

# Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya Family Handbook



Dear Camp Families and Campers,

Welcome to summer camp! We are *so* excited that you're joining us for an unforgettable summer at Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya filled with adventure, friendship, laughter, and moments that will turn into lifelong memories.

From the very first high-five on opening day to the last campfire song, our camp is a place where kids get to be kids—where they can try new things, grow in confidence, make amazing friends, and feel safe, supported, and celebrated just as they are. Whether this is your camper's first summer with us or they're returning like a seasoned pro, we are thrilled to have you as part of our camp family.

Our incredible team of counselors and staff have been preparing all year to welcome your campers with open arms. Each member of our staff is carefully selected and trained not just for their skills, but for their hearts—for their ability to connect, encourage, listen, and create a space where every camper belongs. Your camper's safety, well-being, and joy are always our top priorities.

This summer will be packed with fun: games, activities, outdoor adventures, creativity, camp traditions, and plenty of chances to laugh until your cheeks hurt. There will also be moments of growth: trying something new, learning teamwork, building independence, and discovering strengths they didn't even know they had.

Parents and guardians, thank you for trusting us with your children. We know that sending your camper to camp is a big deal, and we take that responsibility seriously. Please know that communication, care, and connection matter deeply to us, and we are always here to support both you and your camper throughout the summer.

We cannot wait to kick off the season, welcome your camper, and watch the magic of Camp Unie unfold. Get ready for a summer full of smiles, stories, and memories that will last far beyond the final day of camp.

See you soon and let the summer fun begin!

With excitement and gratitude,

Mandy Smith - Director of Program Operations 🌻🌿

Ben Wittig – Director of Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya

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## ALL THINGS CAMP U-NAH-LI-YA

### Mission

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

### Purpose

Improve the world through improving people.

### Core Values

At the YMCA, our core values guide everything we do. **Caring** means showing kindness, compassion, and concern for others in all that we say and do. **Respect** calls us to value every person, treat others with dignity, and celebrate our differences. **Honesty** encourages us to be truthful, trustworthy, and to act with integrity. **Responsibility** reminds us to be accountable for our actions, make positive choices, and contribute to our community. Together, these values help create a safe, welcoming environment where everyone can grow, belong, and thrive.

### Goals

At Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya, these goals guide our programs. **Compassion for Self and Others** creates a welcoming, non-judgmental community that celebrates each person's uniqueness, encourages healthy habits, and supports positive self-worth through inclusion, reflection, and choice. **Environmental Awareness** happens when campers connect with nature through hands-on outdoor learning, developing respect for the environment while practicing simple, meaningful actions that protect and preserve our natural world. **Leadership Skills** are shown through shared responsibility, creativity, and teamwork. Campers build confidence and leadership by planning activities, learning from one another, and practicing core leadership traits. **Resilience** comes when campers are encouraged to try new things, face challenges, learn from mistakes, and keep going—building perseverance, confidence, and a “try again” mindset that lasts beyond camp.

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## OPENING & CLOSING DAYS (INCLUDING 4-DAY, 6-DAY, CIT/AC, TRIPS)

### Opening Days

Campers may arrive between 1:30pm and 3:00pm on the Sunday of each session. You will receive detailed information via email prior to Opening Day. You will be greeted at the front gate where you will receive your camper's cabin number. Once you drop off your camper at their cabin and meet the counselors, please feel free to explore camp and visit the camp store in the Dining Hall. If your camper has any medications with them, please stop by the clinic at the Dining Hall to talk with the nurses. We invite you to join us at the opening ceremony down at The Waterfront at 3:30pm where you will meet the staff and sing a crazy camp song!

### Closing Days

Pick-up is at 2:00pm on the closing day of each session (Wednesdays for 4-Day and Fridays for 6-Day, CIT/AC, Trips). We will start by checking your ID at the front gate and then will direct you to park along the street near the dining hall. Luggage pickup, lost and found, medications, and the camp store are all located by the Dining Hall and the closing ceremony will take place in The Pit at 2:15pm.

## PICKING UP YOUR CAMPER

Your camper's safety is important to us. We require a government-issued photo I.D. to verify your identity prior to picking your camper up.

