

YMCA Camp Wewa Resident Camp Parent Handbook/Packing List

Cabin Group Placement

Cabin assignments will be made on the basis of age and gender. Requests for one individual for your child to room with (must be the same age) will be granted based availability at time of registration. The person requested must request your child also, if not or if more than one camper is requested, we may not be able to honor the request.

Daily Schedule

A typical day for regular camp program is as follows:

7:45- Chapel
8:00- Breakfast
8:30- Cabin Clean up
9:00- Pavilion for Programs
9:15- Program 1
10:30- Program 2
11:45- Attendance
12:00- Lunch
12:45- Rest Period
1:30- Program 3
2:45- Trading post
3:15- Cabin activity 1
4:45- Cabin Activity 2
6:15- Dinner
7:30- Evening Activity
8:45- Twilight Talk
9:15- Back to cabins for showers
10:00- Bed Time

Our Counselors

YMCA Camp Wewa has the best staff around! Together as a community all camp staff participate in a two week on-site training preparing themselves and camp for your campers arrival. Through an individual interview process, everyone selected to work at YMCA Camp Wewa expresses a passion for youth development and interactive learning in the outdoors. With all of our creative talents and diverse backgrounds we strive to positively impact our campers in our unique environment and provide them with the best camp experience possible.

All of YMCA Camp Wewa Staff are:

- Eighteen years or older
- Drug tested and Background checked
- CPR and First Aid trained

Specialized Staff include:

- Individuals certified in program areas such as Archery, Ropes Courses and Canoeing
- College students pursuing degrees in Recreation, Education or Hospitality
- International Counselors recruited through Camp America

TIPS—Our staff may not accept tips or gifts. Contributions to our Youth Scholarship Program on behalf of a staff member are most welcome or consider making a purchase from our Amazon Wish list.

Keep in touch with your camper

Campers LOVE mail! We encourage everyone to write. Feel free to send stationary and stamped envelopes with your camper. Some campers find letter writing a real chore, and are often too busy to “find time.” You can be sure that the trip home and the weeks that follow will be filled with their adventures. If you choose to write to your camper, please keep your letters positive and uplifting when you write. Ask about activities or new friends and try to avoid talking too much of home life as sometimes this sparks homesickness.

MAIL DELIVERY: Campers receive their mail daily. Care packages are nice for campers to receive as well. If you choose to send one, please do not include gum, soda, or food of any kind. Due to health regulations, all food products will be confiscated and not returned so please do not send them. All mail will be opened in front of staff. Any inappropriate items will be confiscated and not returned. Please note that we DO NOT forward or return any packages that arrive after your camper leaves. On closing day of camp we have a very eventful schedule getting campers ready to depart camp, we will do our best to deliver any mail that arrives on the final day. If you can please ensure that your mail or package arrives on an earlier day that would be best. If your camper has not received mail that was sent please feel free to stop by the office on the way out to see if it is available. Please send all mail to this address—Camper’s Name, Cabin Name, YMCA Camp Wewa, 221 South Binion Rd. Apopka, FL 32703.

TELEPHONE: We highly discourage “check-up” phone calls as this pulls your camper away from their activities and can spark feelings of homesickness. In the event of an emergency all calls will be relayed to a camper or to the parents through our Camp Directors.

PACKING LIST

WHAT TO BRING . . . (Suggested list for one Week Residential Campers, please double for 2 week session)

Light weight sleeping bag or blanket 2 Pairs of closed toe tennis shoes

Sheets/Pillow/pillowcase Laundry bag

Clip-on clothespins Flashlight

Backpack Extra bedding in case of accident

Rain gear 2 Swimsuits (One piece for girls)

5 T-shirts 2 Long-sleeve shirts

1-Wk supply of underwear 6 Pairs of socks

2 Pairs of jeans/long pants 3 Pairs of shorts

Pajamas/robe Flip-flops/water sandals

2 Bath towels Swimming towel

2 Washcloths Toothbrush & toothpaste

Soap/Shampoo/Conditioner Comb/Brush

Deodorant Insect repellent

Sunscreen Disposable camera (no cell phone cameras)

Stuffed Animals Books, etc. for quiet time

DRESS

Life at Camp Wewa is informal! Send typical play clothes —the kind you can afford to lose or don't mind getting really dirty. Many camp activities require closed toed shoes for participation; please make sure to pack a pair. Please pack two bathing suits (one piece for girls) so that the camper will always have a spare. We also have a dance on Thursday that campers can choose to dress up for, attire must be Y appropriate and functional.

