



YMCA JOHN ISLAND



Get ready for the
BEST SUMMER EVER.

2021 Parent and Camper Handbook

ACCREDITED
MEMBER



ONTARIO CAMPS
ASSOCIATION

Community Leadership. Life.



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Overnight Camping at John Island Camp! This booklet has been put together for you and your child as a guide for this summer's adventure. Even if your child has been coming to camp for years, every summer there is some new information—this booklet is to keep you in the loop!

In the pages that follow, we have the answers to all your burning questions. There is information that will make planning the logistics of your summer fun a breeze. Read this package carefully, highlight your favourite tidbits, and keep it for future reference!

We have many skilled and enthusiastic staff on board for this summer who are eager to share fun adventures with new and returning campers. We look forward to having your child join us at camp. Thank you for entrusting us with their care. You can be sure they are in good hands.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the camp office at 1-800-465-9622. We look forward to a terrific summer!

Yours in Camping,

Aspen Groom
General Manager of YMCA John Island Camp

Summer Camp Staff Team

Our staff are selected from a highly competitive applicant list and most have been campers themselves. They are fun, enthusiastic, safety conscious, child-focused, well mannered and not to mention...qualified! Our staff hold certifications in everything from lifeguarding to safe food handling. Older staff who lead longer canoe trips have years of experience, and are trained in white-water rescue and Wilderness Advanced First Aid or Wilderness First Responder.

At the end of June, all staff go through an intensive, week-long staff training program. This week focuses on all additional training required to ensure that your child has a positive experience at camp.

PACKING FOR CAMP

The following is additional information to the primary “What to Bring” list that you may already have. If you do not have this list, you can find it on our website!

Sleeping: Each camper has their own bunk with a mattress (sterilized before each camp session) in their cabin. They should bring their own sleeping bag (or bed sheets) along with a pillow or head rest for their bed. For sleep outs and canoe trips away from camp, a sleeping pad is recommended as campers will be sleeping in tents. Sleeping pads can vary in price (less expensive= blue foam, more expensive= Therm-a-Rest). Please do not bring blow up air mattresses or large bubble mats as they are more bulky and less effective in a camping setting.

Clothing: As a general rule, only bring well used clothing to camp. If you have expensive clothes, please do not bring them! Play clothes are the best for camp! If jeans are preferred, please note that if they get wet, they take a long time to dry—so pack another pants option as well. Shoes or sandals are required at all times while at camp unless you are in the swim area or cabin.

Towels: We recommend that two towels are sent to camp. With all water activities, one towel is bound to be used regularly. Having two towels allows for one of the towels to dry at a time while the other one is in use.

Sunscreen: Please send sunscreen that is at least SPF 30 and waterproof. (If your child is extra sensitive to the sun, please send a stronger SPF rating). As an extra health measure, our camps also provide sunscreen for your child if they happen to run out while at camp, to ensure that every effort is made to keep campers safe in the sun!

Insect Repellant: We recommend insect repellant that does not contain DEET, or has a low DEET concentration. There are lots of alternatives to DEET, including picaridin or oil-of-lemon-eucalyptus based products.

Dry Bag: “Dry Bags” are thick, vinyl stuff-bags designed to keep their contents dry in wet situations. They are used for clothes, bedding etc. on out-trips away from camp. Dry Bags are generally available at outdoor stores that sell camping equipment. “Seal Line” is an example of one brand that makes dry sacks.

PACKING FOR CAMP

The following is additional information to the primary “Packing List” that you may already have. If you do not have this list, you can find it on our website!

Lifeguard: This is a very important item and is necessary while in any of our big boats, canoes, kayaks sail boats or while windsurfing. It must be government approved and fit your child appropriately—weight is the most important factor to consider when properly sizing a lifejacket!. Bright colours such as red, orange, or yellow, are recommended as they can easily be seen on the water. Please label your lifejacket with your child’s first and last names!

Electronics: At camp we encourage campers to ‘unplug’ and connect with the natural world. Do not send campers with cell phones, iPods, iPads, or other electronic devices. Should your camper require these items for their return travel (by Greyhound or airplane), they can be given to staff for safe keeping and will be returned upon departure. Please note that these devices will not be allowed during and if found, will be taken away for the duration of your child’s stay at camp.