### Steps you need to know to ensure a smooth pick-up process:

- Ensure the names of individuals authorized to pick up your camper are listed in your CampBrain profile.
- Verify your photo I.D. at the front gate and the camper you are picking up.
- Park near the front office / Dining Hall along the main street.
- Collect your camper's luggage, check the lost and found, and receive your camper's medications from the nurses.
- Head to The Pit (by the dining hall) to join your camper for the closing ceremony.
- Enjoy exploring camp, hearing about all of the wonderful camp experiences and seeing their favorite places!
- If picking your camper up from the bus at the West Side YMCA, please note, campers will be released from the bus after their guardian's IDs are verified. Thank you for your patience as we safeguard our pick-up process! The bus should arrive at the West Side YMCA's side lot around 4:15pm.



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## COMMUNITY STANDARDS

### Camper Code of Conduct

Within the first hours at camp, campers and staff will gather in each cabin to create their Cabin Contract—a set of community expectations to guide their time at Camp. This contract is built around the four core values of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility, which form the foundation of our Unie community. Together, campers and staff will define how each value will be demonstrated and upheld within their cabin and the broader camp community.

### Behavior Policy

YMCA Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya is called the Place of Friends and we welcome campers from all backgrounds to participate in our life changing program. We know that each child is on their own development journey and we are honored to be a part of your camper's path to maturity. Our staff are specifically trained to come alongside each camper and help them develop their character and self worth. You'll find that each camper will be showered with unconditional love, patience, kindness, respect, and gentleness from our staff. Our staff are fully trained in positive behavior management techniques and youth development.

Our primary goal at camp is to create a place that is safe and welcoming for all who attend. That's our promise and commitment to each family. Likewise it is the responsibility of all who attend to be equally invested in that commitment. Every child deserves camp and every child deserves to be safe at camp.

We do not tolerate the following behaviors at YMCA Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya and they are grounds for immediate dismissal from the camp program at our discretion. It is very important that you review these expectations with your camper prior to coming to camp.

1. Physical Violence - hitting, pushing, kicking, biting, scratching, etc.
2. Bullying or repeated harassment
3. Explicit/offensive language - curse words, sexually explicit language, derogatory language, racial slurs, etc.
4. Running away from camp/camp staff therefore endangering self or others
5. Excessively unresponsive to correction/coaching/positive behavior management techniques
6. Inappropriate sexual conduct of any kind
7. Bringing drugs or alcohol to camp
8. Bringing weapons to camp

These behavior expectations exist to keep all campers and staff emotionally and physically safe at all times. Should your camper have difficulty adhering to our expectations we will contact you to discuss a plan for improving their behavior. It is our goal to work with you and your camper so that they may participate positively in our program. However, should your camper be unable to follow our behavior policy and/or not respond to positive behavioral management we reserve the right to dismiss them from the program and you will be required to immediately pick up your camper. YMCA Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya does not offer full or prorated refunds for behavioral dismissal.

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## Bullying

Camp leadership takes allegations of bullying seriously and trains our staff to prevent bullying from occurring. Bullying of any type is not acceptable and will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal from Camp. Each camper is expected to treat all other campers with respect and to help each other achieve the best possible Camp experience. Camp leadership also trains staff to promote communication with staff and their campers so that both will be comfortable in alerting us to any problems during their experience. We ask that you encourage your camper to be a positive influence on other campers and advocate for your camper to talk with a staff member if there are ever any issues. Campers can contribute to their own safety if they know what is acceptable and what to expect from staff, volunteers, and other campers to be empowered to let employees know.

## Staff Code of Conduct

Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya believes that a secure and positive environment provides the best experience for growth for all our campers. This begins with selection and training of staff. Each staff member is carefully selected after a rigorous interview process based on their proven abilities working with children and their desire to support our mission. All staff members must demonstrate exceptional character and undergo extensive screening including professional references, national sex offender database check, and criminal background checks. Staff are certified in CPR, First Aid, and Lifeguarding by the Red Cross. Training includes youth protection, child abuse prevention, emergency procedures, outdoor skills, activity facilitation, managing group dynamics, safety and health training, child development, and more. Our staff is made up of veteran campers who have progressed through the entire Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya program, certified international staff from all over the world, and university students aspiring to work with youth as a career. We believe in building a diverse, skilled, ethical, and passionate staff to provide the best experience for our campers. We expect staff to model the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. We expect them to abide by Camp policies, which includes no use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs, and committed to providing a safe, fun and enriching experience. Every staff member is aware of these expectations upon hire.

## Closed Camp

For security reasons, Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya keeps the gates closed for outside visitors. Each person entering camp during active sessions must check-in at the front office and wear a visible visitor badge. Please call camp if you need to come to camp so we can plan accordingly while ensuring the safety of all at camp.

