



CAMP FOSTER YMCA

PARENT SURVIVAL KIT OVERNIGHT CAMP (2024)

WELCOME TO CAMP FOSTER!

This Parent Survival Kit is designed to help you prepare your child for camp and answer frequently asked questions. We encourage you to read and become familiar with this handbook. We also encourage you to share it with your camper, so they understand what is to be expected as they attend Camp Foster. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can ensure that your child’s camp experience is exceptional. Thank you for choosing Camp Foster YMCA. We look forward to seeing you on check-in day!

FAST FINDS

CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT INFORMATION

CHECK-IN

NEW THIS YEAR! The entrance to Camp will not open until 1:30PM.

*See page 14 for more details

CHECK-OUT

Half-Week Campers:
Wednesday 9:00-10:30 a.m.

Full Week Campers:
Saturday 9:00-10:30 a.m.

*See page 14 for more details

Please pay special attention to the following pages in this guide to help you and your camper prepare for camp.

- Camp Forms: Page 5
- Packing List: Page 6
- Care Package Policy: Page 8
- Cabin Mate Request Policy: Page 9
- Cell Phone Policy: Page 10

STAY CONNECTED ALL WEEK LONG

While your child is away at camp stay in touch with us! Throughout the week we will share updates and post the final slideshow of the week on multiple social media sites. You can find Camp Foster on the following social media sites:

- Facebook: Camp Foster YMCA
- Instagram: Campfostersparky
- Bunk1: See CampInTouch account for letter and code

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ABOUT CAMP FOSTER

MISSION & VALUES

The mission of the YMCA is... To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, body for all.

Camp Foster YMCA is committed to instilling values. Through the efforts of our staff, as well as our program curriculum, we promise to teach the following five core values to all children:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Caring
- Honesty
- Fairness

STAFF & SAFETY

We believe that your child's emotional and physical safety is a critical piece to their development. Our program is designed to provide that safe environment so children can grow, learn, and be the best possible version of themselves.

We offer excellent staff to camper ratios. We recruit counselors based on their values and proven abilities to work selflessly with children. All staff members must complete a rigorous application process that includes references, background and sex offender list checks at State (where allowed) and Federal levels. Prior to the summer camp season, our staff receive trainings that include, but are not limited to, safety, child abuse, bullying, harassment, discrimination, and mandated reporting. Our staff members also participate in extensive on-site training to ensure that they serve as positive, responsible, and caring role models for your child.

We are accredited by the American Camp Association—meaning that we meet or exceed more than 300 standards for health, safety, and program quality. The Health Director lives on-site to provide ongoing care for campers, and camp is located 10 minutes away from Lakes Regional Hospital.



THE CAMP FOSTER EXPERIENCE

OVERNIGHT CAMP PROGRAM

What My Child Can Expect At Camp Foster

Camp Foster YMCA is a 100+ year old program that allows kids to be kids! Camp is a place where campers can learn to canoe, climb, swim, ride horses, create art, make friends, and explore the great outdoors. In addition, camp is so much more than that! Camp Foster is a place where campers and counselors alike learn side by side, get out of their comfort zone, and build a respectful and caring community where each person can be themselves. It is this sense of being part of something bigger that translates to loyalty and fulfillment for both counselors and campers since 1912.

Our program is designed to encourage campers to take healthy, safe risks that challenge them, both mentally and physically, with the guidance of our skilled counselors. Our programming helps each child to gain confidence and learn to work as a team. Our program incorporates the natural surroundings and requires a positive attitude, age-appropriate independence, and teamwork.

Successful participation at Camp Foster means that each camper can

- Live with campers in a cabin that are of similar age and can safely and cooperatively take part in scheduled group activities, free time, and play time with their cabin mates and the camp community.
- Exhibit behavior that is in line with Camp Foster's five values of respect, responsibility, caring, honesty, and fairness and does not require more than the usual amount of individual attention.
- Be responsible for their personal hygiene, health, and safety or be able to ask for assistance from a counselor to assist.
- Walk moderate distances over uneven surfaces that are part of Camp Foster's natural surroundings.
- Understand and respond to group instructions.
- Join in on activities, such as: singing, games, campfires, family-style meals, and other fun stuff!
- Contribute to the Camp Foster community.

What Your Child Will Get Out Of Camp

Camp presents a tremendous opportunity for children to widen horizons, make new and lasting friends, and discover new strengths. At the heart of camp is our mission of “building healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.” We live out this mission through our values of respect, responsibility, caring, honesty, and fairness. United by our mission and values, our caring and nurturing camp staff will support your child in developing:

- ➔ Self-Respect and Self-Confidence
- ➔ Independence and Responsibility
- ➔ Friendships and Social Skills
- ➔ Problem solving skills
- ➔ Affinity for nature
- ➔ Teamwork and Community Living Skills

CAMP CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing Address

PO Box 296
Spirit Lake, IA 51360

Physical Address

1769 260th Avenue
Spirit Lake, IA 51360

Phone Number

712-336-3272

Fax Number

712-336-2026

General Email Address

info@campfosterymca.com

Camp Foster YMCA Professional Staff Team

Josh Carr | Executive Director | josh.carr@campfosterymca.com

Val Hinrickson | Office Director | valarie.hinrickson@campfosterymca.com

Ali Eisenman | Summer Camp Program Director | ali.eisenman@campfosterymca.com

Mallory Wagner | Community Programs Director | mallory.wagner@campfosterymca.com

Alex Brown | Property Manager | alex.brown@campfosterymca.com

PROJECT 130

Doesn't Every Child Deserve to Know the Joy of Camp?