Medication at Camp: If you child is bringing medication to camp, please make sure it is well labeled with your child’s name, medication name and clear instructions for use. Medication will be passed on to the Wellness Manager when your child is dropped off at camp. The Wellness Manager will store and administer all medications according to directions provided.



PREPARING FOR CAMP

Camp is an exciting and fun place: friends, adventures, skills, stories, songs, campfires, games, and much more!

Camp can also be a very different place- new people, new food, and even a new bed to sleep in. Our goal is to give your child the best experience possible while away from home! Here are a few suggestions for parents/guardians that can help your child while preparing for camp:

- become familiar with this booklet and the camp brochure
- talk about what it will be like being in a cabin with new friends and counsellors to help out
- talk about ways your child can solve any problems at camp– such as talking to their counsellor or another staff
- focus on the positive— all the exciting things they will do and friends they will make!

CELEBRATING INCLUSION

YMCA John Island Camp offers programs to children from all backgrounds, abilities and needs. In cabins, children are grouped together by age and gender – regardless of physical or cognitive capabilities. Part of your child’s experience at camp is that of celebrating the different abilities of each camper and what they bring to camp!

LOST AND FOUND

Our camp staff try their best to ensure campers return home with all of their possessions! There are a few things that can be done at home before leaving for camp that will help:

- involve your child in the packing process so they can identify their own clothes
- label everything possible with your child’s full name– we send all lost and found back to Sudbury branch don’t send expensive items to camp
- check off items on the camp Packing List as they are packed and send the list with your child to use when packing up at the end of camp (packing lists are available on our website!)
- if you believe you have left something at camp, we will be holding two evening events for parents to come to the Sudbury YMCA and check for their child’s belongings between 4-6 pm on August 3rd from (July campers) and September 7th (August campers). Parents are encouraged to email or call the camping office if they are missing a particular item. After the lost and found evening events, items will be donated to local charities. for those who live out of town we can mail your items to you at your expense.

****Please note that YMCA Camping Services is not responsible for the cost of any damaged or lost items****

PREPARING FOR CAMP



BIRTHDAYS

If your child has a birthday at camp, they will get a cake to share with their cabin and a rousing chorus of 'Happy Birthday' will be sung by all. Any birthday presents can be dropped off at the buses or mailed to camp.

FOOD

Our camp food is prepared in a modern kitchen facility using recommendations set out by the Canada Food Guide. We make a special effort to accommodate any campers with special food needs or allergies. If your child has any dietary concerns, please ensure that it is brought to the attention of the Director. We do not use nuts or nut oils in any of our food and do not allow nut products at camp.

HOMESICKNESS

Sometimes when kids are away from home, adjusting to new environments, they may experience a bit of homesickness. Homesickness is typically the result of being placed in an unfamiliar place with unfamiliar people. As parents, we realize however, that this is something children may need to experience and see through to the end in order to develop the skills to appreciate new surroundings and practice their independent living. Our counsellors receive training on how to respond to the individual needs of all campers, and help them become comfortable and happy at camp.

An option that we like to extend to families who have children attending camp for the first time or feel that their child may experience homesickness is to attend our Camp Open House. The chance to see the camp first hand for both campers and families allows for the new situation to become more familiar for everyone involved.

As a kind reminder, please do not send cell phones with your child as a remedy for homesickness—they will be taken away and safely stored in the camp office

BEHAVIOUR AT CAMP



WE LOVE TO HAVE FUN!

Camp is a place filled with fun, laughter and new adventures. Our amazing camp staff are on site-24 hours a day to provide positive experiences that last a lifetime! We know that all campers are heading to camp to have a great time and make new friends along the way.

Our Camp Community is founded on YMCA core values of trustworthiness, health, inclusiveness, empathy, respect, and responsibility. Expectations are explained clearly to all campers upon arrival. Any inappropriate behavior will be managed by our senior staff team and the General Manager. Consequences of inappropriate behaviors could include a phone call to parents/guardians and the possible removal of the camper from camp.