## Gender & Inclusion at Camp

Consistent with our mission, vision, and commitment, Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya welcomes all participants and staff. Camp is committed to ensuring access, inclusion, engagement, and affirmation for all who participate. We strive to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, cultural background, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender expression, gender identity, ideology, income, national origin, race, or sexual orientation, feels welcomed, affirmed, supported, and has the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity and respect. To further this pursuit, we hire staff of all gender identities and train all our staff in gender-inclusive practices. Our programs will continue to express their single-gender nature, language, and defined characteristics. Members

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of our community who are non-binary, LGBTQ+, transgender, in transition or questioning their gender identity or expression, will be included, respected, and supported in such programs as all members of our community. If you have a question about which session is best suited for your camper, please give Camp a call so we can discuss it further.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

### Medications

All medications (including over-the-counter medications and supplements) **MUST** be in the original packaging and turned into the camp nurses during check-in. Medications will be distributed from the clinic during mealtimes and before bedtime.

- Keep all medication in the original container with the prescription label.
- All medications need to be listed on the camper's Health Form
- Medication cannot be expired.
- We cannot accept medication or supplements in baggies.
- Emergency inhalers or EpiPens can be kept with the camper or counselor; a discussion will take place with the Camp Nurse to determine.
- **\*\*We cannot distribute medication that is not in the original container with the dosage listed on the label per the prescribing physician.\*\***

### Emergencies & Inclement Weather

Your camper's safety is our top priority. Our staff are trained in emergency procedures and participate in practice drills on Sunday so campers know what to do in a calm, supportive way. Each building is equipped with a clear flip chart outlining specific emergency steps, and staff review these procedures regularly. In the event of lightning or severe weather, activities will be paused and campers will be moved to designated storm shelters as needed. These proactive measures help ensure a safe, prepared, and well-cared-for camp environment.

### Camp Nurses

A licensed medical professional will be on-site throughout the week as the Camp Nurse. Our camp nurses play a vital role in creating a safe, healthy, and memorable experience for our campers and staff. Volunteers help with daily health checks, medication distribution, minor first aid, parent communication, and supportive care that helps our camp community thrive throughout each session. If you are a RN, APNP, NP, DO, or MD and interested in assisting us with Sunday check-in or being a week long Camp Nurse, please let us know so we can share more about the program.

### Nutrition

- At camp, we follow Y USA's Healthy Eating & Physical Activity (HEPA) standards to support the health and well-being of every camper. HEPA focuses on providing nutritious food options, encouraging hydration, and promoting active play throughout the day. By modeling healthy choices and creating

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positive habits, we help campers build energy, confidence, and a lifelong appreciation for wellness—all while having fun at camp.

- To help keep all campers safe, our camp is a nut-free facility. This means foods containing peanuts or tree nuts are not permitted on site. We appreciate your partnership in checking ingredient labels carefully and helping us reduce the risk of allergic reactions. Together, we create a safe, inclusive environment where every camper can enjoy camp with confidence and peace of mind.
- Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya is well equipped to provide for a variety of dietary restrictions. Please note any restrictions on the registration form so we can make accommodations. If you would like to speak to the Kitchen Manager, please contact camp so we can connect you prior to your camper's session.

## COMMUNICATION

### Letters

Please address your letters as follows:

Camper Name and Cabin Number, Week #

Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya

12101 Y Camp Rd.

Suring, WI 54174

### Bunk Notes (emails)

Our email program is one-way from the sender to camper. We will print emails daily and deliver them with cabin mail (Sunday-Thursday). Bunk Notes sent after 1:00pm will be delivered the next day. We print and distribute hundreds of Bunk Notes every day. Please treat these as you would any other type of letter and combine all communication into one email for your camper. For siblings at camp, be sure to send separate emails.

### Bunk1 (photos)

Our staff will take photos throughout the day and will upload them to the Bunk1 site each night. The password needed to enter the album of your camper's session will be emailed prior to the start date. Campers are constantly in motion, therefore, beyond the cabin pictures, we cannot guarantee you will see your child through this platform. We know most families are accustomed to constant contact via social media, and this will be a transition for both campers and family. We believe that a sense of independence for both family and camper while away at camp is an important tool for growth. We also believe in the value of verbally relaying stories from campers to parents as a part of sharing in their camp experience. We will do our best to make sure each cabin and specialty area is represented by the end of the week. Trip photos will be uploaded after the trip is back and the photos have been sent to the director.

