



# Y CAMP AT HORSETHIEF RESERVOIR

REDISCOVER THE GREAT IDAHO OUTDOORS



## Parent/Camper Guide

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## WELCOME TO Y CAMP!



Thank you for choosing YMCA Camp at Horsethief Reservoir this summer! By registering your camper for a week at Y Camp you have begun a journey that will change their life in more ways than you might imagine.

Y Camp is a place of magic and wonder, where under the tutelage of our highly trained staff, your camper will experience new activities and learn new skills, emphasizing developing the YMCA core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. While experiencing fun and exciting adventures, campers will learn more about themselves and build friendships and memories to last a lifetime.

This packet was created to help prepare both you and your child for the resident camp experience including everything from what your camper needs to pack to how you can communicate with them while they are away from home.

**We look forward to welcoming your child into our  
YMCA Summer Camp Family!**



## GETTING STARTED

### Program Goals and Outcomes

- Make new friends, Learn a new skill, Do better in school, Enjoy more physical activity, Live with Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.
- Provide a physically, socially, and emotionally safe environment for every camper.
- Build a sense of belonging in every camper and ensure that every camper connects with a caring adult.

## PRE-CAMP CHECKLIST

1. Review this Parent Packet.
2. Pay balance by no later than 2 weeks before the start date.
3. Complete the "letter to your leader" and bring it with you to check in.
4. Help your child pack using the enclosed packing list.
5. Read check-in and check-out details below carefully.

## DIRECTIONS TO Y CAMP

**Camp's physical address: 301 Horsethief Rd, Cascade, ID 83611**

Driving from Boise: (do not rely on GPS/Google Maps/Apple Maps)

1. Take Highway 55 North to Cascade
2. Once you've passed through Cascade, turn RIGHT onto Warm Lake Road
3. Proceed 6 miles, then turn RIGHT onto Horsethief Road
4. Proceed 3 miles down the west side of the Reservoir. The camp is on the south end of the reservoir.

## CONTACT Y CAMP

**Daniel Alpers | Camp Director**

daniel.alpers@ymcatvidaho.org

208 344 5502 ext 856

**Camp Registrar**

camp.registrar@ymcatvidaho.org

208 344 5502 ext 250

## EMAIL

Although campers do not have access to respond to email, we print out and deliver emails daily, Monday through Thursday. We do not deliver emails on Friday. Emails should include your camper's and cabin names in the subject line.

Because we must print emails to deliver them, we respectfully request that you send no more than one email per day per camper, that your emails be kept to one page per camper, and that no attachments or photos. Emails may be sent to: horsethief@ymcatvidaho.org



## MAIL

Everyone loves to get mail at camp, and a letter or package from home can be an awesome surprise for your camper. Please do not send candy or other food as campers cannot store food in their cabins. If you want your child to receive mail by Monday, mail it by Thursday of the previous week. You will not know your camper's cabin at that time, but that is fine. You may also bring letters or packages to check in and we will deliver to your camper any day you want. Simply write your camper's name and the day of the week you wish the package to be delivered on the package. Note mail is not delivered to campers on the first day or last day of the session.

Mail received after a camper's session is returned to sender. Either address will get mail to camp. Some retailers only accept one or the other.

PO Box:  
Camper's Name and Session/Cabin  
PO Box 87  
Cascade, ID 83611

Street Address:  
Camper's Name and Session/Cabin  
301 Horsethief Road  
Cascade, ID 83611



## CABIN CULTURE

Everything we do at Camp is put through the lens of our core values: **Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility**. If a situation arises where we might need to work through adversity, we will be in contact with you to seek your parental expertise and advice.

Our top priority is the safety of our campers and this means both emotional and physical safety. If a misunderstanding arises we are committed to ensuring it is a teachable moment where campers can understand their impact and resolve conflicts. If in the limited time we have available we cannot resolve a conflict and it is no longer safe for a camper to be at camp we will ask for that camper to go home.

## OUR WELCOME AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

At the Y, we welcome everyone whose behavior adheres to our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We advance our cause by building a stronger and more equitable community where everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, thrive, and reach their full potential with dignity. The Y is a force for building bridges among all people. The Y is for all.