BUG REPELLANT

During the summer in Florida, bugs are everywhere. Because campers spend much of their time outdoors, bug repellent is a MUST.

PERSONAL GEAR/NAME TAGS

Please put your camper's name on everything. Personal belongings must be clearly marked. We can assume no responsibility for them. USE FIRST AND LAST NAMES. Lost and found is sorted at the end of each session. It is retained for one week after each session and then it is taken to Good Will.

We cannot mail lost items to you, please check the lost and found area in the dining hall or on the deck if something is lost upon leaving. We are not responsible for items lost or stolen so please do not send valuables.

LAUNDRY

Laundry will only be provided to our two week or three week campers and will be done on the weekends in between sessions. If your camper is only coming for a one week session please pack enough for their length of stay.

HYDRATION

We encourage everyone to bring their own reusable water bottle. We have multiple water fountains around camp for campers to refill their water bottles and stay hydrated.

WHAT NOT TO BRING:

Cell phones/I Pads/Laptops	Personal sporting equipment
I Pod/MP3	Vehicles
Electronic games/CD players/TVs	Animals
Expensive cameras or watches	Rifles/Ammunition
Knives/weapons	Beverages/food
Alcohol/drugs/tobacco	Pornographic materials

Any of these items and any other item deemed unacceptable by the Camp Directors will be immediately confiscated. Controlled substances or fireworks are prohibited. Possession or use of controlled substances, alcohol, tobacco, or fireworks will result in immediate dismissal from camp, without a refund.

MONEY

YMCA Camp Wewa is all-inclusive; meals, snacks, activities, specialized instructional staff are all included. There is no need to send money with your child.

CELL PHONE POLICY

YMCA Camp Wewa is a no cell phone program. Bringing a cell phone to camp contradicts the idea of being unplugged, engaging with others around you and re-connecting to nature. Cell phones interfere with the resident camp experience. Please do not send your camper with their cell phone. We agree to contact you in the event of any emergencies. YMCA Camp Wewa is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items. Any cell phones found to be interfering with the camp experience will be confiscated by the Camp Directors and may result in the removal of your camper from camp early.

Why Can't I let my child bring a cell phone to camp?

From Bob Ditter ACA Camping Expert

"As you know we have a "no-cell phone" policy at camp. Aside from the fact that cell phones are expensive and can get lost or stolen and that the physical camp environment is not kind to such items, there is a fundamental problem with campers having cell phones at camp, and that is trust. When children come to camp they—and you—are making a leap of faith, temporarily transferring their primary care from you as their parents to us and their counselors. This is one of the growth-producing, yet challenging aspects of camp. As children learn to trust other caring adults, they grow and learn, little by little, to solve some of their own challenges. We believe this emerging independence is one of the greatest benefits of camp. It is one important way your child develops greater resilience. Contacting you by phone essentially means they have not made this transition. It prevents us from getting to problems that may arise and addressing them quickly. Sending a cell phone to camp is like saying to your child that you as the parent haven't truly come to peace with the notion of them being away from you and in our care. We agree to tell you if your child is experiencing a challenge in their adjustment to camp. You can help by talking with you child before they leave for camp and telling them that there is always someone they can reach out to, whether it be their counselor, a trusted activity leader, the Head Counselor, the Director or camp nurse or health care provider. We are all here to help, but if you don't trust us, your children certainly won't!"