### Trips Communication

While out on trail, our staff have multiple communication tools available for emergencies, route changes, and other necessary communication to Camp.

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## Technology Policy

At YMCA Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya, we believe in the power of connection, community, and time spent unplugged in nature. To support a safe, inclusive, and distraction-free camp experience, campers (including CITs and ACs) may not use personal cell phones or electronic devices during camp programs. Staying unplugged helps campers build friendships, try new activities, and fully immerse themselves in the magic of camp—no screens required. To maintain privacy and ensure proper supervision, any personal devices brought to camp will be collected by staff, stored securely, and returned to campers at the end of their session. Campers will always have access to communication through YMCA staff if a need arises.

## Helpful Communication Reminders

- Remember that one of the reasons your camper is at Camp is to build independence and confidence.
- While on trail, mail will be held and then delivered upon returning from their trip.
- Letters: Be positive and encouraging. Help alleviate homesickness by focusing on what they are doing here at camp, not on dwelling on how much you miss them. It is much more important for them to know that you are proud of them for going to camp! Include a picture(s). Share something you learned while your camper was at Camp. Make a small puzzle or word search for them to complete.
- Campers will not have access to phones or computers while at Camp, so encourage them to write letters home so you can hear all about their experiences. Include stationery, addressed envelopes and stamps to help ensure your camper writes home.



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## PACKING LIST

The following is a recommended list for a one-week session. Don't forget to mark your camper's items with a permanent marker in case they are misplaced.

RECOMMENDED CLOTHING	RECOMMENDED ITEMS	ITEMS TO LEAVE AT HOME
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tennis shoes (2 pair)</li> <li>• Long Pants (1 pair)</li> <li>• T-shirts (7)</li> <li>• Shorts (4)</li> <li>• Underwear (9)</li> <li>• Socks (7 pairs)</li> <li>• Appropriate swimsuit (2-piece modest suit is ok)</li> <li>• Shower shoes</li> <li>• Pajamas</li> <li>• Cap or Hat</li> <li>• Poncho or rain jacket</li> <li>• Sweatshirt or fleece</li> <li>• Water shoes and sandals</li> <li>• One set of Messy Day clothing (that might just get too messy to return home)</li> </ul> <p>Optional: Costume clothes for dance/dress up nights (examples: silly hats, fun socks, bright and colorful clothing...)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backpack</li> <li>• Sunscreen (spray type)</li> <li>• Bug Spray (spray type)</li> <li>• Water Bottle – MUST HAVE</li> <li>• Flashlight</li> <li>• Bath Towel</li> <li>• Swimming Towel</li> <li>• Dirty Laundry Bag</li> <li>• Shower Caddy</li> <li>• Soap and Shampoo</li> <li>• Toothbrush and Toothpaste</li> <li>• Brush or comb</li> <li>• Sleeping Bag or Twin Sheets with blanket</li> <li>• Pillow</li> <li>• Journal/notepad</li> <li>• Book</li> <li>• Pre-addressed stamped cards</li> <li>• Disposable Camera</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cell phones</li> <li>• Electronics (ipods, game systems, smart watches)</li> <li>• Money</li> <li>• Knives or weapons</li> <li>• Drugs or alcohol</li> <li>• Expensive jewelry</li> <li>• Candy, gum, food, drinks</li> <li>• New clothes/new shoes -</li> </ul> <p>Campers need to be free to play and not worry about ruining anything while here at camp!</p>

### Trip Participants:

If your camper is participating in a canoeing or backpacking trip, see your packing list labeled Packing List **Canoeing** or Packing List **Backpacking** for additional items specific to each type of trip. Packing lists can be found online in the Parent Portal or on the Trips page.



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## LOST & FOUND

Please label EVERYTHING with your camper's first and last name.

### Helpful Hints:

- As you pack, create a list for your camper to use as they repack their items as they prepare to go home.
- Clearly labeling all belongings will cut down on the volume of lost & found items.
- We will work with campers to help them keep track of their belongings. They will be instructed about where they can check for lost items throughout the session.
- Any items not claimed by the end of the session will be located in the lost and found area of the Dining Hall on closing day.
- Campers will be asked to check for any personal items before departing Camp. ☒
- If you discover something is missing when you return home, please call us immediately. ☒
- All unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to local charities by September 1st.
- Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya is not responsible for LOST, STOLEN, or DAMAGED equipment or clothing.