Camp should be enjoyable and encouraging, where campers share space with a group of other campers and staff both in the cabin and at their program. We pride ourselves on welcoming individuals and families from diverse communities where they may learn, grow, and thrive together. Your child may share a cabin with someone, staff included, who represents a community differing from their own. We recommend taking a moment with your camper to celebrate how great an opportunity this is to make a lasting friendship with someone they might not interact with outside of camp.





## PAYMENTS, CANCELLATIONS, CHANGES, AND REFUNDS

Deposits are due and non-refundable when initial registration is created. All deposits are non-refundable. Full payments, minus deposits, can be refunded for cancellations up to 2 weeks prior to the start of the session date. You may change your camp session (space permitting) without penalty at any time before May 1. After May 1 a transfer fee of \$25 will be charged for any changes. After 2 weeks before the start date of your session, all fees are due and your full registration is non-refundable. If payment is not received at that point, your registration will be canceled and your payments forfeited. Exceptions can be made with documentation from a physician stating circumstances involving camper illness/injury, documented evidence of a significant life event, or consent of the Camp Director. Missing home, inappropriate camper behavior, or change in plans are not sufficient grounds for a refund.

## FINANCIAL AID

We believe anyone who wants to come to camp should be able to come to camp and money should not be a reason campers don't experience this program. If you have extenuating circumstances or if you would like to apply for financial assistance please see our website for more information or contact the Camp Registrar at 208 344 5502 ext 250.

## CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

There are two ways to arrive at camp. On our bus leaving from Boise or straight to camp in your vehicle. We recommend dropping off and picking up your camper at camp in person if possible: especially for their first summer camp experience. Being able to see the property as a parent can help set campers up to be successful and help you share in your camper's excitement. Though both options are great and both facilitate a positive summer camp experience. Note, that all campers must be checked in by an adult, and all check-ins are on Sunday.

**Check-in with Bus: \$25/each way | 10:15 AM – 10:30 AM**

**Changes to transportation requests must be made no later than one week before check-in of your camper's session.** The bus fee is nonrefundable if your plans change at the last minute. CIT campers will stay at camp the weekend in between their sessions. Check-in for bus riders is in the West Boise Family YMCA Parking Lot on Sunday. Buses depart for camp at 11 AM. Check-ins should take 10–15 min. Adults checking campers in must stay until campers are completely checked in. Though campers are not at camp yet, all behavior expectations apply throughout the check-in process and bus ride. When in doubt campers should follow **Y Core Values of Caring Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility**. A more detailed orientation will be provided to the campers at camp. Campers riding the bus will be given a sack lunch upon arrival at camp.

**Check-in at camp (no bus): 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM**

As you drive into camp you will be guided to a parking lot where we will greet you and help get your camper checked in. Check-in can take 15–30 minutes. Please plan accordingly. The process includes tagging all bags, confirming registration information, turning in any medications, checking for head lice, meeting your camper's counselors, and sharing the "letter to your leader" with your camper's counselors.



## CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

In order for Y Camp to check out any camper, Camp staff will check valid photo ID on all authorized persons. **Please do not forget to bring a valid photo ID!** Parents/Guardians must be listed on the check-out authorization as well. If a person is not listed, Y Camp will not release your camper to the individual.

### Check-out with bus:

The buses depart camp before camp check-out begins, therefore early check-out will not be available for bus riders. Campers will arrive for Bus check-out from 3–4 pm at the West Boise YMCA.

### Check-out at Camp (no bus):

Check-out at Y Camp is from 12–1 PM on Friday of each session. If you need to pick up your camper early or before Friday, please notify the camp in writing by your check-in day.

If the buses are running late for check-in or check-out we will notify you upon your arrival to West Boise YMCA.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety is our number one priority at Y Camp. **If we need to know something about your camper for them to be safe, that would not be included in the regular registration questions, or require more detail, please contact the Camp Director before your camper's session begins with the contact information on page 3.**

We achieve a high safety standard by recruiting and vetting great staff, detailing an intentional plan for the summer that paces out fun and safety in all our programs, and then training our staff to become experts in youth development. Some aspects of our safety plan at Y Camp Horsethief include The rule of 3, no camper or counselor will ever be in a one-on-one situation and campers are never unsupervised. Also, any visitor will always be accompanied by a staff member.