Camp Foster sends over 80 kids to camp each year through our annual campaign efforts. Project 130 is a Camp Foster initiative to generate funds to send even **MORE** children to Camp Foster so they can experience all that camp has to offer. Together, we can invest in our greatest resource: our children. A gift to Project 130 will help provide scholarships to Camp Foster so that no families' financial situation prevents them from participating in our life changing camp.

As part of the YMCA, we build our program on healthy living, youth development, and social responsibility. As part of teaching social responsibility to Camp Foster campers we will talk about Project 130 with your camper. During their stay at camp, campers will have the opportunity to donate towards Project 130 with their store money if they choose. We do this by hosting special events (like pieing a counselor in the face) or selling special items (like bracelets or food items). 100% of these purchases at the camp trading post will go towards Project 130. This is not mandatory for campers to participate in. Please have a conversation with your camper about giving to Project 130 and how that looks for your family.

For more information about Project 130 or to donate online: www.campfosterymca.com/project-130

If needed, you can apply for financial aid here: <https://campfosterymca.com/apply-for-a-scholarship-2/>



BEFORE CAMP BEGINS

PAYMENTS/CANCELLATIONS

Payments

Payment for the full balance is due **MAY 15, 2024**.

CANCELLATION/TRANSFER POLICY

- **Registrations taken between August 2023 and December 2023,**
 - You will have a 14-day grace period from the date of your initial registration to make cancellations or changes without penalty.
 - After those 14 days, any cancellations or changes will result in the loss of the \$100 deposit.
- **All registrations taken in 2024,**
 - Any cancellations or changes requested will result in the loss of the \$100 deposit.
- Cancellations within 7 days of a session or no shows will result in a loss of all fees paid and charges will still apply.
- **Special Circumstances,**
 - If you know your camper is ill and you make the responsible decision to keep them home, simply provide us a doctor's note within 5 days of their scheduled session and we will be happy to refund your camp fees, minus the non-refundable deposit, specialty camp, and bus fees.
 - If your camper arrives at check in and is found to have a temperature of 100.4° or higher, they will be sent home and no refund will be issued.
 - If Camp Foster cancels your session, \$50 of the deposit is non-refundable.
- Payment of your camp fee is due in full by May 15, 2024. Any cancellations after this date will result in the loss of any specialty camp and bus fees that apply, in addition to the terms above.
- **All cancellations and session changes must be made in writing.** You must email changes and cancellations to info@campfosterymca.com. Phone calls, messages, and emails sent to any other address will not be accepted. You will receive a confirmation email once your request has been processed.
- *If your child is placed on a wait list, there is no initial charge made to the card on file. However, the camper may be pulled for an open spot at any time. If this occurs, the appropriate charge will be placed to the card on file. In order to avoid non-refundable charges, you need to remove your child from the wait list if they can no longer attend.

CAMP FORMS

BELOW IS A CHECKLIST OF FORMS THAT NEED TO BE COMPLETED ONLINE BY MAY 15. THESE FORMS HELP US PREPARE OUR STAFF FOR YOUR CAMPER'S ARRIVAL.

FORM CHECKLIST

- Health Form & Camper Information Form
- Authorized Grown-Ups Form
- Cabin Party/Care Package Form (optional)

[Forms can be found in your CAMPINTOUCH Account](#)

All forms should be filled out online.

If you need any assistance with forms, please contact our office at 712-336-3272

PACKING LIST

Please send old clothes that can get dirty. It is recommended that all personal items be marked. Camp Foster is not responsible for damaged or lost clothing items. **ITEMS TO PACK FOR CAMP INCLUDE:**

2 swimsuits (camp appropriate—no tie straps, please)	1 pair of shoes that can be worn in the lake*
6 pair of socks	<i>*water shoes, strap on sandals are ok for this</i>
Daily change of underwear	1 pair of tennis shoes or closed toe shoes (not Crocs)
1 pair of sandals or beach shoes	2 sweatshirts
3 pair of jeans or sweats	1 raincoat/poncho
4 pair of shorts	1 jacket
6 shirts/t-shirts (some dark)	Pillow and pillowcase
1 pair of pajamas	Soap
Baseball cap	Extra sheet or lightweight covering
Sleeping bag (teen campers may go on campouts)	Flashlight
4 bath towels and washcloths	Personal toiletry items
Laundry bag	Sunscreen
Toothbrush and toothpaste	Shower sandals
Stationery/envelopes or postcards/Stamps	Insect repellent
Camera (not a camera phone)	Book/Magazine for quiet times
Water Bottle	

- If you are registered for **Boots and Saddles**, bring extra jeans and a pair of boots with a sturdy heel. For your comfort, you may bring your own riding helmet, but one will be provided for all riders.
- If your camper has sensory needs (noise sensitivity) and utilizes equipment (such as noise cancelling headphones) to help them participate in busy environments, please send this equipment with them to camp.