Source: <http://www.elca.org/camps/newsletter/07May/Ditter.html>

Travel Information

DIRECTIONS: From I-4 from Jax area: Take the S.R. 436 Exit. Go WEST on 436 until it intersects 441. Go NORTH on 441 through Apopka. Turn left on Lakeview (just past Home Depot). Go to the end of Lakeview and turn left on Binion Rd. The camp will be a mile down on the left.

From I-4/Tampa Area: Take the 429 North exit (just before you get to Disney) and follow it until it comes to an end and intersects Hwy.

441. Turn left on 441 and go to Lakeview (just past Home Depot) where you will turn left again. Go to the end of Lakeview and turn left on Binion Rd. The camp will be a mile down on the left.

From Florida Turnpike: Go NORTH on the Turnpike to Toll Road 429 NORTH. Go to the end of 429 where it intersects Hwy. 441. Turn left on 441 and go to Lakeview (just past Home Depot) where you will turn left again. Go to the end of Lakeview and turn left on Binion Rd. The camp will be a mile down on the left.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

ARRIVAL:

Please arrive on Sunday between 1:30-3:00 pm. All campers need to arrive during this time. Please do not arrive early! Some of our staff are dismissed on weekends between sessions and are not available to greet early arrivals. When you arrive, a member of our staff will meet you at the

entrance and show you where to park. After parking you will unload your camper's luggage and place it their cabin pick up spot, given to you by one of our counselors. They will direct you to the Dining Hall for Check-In. You do not need to bring your bags with you to the Dining Hall, but please bring any medications or special dietary needs they may need during the week. At the Dining Hall, you will receive further instructions about check-in. Please make sure to stop at each station of the check in process while in the Dinning Hall. Once check-in is complete you and your child will need to walk to their cabin where their luggage will be waiting. PLEASE DO NOT DRIVE INTO CAMP.

SWIM EVALUATIONS

Shortly after arrival all campers will be asked to take a swim evaluation, so while unpacking make sure to have your swim suit ready. Everyone must have a swim evaluation. Some programs like boating, skiing, swimming, tubing, etc. correlate with the campers swimming capabilities.

DEPARTURE

Parents are encouraged to come at 1:30pm and join us for the closing ceremonies at 2pm in our Pavilion. Checkout is from 2:30-4:00pm. Campers will be ready to leave right after the Closing Ceremony. It is important they be picked up before 4:00pm as that is the time most our staff begin their time off. YOU MUST CHECK YOUR CAMPER OUT PERSONALLY WITH THEIR VILLAGE COORDINATOR! We must have written permission to let them leave with someone else. Please send a note to the Director indicating the name(s) of the person(s) who have permission to pick up your child. Please have a photo ID with you for anyone picking up a child at Camp Wewa will be asked to see their ID before any child is released. PLEASE REMEMBER TO PICK UP ANY MEDICATION BEFORE YOU LEAVE AT THE HEALTH CENTER.

DOUBLE CHECK FOR MISSINIG POSSESSIONS IN THE DINNING HALL OR ON THE DECK!

NOTE: In inclement weather, such as thunderstorm, check-in and out procedures will be modified. We appreciate your patience on these days!

PARENT SURVEY

At the end of the summer you will receive a parent survey. Your feelings and impressions are important to our commitment to quality camping. Please complete this evaluation and submit it promptly, as all comments are considered by our program committee and help us plan for the following year.

VISTITATION POLICY

We strongly discourage visitors while your child is at camp. This policy allows us to provide a higher quality experience with limited interruptions, promotes a safer environment, and decrease potential home sickness scenarios. We understand as a parent it is a challenge to be away from your camper, unable to talk to them, but this is an important opportunity for them to grow in their confidence and gain independence.

CAMP WEEKENDS

Campers who want to try Wewa for the weekend or are staying between sessions may stay for an Try Me or Carry Over Weekend. Try Me/ Carry Over Weekends include supervised activities and meals. There is an additional fee if they stay and they need to be registered for this program in advance.