YMCA Camp at Horsethief Reservoir engages volunteer medical staff for each session of camp. These volunteers hold a current RN certification. Our medical staff are responsible for all aspects of health management at camp from dispensing regular medications to first-aid and emergency care. All higher-level care is provided by Cascade Medical Center, a 24-hour emergency care clinic located about 20 minutes from camp. Our nurses love calling parents for advice. The camper's emergency contact will be notified in a timely manner if the camper experiences anything more severe than a minor medical incident or needs medical support or consultation.

## MEDICATIONS

Medications include prescription, and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medications, vitamins, etc. All medications sent with your camper must be listed on our Medications Information Page completed during registration and will be stored at the wellness center and dispensed by the medical staff. Exceptions can be made for emergency medications such as rescue inhalers and Epi-Pens. This must be disclosed at check-in and can stay with your camper. We ask that you also provide a backup or second dose that we can store in the wellness center as a redundancy.

Prescription medications must be in their original containers with the original label and directions attached. Prescription administration must match the label or be accompanied by a note from your physician approving any change. Medication stored in anything other than the original container will not be accepted by camp staff. Only medications from pharmacies located in the United States will be accepted. Please send the enough doses needed for your camper's stay.



Generic over-the-counter Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen (Tylenol), and allergy medicines are available from the wellness center and therefore do not need to be sent with your camper. Other “as-needed” medications are welcomed.

## CABIN-MATE REQUESTS

Requests must be for the same cabin request, campers must be within one grade from each other, and the request must be reciprocal, meaning that each camper must request and accept the request of the other camper they wish to pair with. Y Camp will only honor roommate requests in pairs of two and no more. This is a long-standing policy at Y Camp, established to foster a sense of belonging for all campers and encourage all participants to interact with people in their Camp community. Y Camp focuses on helping your camper develop healthy and supportive relationships by allowing them to interact with the diversity of Y Camp participants. We are very aware of the anxieties, emotions, and desires that campers feel toward this life-changing experience. Our policies are part of a design that allows us to continue to practice youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

More often than not, when a camper comes with a friend it is something that matters right up until they actually arrive. Once campers get here our campers work hard to make an equitable start for everyone and campers tend to make friends with other campers quickly.

## CAMP STORE

Campers may deposit money to a Camp Store account during the registration process online. At least once during the session campers will have the opportunity to make purchases. Counselors also help campers manage their money wisely so it lasts through the week. Clothing and souvenir items range from \$1 to \$40. Please do not send cash with your camper!

Camp Store will be open for parents to purchase at check-out at camp as well.

Any remaining balance of \$5 or less will be donated automatically to the YMCA Annual Campaign. This campaign is how we invest back into our community. We provide financial assistance to those who otherwise could not afford to participate in services and programs offered by the Treasure Valley Family YMCA.

## LOST AND FOUND

The YMCA is not responsible for any lost or stolen items. To avoid lost items, be sure to label everything with your camper’s first and last name.

Lost and found items found during camp are displayed daily for campers.

Prudent attempts will be made to reunite labeled items with their owners after check-out, but due to limited space, all unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to charity 2 weeks after the end of your camper’s camp session.

If you are looking for a lost item, be sure to contact the camp staff at [ycamp@ymcatvidaho.org](mailto:ycamp@ymcatvidaho.org) immediately after discovering an item has been misplaced.





## STAY UP-TO-DATE

Keep up-to-date on photos, information, and other Y Camp events by liking and following us on Facebook with @YCampidaho. We will send a link to the camp photos once the session has started. It is not posted publicly for privacy reasons. Photos will be archived in November of each year.

In the event of an emergency, we will use Facebook and email as a way to communicate with parents immediately and broadly and follow up with an email when possible.

## PHONES AND ELECTRONICS

Campers separating from their cellphones and other electronic devices is a great way for them to reconnect with themselves and others. We ask parents to please make sure their camper leaves their electronic devices at home. We are an unplugged camp, which means camper's ears will be free from earbuds and their eyes will be free from screens while they are at camp. This way conversations, friendships, and life-long memories happen.

We will never stand in the way of you communicating with your camper, however, we recommend using the camp experience to allow your camper to build independence and self-confidence. If your camper asks to call home and speak to you, we will check with you first before putting them on the phone. Any cell phones found at camp will be collected and returned to your camper at check-out.

## PHOTOS

We realize that campers today see their cell phones as cameras. For this reason, we hire a staff photographer to take an abundance of photos each week and capture your camper's memories. These photos are uploaded to the SmugMug website. We will email a link to view and download the photos once the session has started. For privacy reasons, this link is not publicly available on our website. Disposable cameras on camp are fine.

