericson Day Camp to be part of your child's summer.

We are proud that 98% of campers reported having made at least one new friend while at camp. In fact, the vast majority of these new friendships were made with children from other towns and schools.

If you ask a camper what they like about camp, most of them will say something about being allowed to "be themselves." This is not by happy accident; this is the result of a carefully crafted culture that is accepting of all, diverse in nature, and built on the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Please take a few moments to read through this guide with your child. It will help familiarize you and your child with our policies and procedures as well as explain details about payments, transportations, and more.

Sincerely,

Mike Murphy

Executive Director



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# MISSION & OBJECTIVES

## Mission Statement

Our Mission is to put Christian Principles into Practice Through Camping Programs That Build Healthy Spirit, Mind And Body For All.

## Our Values

Our core values unite us as a movement. They are the shared beliefs and essential principles that guide our behavior, interactions with each other and decision-making. The four values of the Y are:

Caring: Show a sincere concern for others

Honesty: Be truthful in what you say and do

Respect: Follow the “golden rule”

Responsibility: Be accountable for your promises and actions

## Our Goals

Our cause is for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Our camp programs, as part of YMCA, reflect these values and designed to help our campers grow physically, mentally, and spiritually within a fun camp environment. Well-trained camp staff act as a catalyst for the development in your child as they lead the camper in challenging activities.

# CONTACT & OPERATING HOURS

## Camp Operating Days & Hours

Location– Our camp is located at:

2301 East 26th Street, Sioux falls SD 57103

### Camp Operating Days & Hours

Monday-Friday

Camp opens Monday, June 3rd 2024 and closes August 16th, 2024

Pre-Camp Hours: 7:30am-8:40am

Camp Hours: 8:40am-4:15pm

Post-Camp Hours: 4:15pm-5:30pm

## Contact Information

Camp Office

(605)336-2267 or [camp@siouxfallsymca.org](mailto:camp@siouxfallsymca.org)

Transportation

(605)336-2267 or [camp@siouxfallsymca.org](mailto:camp@siouxfallsymca.org)

Payment

(605)336-2267 or [camp@siouxfallsymca.org](mailto:camp@siouxfallsymca.org)

All Directors can be reached at

(605)336-2267 or [camp@siouxfallsymca.org](mailto:camp@siouxfallsymca.org)

# PAYMENT & LATE FEES

## Day Camp Fees and Payment Days

- \$100 Deposit per child (non-refundable)—due at the time of registration.
- Remaining tuition balance —due two weeks before the session begins.
- If full payment is not made at the time of registration, you must login to your CampMinder account to make final payments. PAYMENTS WILL NOT BE AUTOMATICALLY APPLIED ON THE DUE DATE.
- To make a payment, please log into your CampMinder account and click 'Financial Management.'
- Payments will NOT be pro-rated due to absences or inclement weather.

## Refund Policy

All withdrawals from a camp session and/or refund request must be done in writing through Camp Leif Ericson.

Refunds/credits will be issued as follows:

The \$100 deposit is non-refundable; the remaining funds are available for refund if cancelation is requested two weeks before the start of the session.

If you paid by check/cash or camp payments were made through EFT draft from a checking or savings account, it takes two weeks from the date requested to receive a refund. If you paid by credit card, it takes two weeks from the date requested to receive a refund on your credit card statement. All payments may be a system credit if cancelation is made at anytime before camper session.

This policy applies to any cancellation on the behalf of the registrant or if YMCA Camp Leif Ericson is forced to cancel a portion of a session or a session in its entirety for any reason.

## Expulsion Policy

The YMCA reserves the right to end your child's enrollment with or without refund if the staff deems in the best interest and/or safety of the camper, other campers, or staff. If a child's enrollment termination is deemed necessary by staff, parents will be informed of reasons for termination.

# CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

## Check In

The YMCA requires that all children are to be properly signed in by an adult and turned over to a YMCA staff person. The YMCA does not and will not assume responsibility for children that arrive before the start time at any location. Please do NOT leave camp property until your camper has been signed in.

## Check Out

Those picking up children should be prepared to show identification to the camp staff member upon request. No child will be released to anyone who is not authorized to pick up that child unless camp office is aware.