LANGUAGE

Swearing and the use of distasteful words (including derogatory racial, sexual or religious terms) in speech or songs is not acceptable at camp. Our camp staff role model positive language while at camp and will promptly address situations where unacceptable language is used.

VIOLENCE

Violence in any form against another person is unacceptable at our camps. In the case that a situation escalates, our staff are trained in disciplinary methods that do not include physical means. Some of our camp activities may involve physical contact (such as dodge ball and tag games), but they are controlled and supervised.

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

The possession of alcohol, cannabis, and non-prescription drugs is absolutely not allowed at camp. Campers found in the possession of these substances at camp or on camp trips will be sent home at the expense of the family. Campers found in the possession of tobacco or any e-cigarette related products will have the product confiscated and then be required to call make a phone call home with a manager to explain what has happened. The parent/guarding, manager, and child will then work together to determine an appropriate course of action. Depending of the circumstance this could result in the removal from camp.

BEHAVIOUR AT CAMP



CAMPER TO CAMPER BEHAVIOUR

Our camp communities place a huge emphasis on respecting others and ourselves. Counsellors monitor how campers relate to each other and are trained to intervene when necessary. Campers that deliberately try to lessen the enjoyment of another will be asked to discuss the situation with counsellors and senior staff. In extreme cases, parents may be called to discuss on-going negative behaviour. Bullying, theft, harassment—none of these behaviours belong at camp. Let's foster an inclusive community that ensures everyone's experience at camp is positive!

BULLYING AT CAMP

We believe in building a positive and supportive camp community that leaves no space for bullying to occur. Our staff are trained in how to detect the early warning signs of a bullying situation. In the case that bullying does arise, our staff are trained to deal with the situation through cabin exercises in communication, team building games, and problem-solving.

Should the bullying continue to escalate and impact the positive camp experience of a child, senior staff and the Camp Director may become involved. Persistent bullying is not an acceptable behaviour at camp, and may result in a camper being sent home.

Please remind your child about the importance of respecting others. Encourage your child to speak with their counsellor or another camp staff if they ever feel they are being bullied. Anonymity is protected when dealing with a bullying case that is brought forth in private by a camper.

After camp, we are not able to monitor whom campers keep in contact with via E-mail, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or in other "online communities". Although these sites can occasionally provide a space for bullying. As it is often difficult to detect, cyber bullying can be more damaging than face-to-face bullying. It is important to be aware of this type of bullying, and play an active role in your child's online activities.

TAKE HOME PACKAGES

Please note that at camper drop off, parents will have to pick up an envelope from their child's counsellor. This will include a cabin photo, program accomplishments and left over tuck money. If this is not picked up at the end of the session it will be kept in the office until September 9th, 2021 After this date it will be recycled and the money will be deposited as a YMCA donation.

MAIL AT CAMP

Everyone loves to get mail at camp!

It is always an added bonus for campers to hear from home. Throughout our camp sessions, we encourage all campers to write home about their experience at camp! If you are sending mail to camp, here are a few helpful tips:

- Keep letters upbeat and fun! A mixture of encouragement and family updates are guaranteed to be a positive addition to any camp experience.
- Mail can often be slow getting to camp. If you are writing a letter, it can take 5-7 business days to arrive at camp.
- If you receive an unhappy letter from your child, please don't panic! By the time you receive the letter, the situation has probably been solved for a few days already. That said, if you do ever have a concern, please don't hesitate to contact us.
- If there are circumstances that happen at home that may upset your child, please call us and we can discuss the best way to inform them while they are at camp.
- **Do not** drop off mail at the YMCA front desk in the Camping office with the hopes of it being brought out to camp, mail is not collected regularly from Sudbury.