## VISITORS DURING THE SESSION

Although we recommend that guardians pick their camper up from camp at the end of their session, we highly discourage visits during the camp session. Having visitors is logistically difficult, diminishes the opportunity for campers to learn independence, and seeing loved ones can create, or exacerbate, feelings of homesickness that your camper or other campers might be feeling. It also means your camper is missing the activity that is scheduled at the time of your visit. Of course, that being said we will never stand in the way of a parent/guardian and their child, so long as they can show valid ID and be listed as an authorized pick-up. Please contact the camp beforehand and upon arrival, all visitors must check in at the camp office.

## COME TO THE FAMILY CAMP OR TAKE A TOUR!

Seeing camp before you arrive is a great way to alleviate any concerns first-time campers or their guardians may have. Tours are best scheduled for late spring, though we do take tours during the summer and the fall. Contact the camp office to set up a tour.

We also highly recommend attending one of our family camps (Memorial Day FamilyCamp, 4th of July Family Camp, or Labor Day Family Camp) if your camper is at all nervous about attending overnight camp. More information can be found on our website.

## IS MY CHILD READY FOR A WEEK AT CAMP?

To ensure your camper is ready for such an experience, you should be able to answer “yes” to these questions

- Does my child consistently identify when they need to use the restroom?
- Has my child successfully spent at least one night away from home?
- Is my child willing to eat a variety of food?
- Can my child take a shower by themselves?
- Does my child effectively manage their behavior around other children?
- If something is wrong, will my child advocate for themselves and inform an adult?



If the answer is “no” to any of these questions please contact the Camp Director via email: at [daniel.alpers@ymcatvidaho.org](mailto:daniel.alpers@ymcatvidaho.org) or by phone at 208 344 5502 ext 856 to discuss your child’s experience.

## MISSING HOME

Adjusting to any new environment is difficult for any person no matter your age. We understand no matter how great camp is there will be some campers that need extra attention or resources to adjust.

From the moment campers arrive our staff will keep your camper engaged. We have found that downtime, especially first day, can quickly lead to campers longing for the certainty of home. If a camper starts showing signs of homesickness or any particular need, we will contact you and seek your guidance and expertise. Campers will often ask to call home at the first onset of any homesickness. Calling home most often worsens feelings of missing home and can make the camp experience harder. While we will never prevent a camper and parent/guardian from communicating, we will most often try to resolve missing home without the use of a phone call initially.

Here are some ideas we have for you to prepare your camper ahead of time to be successful. Think of what makes them happy and let your camper’s counselor know. Set a goal with your camper ahead of time. We recommend completing the whole session, if a camper’s goal is ½ the week they tend to do great up until ½ the week. Ask them what they would need to complete this goal. Write them an email or a letter, but make sure to not go into too much detail about the cool stuff they may be missing. Try not to schedule their session during any big events at home. If they ask what is going to happen at home while they are gone, explain that you will be doing something that they might not enjoy (for example: chores, waking up early, mowing the lawn. Etc.) And finally, of course, celebrate them if they achieve their goal!

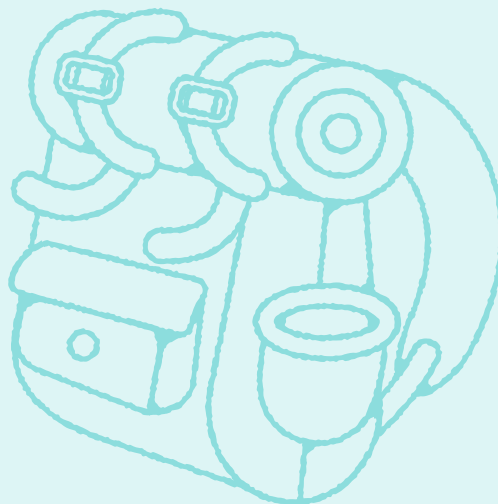
Camp should be fun. We never want camp to feel like it is a punishment. A lot of campers might not be ready for the full session. If that is the case we want to catch it before we roughen camp for them and celebrate the progress they made. Note: Visiting Family Camps and Camp Tours are a great way to put you and your camper at ease.