## Early Check Out

When picking up your child during camp hours (before 4:00pm), **the camp office must know 24 hours in advance. Email or call camp office with camper name, age, check out time, and if camper will be returning that day.**

Early check outs are **ONLY ALLOWED** at:

10:30am      12:00pm  
2:30pm      4:05pm at the Big Top

Notifying the camp office after 1:00pm that day will NOT be allowed and the camper must remain at camp until camp hours are over. All early check outs will happen through the camp office located at camp.

All busses must be out of camp before After Care pickups can happen. The gate will be closed and you will not be able to drive down the camp road until all the busses have left camp. Parking is very tight at 4:00pm; please get out of the way of busses and park in the far left parking lot.

## Late Check In

If camper arrives to camp after 8:40am, parent/guardian must sign in camper with a valid photo ID. If camper is going to be late, call camp office with a 24 hour notice. Camp office needs to know camper name, age, when camper will be dropped off at camp. Camper will be dropped off at the camp office located at Camp.

## Parking

Please remember to drive slowly and carefully. During early morning/afternoon pickup, please note parking is limited, so plan accordingly. **CAMPERS ARE ABSOLUTELY NOT PERMITTED TO DRIVE THEMSELVES TO CAMP, PARK AT CAMP or PARK AT ANY SURROUNDING BUSINESSES OR PARKS.**

# TRANSPORTATION

## Bus

Campers are able to take a bus to and from camp for free. During registration you picked a bus stop location to use everyday for that camp session. Bus Stop Location is **not** allowed to be changed throughout the session. Bus Stop Locations do fill up. If a camper bus stop location needs to be changed, your request needs to be submitted **one week** prior to the camp session starting. **Campers are NOT allowed to use bus stop location AND before and after care; you must pick one option.**

- The Bus Stop Location time schedule will be sent out via E-mail three weeks before session starting or found on our website [www.siouxfallsymca.org](http://www.siouxfallsymca.org)
- Arrive to the bus stop location five minutes early
- If you miss your pick-up in the morning, you may elect to drop off your camper at the Camp Office and sign them in there or try to catch the bus at a later stop on the route

## Parent drop off and pickup

Campers may use Before and After Camp Care held at camp. Before and After Camp Care for a two-week session is an additional \$70; one-week sessions (Before and After Care) and Little Vikes (Before Care) is an additional \$35. Parent/guardians can drop campers off at the "Big Top" located in camp. Morning drop off is from 7:30am-8:40am. Afternoon pick up is from 4:15pm-5:30pm; those picking up children should be prepared to show identification to a camp staff member upon request. Campers are not allowed to use bus transportation and Before and After Camp Care (you must pick one or the other). Please remember to drive slowly through camp; the speed limit is 5mph. Busses will be driving in and out of camp, please be patient. Please do not show up prior to 4:15pm to pick up a camper from Before and After Camp Care. You will not be permitted to enter until 4:15pm.

Little Vikes campers may use Before Camp Care only. All Little Vikes campers must be picked up at 12:00pm at ROTARY PARK.



# MEDICAL/EMERGENCY INFORMATION

## Medication

- All prescription medication must be kept in the actual container in which it was received from the pharmacy. The container should include the prescribing doctor's name, name of medication, procedure for use, and the child's name.
- Any medications or treatments to be given during Camp must come with complete, detailed instructions.
- Camp staff will NOT dispense medication that is not labeled appropriately.

## Illness and Emergency Procedures

- Please notify the Camper Health staff if your camper is diagnosed with COVID-19 or any other communicable disease. A physician's written permission to return to camp may be required.
- If a camper becomes ill during the camp day and is unable to participate in activities, the parent/guardian will be contacted.
- If a camper is injured, Camp Staff will administer immediate first aid.
- If the situation should require immediate medical attention, the Camp Staff will contact and inform the parent/guardian as soon as circumstances permit. In the event they cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be notified. If necessary, a Program Director will call the designated physician and/or local Emergency Responders for treatment and/or transport to the nearest hospital. A staff member will accompany the camper to the hospital and stay until the parent/guardian arrives.

## Weather Emergency

Camp Staff continually monitor weather conditions and in the event of Severe Weather, campers will be moved under shelter and evacuated from the Camp Facility if necessary via the Camp Busses.

## Other Emergency

Camp Staff have been trained to handle other types of Emergencies in conjunction with local Emergency Responders. Parents/guardians will be contacted if necessary following any such emergency and given pertinent information for being re-united with their campers.

# BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES & POLICIES

## “Golden Rule”

We ask that all of our Campers and Staff follow the “Golden Rule” by “treating others as they wish to be treated.” This ensures that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy a positive, safe, and fun-filled Camp experience.

## Camp Guidelines

- Campers **MUST** treat all staff with respect and follow their instructions
- Campers **MUST** stay with their group
- Campers **MUST** use appropriate language at all times
- Campers **MUST** respect the natural environment and all its inhabitants

## Managing Inappropriate Behavior

Most inappropriate behavior can be dealt with quickly by counselors who are trained in a scaled approach to dealing with misbehavior. However, additional Camp Staff may become involved if necessary. Our typical response plan includes:

- Verbal Reminder/Redirection
- Removal from activity for a brief period (3-5 minutes)
- Removal from remainder of activity/loss of privilege
- Call to parent/guardian
- Temporary Removal/Expulsion from Camp

Admission as a camper at YMCA Camp Leif Ericson carries many privileges and responsibilities. Camper found with tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, or weapons will immediately be dismissed without a refund. In addition, should a behavior or discipline problem affect our work with other campers or their enjoyment of YMCA Camp Leif Ericson, **we reserve the right to dismiss those camper’s responsible without a refund.**

# WHAT TO BRING/NOT TO BRING

## What To Wear (LBELED with first and last name)

- Comfortable outdoor clothes that may get dirty
- Dress appropriately for rain/cold/warm weather
- Camper should wear CLOSED toe athletic shoes
- NO sandals, opened toe shoes, or flip flops
- LABEL all items that are brought to camp

## What To Bring Everyday (LBELED with first and last name)

- Backpack
- Water Bottle
- Bug Spray and Sunscreen (staff members will have DEET bug spray and lotion sunscreen on hand for campers, if needed)
- Towel
- Swimsuit (Little Vikes do not need to bring swimsuits/towels everyday—staff will inform Little Vikes families when to pack these items)

## What NOT To Bring

- Cell Phones
- iPods
- MP3 Players
- Wireless Speakers
- Toys
- Any electronics
- Money—please feel free to provide extra funds for your camper to use at the camp store through CampMinder. After logging in click 'view camp store' to add money to their account.

**These items often create unnecessary distractions and take away from the camp experience.** If a camper is found to have one of these items they will be asked to place it in their backpack or another location for safe keeping. If your child needs to have a cell phone due to special circumstances please notify the Camp Staff and we will do our best to work out an agreement. **Leif Ericson is not responsible for any lost or damaged items.**

Camp staff have the authority to confiscate any items mentioned above, or any other items that generate inappropriate camp behaviors or safety concerns.

# CELL PHONES

We understand that many campers have cell phones of their own. WE HIGHLY ENCOURAGE CAMPERS TO LEAVE CELL PHONES AT HOME. If leaving cell phones at home is not an option for your camper, their phone MUST REMAIN IN THEIR BACKPACK OR BAG AT ALL TIMES.

If your camper feels the need to contact you during the camp day on their cell phone and requests to be picked up, please redirect them to a staff member. All camp staff members are there to help campers, and will do their best to assist with the situation at hand. If your camper is sick or injured the camp nurse will assess the camper and make a call to parents, if necessary. If you elect to pick your camper up, YOU MUST CONTACT THE CAMP OFFICE BEFORE ARRIVING TO COLLECT YOUR CAMPER.

# CAMP SCHEDULE

## Daily Camp Schedule

Please understand that this schedule may vary due to weather, special activities or other unforeseen circumstances. Some activities may require an additional signed release form found in the registration.

### Times

7:30am-8:40am

8:45am

9:00am-9:40am

9:45am-10:35am

10:40am-11:30am

11:35am-12:35pm

12:40pm-1:30pm

1:35pm-2:25pm

2:30pm-2:40pm

2:45pm-3:35pm

3:40pm-4:15pm

4:15pm-5:00pm

### Activities

Parent drop off

Camp Buses Arrive at Camp

Chapel/Orientation

1st Activity Period

2nd Activity Period

Lunch

3rd Activity Period

4th Activity Period

Afternoon Snack

Camper Choice

Busses Depart Camp

Parent Pickup

## Activities May Include

Archery

Sling Shots

Pedal Cars

Arts & Crafts

Horseback Riding

Skits

BB Range Sports

Hammocks

Sports

Biking

Music

Camp Stories

Boating

Nature

Zip Lines

Fishing

Water Slides

GaGa Ball

Playgrounds

\*For the safety of the campers, we do not publish the daily schedule.