MAILING ADDRESS

All summer mail should be dropped off at camper drop off location or addressed with their name and session on the envelope to:

JOHN ISLAND CAMP: Camper Name & Session
c/o YMCA John Island Camp
Spanish, Ontario P0P 2A0

SENDING EMAILS: BUNK1

Although we recommend the traditional method of a classic, hand-written letter, we completely understand the need in today's electronic world to send emails. Due to the overwhelming number of emails that come to us and the daily challenges we face with proper internet connection **we use BUNK1.com to manage our camper emails and there will be a cost to families for using this service.** The BUNK1 brochure explains the system and can be found in our information package. Bunk1 emails will be printed at 8:00 am and delivered to campers at lunch, if you send an email after 8:00 am, it will be delivered the following day.

CAMPER CARE PACKAGES

We thoroughly encourage letters, reading material or other items that could benefit your camper's experience (photos, postcards, small games, etc.)! We do remind everyone that any nut products are strictly prohibited and will be confiscated if they arrive onto camp property. Also, please be mindful of the size of the care packages you are sending.

TUCK SHOP

Tuck Shops give campers the option of purchasing a variety of snacks and camp merchandise:

- Every camper receive tuck food and drink items included in their camper fees
- Campers have tuck 2-3 times per week - every camper will receive a food item and drink (included in camper food)
- Camp hats, post cards, water bottles, flashlights, stickers, sun glasses, pens, mugs, and other cool camp swag cost between \$1.00 and \$15.00.
- Tuck money is to be given to camp staff at bus pick up locations on the first day of the session.
- Remaining funds will be sent home with campers on the last day of the session (please remember to pick up your child's envelope with remaining tuck money and other camp memories at pick-up)

If your camper will be using the Tuck Shop, we suggest sending \$25 for one-week sessions and \$50 for two-week sessions.

THE QUALITY EIGHT

The Quality Eight

are the major principles that guide at all YMCA overnight summer camps in Ontario.

Campers and families that attend YMCA Camps can expect that the Quality Eight will be at the foundation of their camp experience.

The following are the quality eight: Fun, Safety, Friendship, Belonging, Learning, Natural World, Life Needs, Place to Return.



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION REMINDER

Please arrive 30 minutes prior to bus departure times to allow for check - in, medication submission, and tuck money sign off!

BUS FROM SUDBURY - James Jerome Sports Complex Parking Lot

Buses depart from and return to Sudbury James Jerome Sports Complex Parking Lot (Lily Creek), Centennial Drive at Paris Street (behind the soccer fields across from Science North).

Campers also have the option of boarding in Espanola, Serpent and Spanish, Elliot Lake and Blind River.

TRANSPORTATION OPTION 1: BY BUS		
BUS STOP	BEGINNING OF CAMP- ALL PROGRAMS	END OF CAMP- ALL PROGRAMS
Sudbury James Jerome Sports Complex Parking lot	12:00 PM	5:00 PM
Espanola, Ontario HWY 17/ HWY 6 Tim Hortons/Wendy's	12:45 PM	4:00 PM
Blind River, Ontario Visitor Centre	12:45 PM	4:15 PM
Serpent River, Ontario HWY 108 and HWY 17 Intersection Visitor Centre	1:30 PM	3:30 PM
Spanish, Ontario Parking Lot Across From General Outdoor Store	1:45 PM	3:30 PM



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION REMINDER

Please arrive 30 minutes prior to bus departure times to allow for check - in, medication submission, and tuck money sign off!

TRANSPORTATION OPTION 2: BY CAR		
LOCATION	ARRIVE	DEPART
AT CAMP DOCKS	1:00 PM	2: 00 PM



DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO WALKHOUSE BAY - JOHN ISLAND CAMP DOCKS

1. Take Hwy 17 to Cutler
2. Turn South on Weegwas Road
3. Turn Left at the first stop sign onto Village Road West
4. Turn right onto Walkhouse Bay Road (after the Railway Tracks)
5. The camp docks are 6km down Walkhouse Bay Road

The speed limit on walkhouse bay road is 40km/h—please drive slowly as the road can be rough and there are many children at play in the community.



YMCA JOHN ISLAND



Questions?

Contact us below!

Aspen Groom
General Manager of YMCA John Island Camp
706-674-8315 ext. 2121

Katie Runions
Assistant Director of YMCA John Island Camp
706-674-8315 ext. 2138



@ymcajohnisland

ymcaneo.ca