## BEDWETTING

Our staff works diligently to keep bed-wetting a private matter just for your camper. If your camper has a history of bed-wetting, please be certain to inform your camper’s counselors at check-in if this is something we can assist with and to share any suggestions you may have. Counselors can help ensure your child does not drink any fluids before bed, we can set an alarm for the middle of the night to wake your camper to use the restroom, and if an incident does occur, we will handle it with complete discretion. Our staff are trained to leave one staff member behind when we depart for breakfast. This staff will smell all the bunks and radio to handle any situations during breakfast. Bedding will be washed and returned before campers return from breakfast.

## A TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP

- 7:00 am Wake Up
- 7:45 am Breakfast/Flag Raising
- 9:00 am Morning Activities Begin
- 12:30 pm Lunch
- 1:20 pm Toes Up(Rest Hour)
- 2:30 pm Cabin Activities
- 4:00 pm Waterfront Time (times vary)
- 6:00 pm Dinner/Flag Lowering
- 7:00 pm Evening Program
- 8:30 pm Daily Reflections
- 9:15 pm Embers/Lights Out



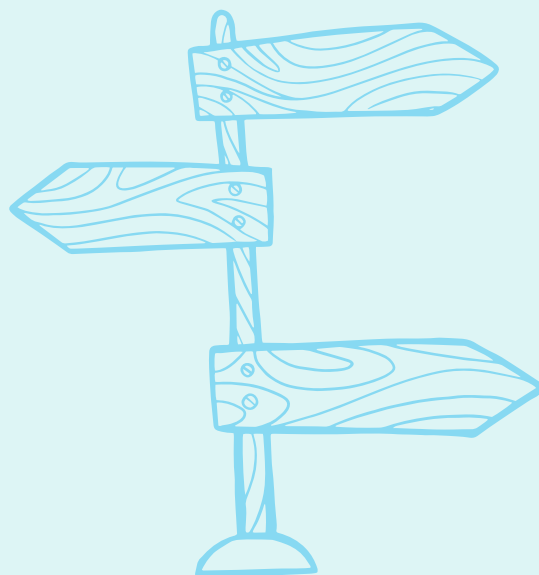
\*A note about weather\* We cannot guarantee the availability of programs based on extreme weather. If there are storms/thundering/lightning, we are not able to offer outdoor activities until/when it passes. If the air temperature is too cold, we are not able to offer swimming activities.

## WHAT TO PACK

Please use the Camper Inventory included in this packet to record what your camper brings to camp. Average daytime highs are between 75–95 degrees Fahrenheit while evening lows can be as low as 35 degrees Fahrenheit. In the past, we have seen snow in the first two sessions of camp. Please be certain your camper has warm clothing. Long sleeves and pants are encouraged for evenings at camp as they help protect against the cold as well as insect bites.

Remember that your camper will be spending most of the day outdoors and they will get dirty. Camp is not the best place for expensive clothing or irreplaceable items. Please be sure to label ALL clothing and equipment. Remember, cell phones, electronics, pocket knives, firearms, alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco are not allowed.

- Sleeping bag, with stuff sack or plastic bag
- Pillow
- Laundry bag for dirty clothes
- Wash kit (with soap, toothbrush and toothpaste)
- 2 Towels and 1 Washcloth
- Flashlight (and extra batteries)
- Pencils, paper, self-addressed envelopes, stamps
- Sunscreen (we recommend SPF 50; aerosol over lotion)
- Chapstick (minimum SPF 15)
- 6 T-shirts, 6 sets of underwear, 6 pairs of socks
- 1 pair of jeans or similar rugged pants
- 3 pairs of shorts
- 2 Sweatshirts
- Warm jacket
- 2 pairs of closed-toe shoes (at least a pair of sturdy tennis shoes)
- Swimsuit (should only be worn when at swimming program)
- Pajamas
- Refillable water bottle