HOMESICKNESS

Homesickness can be a common occurrence at resident camp, especially for first time overnight campers. Sometimes it takes some adjusting to a new environment and new friendships but typically these cases are resolved within the first night of camp. We do not call parents at the first sign of homesickness but instead work with your camper to help them get the opportunity to experience camp. The resident camp experience is about personal growth, learning resilience and gaining independence. If the homesickness continues and is impacting your camper's experience we will reach out to you so we can work together to decide the best course of action for your camper. Please do not tell your camper that they can call home in a case of homesickness as this often sets up the expectation that they do not need to at least try to make the best of their time at camp. Reassure your camper that they will have a wonderful time and you look forward to hearing all about it. In cases where the Camp Director recommends or as a parent you decide to remove your camper from camp early, please be aware that a refund will not be issued.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Many pictures are taken each summer. Often they are used in camp promotion pieces and placed on our web site. During the registration process there is a form that releases use of photos of your campers, if you do not want photos of your camper being taken then you must complete the opt out form. Please see our registration team for this form. Camper photos can be view at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ymcacampwewa/> where we have made galleries for each session. More information will be provided at check in.

CAMPER HEALTH HISTORY FORMS

Please complete this very important form completely and accurately. **DO NOT PERMIT THE CAMPER TO FILL OUT THE FORM.** The form asks you for information that will assist us in caring for your child's health and provides us with vital information in case of illness or accident. A physical by a health professional is required within one year of your camper's arrival at camp. **PLEASE RETURN** the Health History Form at no later than two weeks before the start of your camper's session. **THIS FORM IS MANDATORY FOR ALL CAMPERS!**

Important Health & Camp Policy Information

HEALTH CARE PROCEDURES

The camp health center is supervised by a registered nurse and/or the Camp Director. Our counselors are all required to have current First Aid and CPR/AED training. Our health center is equipped with all necessary and routine over-the-counter medications. We accept only prescription medications prescribed by a doctor upon arrival at camp. These will be administered to your child by our health care staff.

If an emergency trip to the hospital or a doctor is necessary, a staff member will accompany your child and one of our staff will contact you as soon as possible. You will be expected to meet your child at the hospital and are responsible for any follow-up appointments that may be necessary. You and a physician must release your child in order to come back to camp. If your child becomes ill and a non-emergency visit to a doctor is needed, you will be contacted and asked to transport your child to the doctor.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

Medical charges for any illness or injury at camp are your responsibility. Bills will be sent to you for submission to your insurance carrier. Be sure the name of the carrier and your policy number appear on the medical form! This procedure will prevent paying for the coverage twice.

MEDICATION

ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE TURNED IN TO THE CAMP NURSE DURING THE CHECK- IN SCREENING.

This includes all vitamins, over the counter drugs, etc. **NO MEDICATION** will be accepted unless it is in a properly labeled container including:

1. The Camper's Name
2. The Prescription Number
3. The identification of the medication
4. The proper dosage
5. The date it was dispensed
6. Complete instruction for use
7. The doctor's name.

CAMPERS USING INHALERS MUST BRING 2 INHALERS WITH THEM.

Medications not picked up after camp will be held for two weeks and then discarded.

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

Please let the Camp Director know at least 2 weeks prior to arrival of any dietary restrictions your child may have. It is important to get this information to us so that we may inform the kitchen of any special menus that need to be prepared.

ALLERGIES

Please notify us if your child has any allergies, especially insects or food. Please make sure that all information is included and accurate on their health history form as well.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Prior to your arrival at camp you and your will be asked to sign a program code of conduct. We encourage you to sit down and have a conversation with your camper about the items outlined in the code of conduct. A camper may be asked to leave camp if his/her behavior interferes with the camping experience of others. No refund is made in this situation!

Confidentiality Agreement

All information contained within your child's file and all conversation is considered confidential. The program is restricted by law from releasing confidential information on any individual, agency, or school district without first obtaining permission from the parent to do so. Any names, addresses, phone numbers or other confidential information will only be used by YMCA Camp Wewa for marketing purposes.