# FIELD TRIPS

Depending on the program, campers may get to experience some field trips during their session of camp.

## Wild Water West

Campers ages 8-15 enrolled in two-week programs get to enjoy a fun day at Wild Water West water-park just west of Sioux Falls. This field trip is included in the cost of camp. Campers and their counselors typically arrive around 11:00am and eat lunch before entering the park. Campers ages 8&9 experience a rotation schedule with staff members, so that they can safely enjoy each part of the park under the watchful eye of our camp counselors. Campers may bring extra money from home if they would like to purchase items from the Wild Water West concessions. However, there is NOT a guarantee that campers will have the opportunity to visit the concession stands. Older campers experience a little more freedom during their trip to Wild Water West. While they must be with other campers at all times, our staff members are stationed around the park to be available to campers as needed. All campers are also required to check in with their counselors at three designated times during their visit.

## Wall Lake

Campers ages 8-13 enrolled in two-week programs visit our Wall Lake waterfront property for one day during their session. Campers enjoy outdoor cooking, games, and other land activities in addition to boating and beach time. **Any time campers are in, on, or near water they are required to wear life-jackets.** 8&9 year old campers enjoy peaceful boat rides in small motorized canoes with group members and their counselor. 10-13 year olds enjoy paddling canoes/kayaks together. Beach time is closely monitored by a certified lifeguard and counselor at all times. Campers at the beach enjoy swimming and other beach activities. Please note that there is a certified lifeguard present at all water activities.

**\*\*\*Please note that if you plan on picking your camper up early or dropping them off late at any time during the session, there may be risk of your camper missing out on a field trip. Because of this, we highly discourage any deviations in normal transportation routine during the camp session.**

# OPEN HOUSE NIGHT

## Open House Information

- There will be ONE open house night each session. Open house will be held on the 2nd Tuesday evening of the session 6:00pm-7:30pm
- Your camper will be bussed home at the end of the day at their usual time and you have the option to return to camp with your camper at any point during open house hours.
- This will be an opportunity to meet your camper's counselor, take a tour of the camp grounds, and see many of the activities that your camper will get to experience.
- The camp store will be open during the Open House. Where you will be able to purchase camp merchandise with cash, card, or Camp Store Account.
- Drive into camp and a parking monitor will show you where to park and where to go.
- Open House night is not mandatory. This is an opportunity for your camper to show you what they do everyday.

# 2024 OVERNIGHTS

**Tepeetonga campers, TLC campers, Ranch campers and Tailfeather campers have the opportunity to partake in overnights during their sessions. Tepeetonga Campers are divided into two groups, ages 10-11 and 12-13, each staying at separate overnight locations that have unique and age specific features.**

- 10&11 year old Tepeetonga campers will enjoy one action-packed overnight on the **second Thursday night of the session.**
- 12&13 year old Tepeetonga and TLC campers will enjoy two fun-filled overnights, on **each Thursday night of the session.** \*Session 3, July 4 overnight will be on a different night that week.
- Ranch Camp and Tailfeather – campers spend the night on the Thursday night of their session.

## Overnight FAQs

### What if my camper doesn't want to sleep over?

That's fine! It is EXTREMELY important that you communicate that with the camp office at least 24 hours before the overnight. Campers may either ride the bus home at the usual time, or be picked up at: 5:15pm, 6:30pm or 9:45pm. (camp@siouxfallsymca.org or 605-336-2267) We do strongly encourage campers to give overnights a try, even if they are a little nervous. They are a lot of fun!

### Are meals included in the overnight, or do I need to provide them?

All meals outside of lunch are provided free of charge during overnights and the following morning. Please notify camp at least two days before the overnight if your camper has special dietary restrictions (ie., gluten free, vegetarian, etc.).

### What does my camper need to bring for the overnight?

- a sleeping bag and pillow
- weather appropriate clothing
- a change of clothes
- a set of pajamas
- any other necessary toiletries

### What if my camper takes an evening medication?

Our camp nurses will distribute all medications. Please send medications in the prescribed bottle labeled with the camper's name, the name of the medication and administration instructions. Camp nurses will NOT administer medication that isn't properly labeled. Please refrain from sending over the counter medications that aren't absolutely essential for the camper's well-being (these may include: melatonin, daily vitamins, etc.).