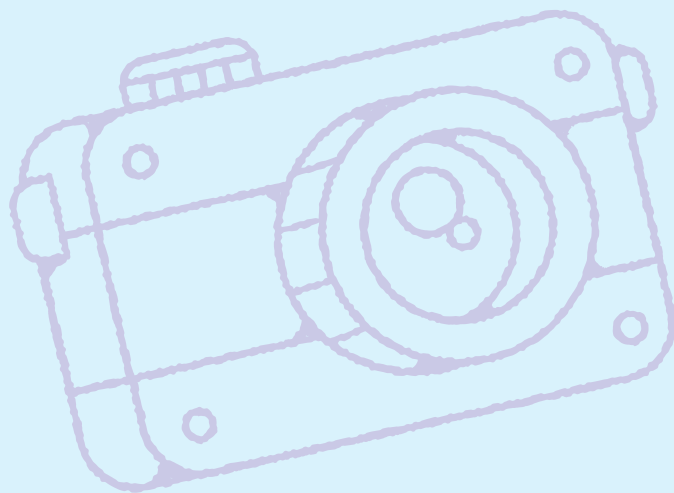
## JUNIOR ADVENTURE AND ADVENTURE CAMPERS

- Backpack (day-pack)
- Extra non-cotton Sweatshirt
- Mess Kit
- Sleeping pad
- Gloves and a warm hat

\*Junior Adventure and Adventure campers sleep in group tents with staff every night of their session. If your the child is not comfortable with exploring the outdoors or excited about tent camping, these programs may not be for them.

### OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- T-shirt to tie dye in Arts & Crafts!
- Travel games, cards, activity books (for toes up)
- Non-aerosol insect repellent
- "Itch & sting stick" for insect bites
- Family photo, Stuffed animal, or blanket (for comfort)
- Journal
- Rain jacket (check the weather forecast beforehand)
- Sandals (for waterfront and showers only)
- Books (old-fashioned paper)
- Camera
- Feminine Hygiene products (camp will have supplies)
- Instead of a duffle bag consider a Rubbermaid tub (It's easier to stay organized and it doubles as a bedside table)



\*Teen campers will spend one night, typically Wednesday, on an overnight campout under the stars with their group and should pack a set of extra warm clothes and a sleeping bag for this occasion. This is weather permitting often the highlight of their session.

### Y CAMP DRESS CODE:

Camp is a place where we all come together. Please do not pack anything derogatory, vulgar, violent, offensive, drug/alcohol/tobacco-related, or divisive clothing or items. This includes risqué clothing or swimwear, as well as overt political statements. Everything we do at camp is through the lens of our core values, caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility and our attire should reflect that. Please choose modest and comfortable outfits for a camp that reflect our values and you don't mind getting dirty.

### SUMMARY

We look forward to meeting you and your Camper this summer! If you have any questions regarding your camper's experience please let us know what we can do to help.

### SEE YOU AT Y CAMP!

## A LETTER TO MY CHILD'S LEADER

To be completed by the camper's parent/guardian. Bring this letter directly to your camper's cabin leader at check-in.

Dear Leader,

This is \_\_\_\_\_'s \_\_\_\_ year at an overnight camp and \_\_\_\_\_ year at YMCA Camp at Horsethief Reservoir. I want them to go to camp because \_\_\_\_\_

While at camp, I hope that they will \_\_\_\_\_

**My child is:** most happy when \_\_\_\_\_

...most unhappy when \_\_\_\_\_

...most enthusiastic about \_\_\_\_\_

...not fond of \_\_\_\_\_

...apt to be afraid of \_\_\_\_\_

...allergic to \_\_\_\_\_

...is \_\_\_\_\_ at personal hygiene (brushing teeth, changing dirty clothes, washing hands)

...and is \_\_\_\_\_ at taking care of personal belongs.

At home my child is often disciplined for \_\_\_\_\_

He/she/they have the following responsibilities at home: \_\_\_\_\_

Please pay special attention to: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any diagnoses pertaining to diverse abilities, difficulties, or challenges we should know of to make sure your camper is successful at camp? If so, please explain (Note: this letter will be given directly to your cabin leader and used to help us provide the best possible experience for your child. If the Health Center Staff or Camp Director should be aware of these needs, please include them in the Medical information collected through the online porthole.)

**Parent/Guardian's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_





## LETTER TO MY LEADER

To be completed by the camper.

Dear Leader,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. My friends call me \_\_\_\_\_.

In my spare time, I like to \_\_\_\_\_

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When I am not in school, the things I like to do least are \_\_\_\_\_

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I am good at \_\_\_\_\_

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I am coming to camp because \_\_\_\_\_

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I hope to be able to do the following things at camp \_\_\_\_\_

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When I'm at camp I don't want to \_\_\_\_\_

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I get along with friends who \_\_\_\_\_

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Last summer, I \_\_\_\_\_

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Next summer I will be in \_\_\_\_\_ grade in school.

Camper's signature: \_\_\_\_\_