## REGISTRATION & FEES

### Camper Cabin Placements

Campers are assigned to cabins and trip groups based on session registration, age/grade, gender, and trip. Other factors that influence cabin assignments are cabin mate requests, staffing capacity, accommodation of medical needs, etc. The cabin and trip group assignment process undergoes several reviews prior to your camper's arrival to best accommodate specific requests and the whole camp community. See details regarding requests below. Counselors are hired for specific sessions based on gender identity. All girls camp cabin counselors will have female counselors, and all boys camp cabin counselors will have male counselors. While on trail, a trip counselor may be assigned to a trip of the opposite gender or be composed of a male and female staff member.

### Cabin Mate Requests

Please submit cabin mate requests on the Camper Information section in CampBrain. Should you want to make a camper request to be in the same cabin as a friend:

1. The request must come from BOTH families.
2. Both campers must be the same age and/or grade.
3. Both campers must attend the same session.
4. Both requests need to be completed in the camper's CampBrain profile.
5. We cannot guarantee all requests (though we try our best!)

### Deposits

A \$100 non-refundable deposit per camper per week is required at the time of registration.

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## Fees

We understand that our camp families have differing abilities to pay, so we offer a tiered pricing system to better accommodate all financial situations. Please select the highest tier that your family can afford. This funding allows YMCA Camp U-Nah-Li-Ya to provide quality programs for all campers. Each camper receives the same experience regardless of the tiered price selected.

- Tier A: Most accurately reflects the true and actual cost of camp.
- Tier B: A partially subsidized rate, but more closely reflects the actual cost of camp.
- Tier C: Our historically standard rate which does not represent the true cost of camp. This rate is subsidized by the YMCA through fundraising, special events, and contributions.

A variety of payment plans are available to meet specific needs and can be arranged by phone. The balance of the program fee must be paid in full at least 30 days before your camper's session.

## Financial Assistance

We believe every child deserves a summer camp experience; financial assistance is made available through contributions to the YMCA's Annual Campaign. Visit the website for more information.

## Cancellation & Refunds

A two-week notice is required to withdraw a camper from a program and receive a partial refund. If appropriate notice is provided, your camp fees minus the \$100 deposit per camper per week will be refunded to you. Departure from camp due to homesickness or dismissal for behavior problems is non-refundable.

## Camp Store

All campers receive \$5 in their Camp Store account for each session they attend, and we recommend \$40 of additional spending money for each week of summer camp. This will cover a snack and drink each day and a souvenir (t-shirt, stuffed animal, etc.). Any money remaining in your camper's account at the end of their session will be donated to the YMCA Scholarship Fund. The Camp Store (merchandise) will be open on Sunday during opening, on Wednesday and Friday during closing, and during the week during cabin time. The Snack Shack will be open daily during Free Time for snacks and drinks.

## Authorized Persons

For your camper's safety, only individuals listed in the Authorized Persons section of the registration—by first and last name—will be permitted to pick up or remove a camper from camp. Please ensure this information is accurate and kept up to date. Camp staff will verify authorization at pick-up, and campers will not be released to anyone not listed, even with verbal permission. This policy helps us maintain a safe and secure environment for all campers.

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## CAMP UNIE FUN

### 4 & 6 DAY Camp Sample Daily Schedule

7:15	Wake-Up Bell & Optional Polar Bear Swim
8:00	Thought for the Day – YMCA Character Value Activity
8:15	Breakfast
9:30	Specialty Area
12:15	Lunch
1:00	Rest Hour
2:15	Open Recreation Time
3:30	Cabin Group Activity Time/Choice Activity Time
5:15	Dinner
6:30	Evening Program - Camp Game/Cabin Activity
7:30	Campfire Program
8:30	Taps – Daily Reflections/Cabin Bonding
9:30	Lights Out

### Camp Magic

Camp magic is the special feeling that comes alive in every part of the day—from joyful songs and spirited chants to silly skits, creative games, polar plunges, and unforgettable weekly themes. It's found in shared laughter, new friendships, glowing campfires, sticky s'mores under the stars, and Kissing the Moose. These moments come together to create a sense of belonging, fun, and wonder that campers carry with them long after camp ends. Mealtimes can be loud and overwhelming with songs and chants.

### Wednesday Night Overnight Campout

Our Wednesday night overnight campout is a highlight of the week and a true camp adventure! 6 Day Campers will hike out to our campsites, set up tents, and spend the night under the stars. Together, we'll cook hobo stew over a crackling campfire, share stories and laughter, and enjoy the simple joy of being outdoors. It's a night filled with teamwork, fun, and unforgettable memories that make camp extra special.



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