# LOST AND FOUND

## Lost Items

PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS YOUR CAMPER BRINGS TO CAMP SO THAT ANY LOST ITEMS CAN RETURNED TO YOUR CAMPER.

- Every night, Camp Staff will sweep camp and busses for any lost items.
- Any unclaimed items will be displayed each day so that campers may have a chance to claim any lost items.
- Any unclaimed items after the session ends will be kept outside the camp office for TWO WEEKS for parents/guardians to search through.
- All unclaimed items will be donated or tossed after this time frame.

**\*\*This does not apply to medications, high value items, etc.**

The best way to avoid lost and found at camp is to label everything your camper brings, and remind your camper to come home with everything they brought with them—staff do their best to ensure campers have all their belongings before the busses leave each day.

# SPECIALTY CAMPS

## Specialty Camps consist of:

- Venture Vikes
- Tailfeather I&II
- Ranch Camp
- Specialty camp goals are to enhance various skills and fundamentals, explore rich history of the sport or activity, learn rules and skills, and practicing.
- All specialty camps are one week long.
- Venture Vikes do not have an overnight; Tailfeather and Ranch Camp have an overnight on the Thursday night of their week.
- Specialty Camps do not have an open house night specific for their camp, but families are welcome to stop by at the open house night for traditional camp (on the second Tuesday of a two-week session).
- Specialty Camps have all the same policies and procedures as traditional camp.
- Specialty Camp fee for Before and After Camp Care is \$35.
- Specialty Camps do not count towards a campers' years of attendance, therefore, these campers do not receive an attendance award during their session.

# FOOD PROGRAM

- Camp provides an afternoon snack to all Campers as part of their Registration Fee
- Campers will be served a lunch provided by camp if requested and paid for during the registration process. If campers are not signed up to receive a lunch provided by camp, they must bring a lunch to camp everyday.
- **Camp is Peanut Free.** However, our meals do include gluten, wheat, eggs, and barley. Menu items may include tree nuts, but not peanuts.
- Your camper may bring their own meal, **but it cannot contain peanuts.** If your camper's meal does contain peanuts, they will be asked to consume it in an isolated area away from the other campers, and will be informed to not bring a lunch containing peanuts to camp.
- **Special Dietary Needs:** although we strive to accommodate all of our campers' needs, you may have to provide your own meals if our menu does not meet your campers' dietary guidelines
- PLEASE NOTE that the menu is subject to change. We will do our best to make notification concerning any changes in the menu. The menu is posted online on the 'FAQs' page of the camp website.

# CAMPER AWARDS

## Camper Award Information

Due to issues with supply, we have made some adjustments to the structure of our camper awards that will be implemented in 2024, and will continue for the foreseeable future.

Campers who attend two-week sessions are presented with Attendance Awards during a ceremony on the last day of the session. The following Awards are presented to our Campers:

- 1 Year: 1st Year Patch
- 2 Years: 2nd Year Patch
- 3 Years: Jr. Staff Shirt
- 4 Years: Ole Horn
- 5 Years: 5th Year Hat
- 6 Years: Paddle
- 7 Years: Teepee Rules T-Shirt
- 8 Years: Plaque
- 9 Years: Walking Stick
- 10 Years: Embroidered Tipi Canvas

- We do not count Little Vikes or One-Week Programs towards years of attendance.
- Attending multiple sessions or adventure camps in one summer only counts as one year.
- We ask that you notify Staff as soon as possible if any corrections need to be made so that we can follow up in a timely manner.
- After the camp sessions are over, campers will not be able to pickup left award or fix any award. This needs to take place as soon as possible.

# FRIEND REQUESTS

## Friend Request Policy

We allow campers to submit their application with up to two friend requests. These are simply requests, and though we try our best to accommodate them, they are not guaranteed. In order for friend requests to be accepted, BOTH campers MUST request each other.

- Please ensure that the first and last name of the friend request is spelled correctly.
- Friend requests can only be facilitated if both campers are enrolled in the same age group (4&5, 6&7, 8&9, 10&11, 12&13, 14&15). Campers ages 6-13 must also be the same gender.
- Group lists are created in the weeks leading up to the session. Due to the popularity of our camp programs, our groups are at full-capacity, meaning there is little to no flexibility for campers to move to a different group once the session has started.