For your child's security and safety of other campers, please DO NOT pack these items to bring to Camp Foster:

Junk food, soda pop, peanut products	Electronics	Cell Phones	Firearms
Tobacco/Vaping/Juuling products	Expensive jewelry	Squirt Guns	
Fireworks	Knives	Animals	Alcohol
Expensive clothes	Inappropriate clothes	Non-prescription drugs	

Campers wearing inappropriate clothing will be asked to change. Due to the activity level at camp, spaghetti strap tees are only allowed to be worn over swimsuits or sports bras. Please do not bring swimsuits with ties because of our high activity level.

Any camper discovered with tobacco/vaping/juuling products, alcohol, non-prescription drugs, firearms, or knives is subject to being sent home immediately. Local law enforcement authorities may be notified.

We DO NOT allow CELL PHONES at camp. Tablets, smartwatches, and other communicative electronics are also not allowed. If your camper is found to have a cell phone or other electronic device it will be taken to the office. All phones will be returned at check-out.

HEALTHCARE

Health Form/Camper Information Form

It is a standard of the American Camping Association that all campers have a current health history on file. It is critical that we have an annually updated record of a camper's past and present health status. **A new health form needs to be completed before your camper attends Camp Foster each summer.** Please fill out the health form as completely as possible as this helps our health staff become familiar with your child and serve their needs as best possible. Information from health forms will be shared confidentially with camp staff as needed.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE HEALTH FORM IN YOUR [CAMPINTOUCH ACCOUNT](#) BY MAY 15.

ALL FORMS ARE FILLED OUT ONLINE ONLY.

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Insurance Information

Health and safety are the primary concerns in all camp activities. Our camp is equipped with a health lodge and live-in Health Director. The Health Director can meet with parents as desired or necessary on opening days after check in. A medical clinic and hospital are within 10 miles of Camp. Since Camp Foster does not have a camper insurance policy, you must accept responsibility for any medical, surgical, or medication charges that may be incurred on your child's behalf. For that reason, it is extremely important for you to enter your insurance information on your camper's health form.

Mental Health

Though we have a nurse on site and our staff are trained to respond to medical emergencies (within the scope of a Physician's orders), our team is not trained to respond to mental health emergencies. We ask that families take the preventative approach to communicating with their campers and the team at camp if this is a potential concern for their camper. We want to set every individual up for the most successful camp experience possible.

Our procedures are as follows: If a child communicates that they are experiencing a mental health crisis, or if our staff determine that a camper is unable to communicate a crisis, we will attempt to contact the parent/guardian immediately. In the event that we cannot reach a parent/guardian, we will contact our local mental health hotlines to provide care. If it is determined that the camper is in immediate danger to themselves or others, we will contact local emergency services in addition to contacting their emergency contact. If a camper leaves camp due to a mental health emergency, they will not return to camp.

Medications (Over-the-Counter)

The Health Center is generally stocked with common over-the-counter medications, including, but not limited to, Tylenol, Benadryl, cough syrup, and topical ointments, as well as first aid supplies, which are available, if needed, at no charge. Claritin is not regularly stocked. Please refer to the Health Form if you have any questions about over-the-counter medications.

Medications and Health Needs

- **All medications should be sent in their original containers with the original pharmacy label.**
- Please send enough medication to last the week.
- Do not send over the counter medications. Over the counter medications CANNOT be kept in your child's cabin.
- Send only necessary vitamins/supplements. These also must be checked in with the Health Director.
- **Inhalers and Epi Pens can be kept with the child.**

All camper medications must be checked in to the camp Health Director at check in.
The Health Director will dispense all medications as needed.

Medical Notification Policy

Camp Foster YMCA will make every attempt to notify you before making a doctor's appointment or an emergency room visit for your child while they are in our care. All phone numbers given to us will be attempted in an effort to reach you. All minor medical needs will be cared for by the on-site Health Director without notification to parents. If a camper is sent home for a medical reason, they will not return to camp.

Child and Sexual Abuse Policy

The Camp Foster YMCA has well-developed policies regarding the protection of children while in our care. These policies have been developed with guidance from the YMCA of the USA and our risk management providers. Please be aware that all employees are subject to background checks, and no one, while employed by us, is allowed to perform private childcare services for members, campers, or program participants. We will contact parents if an abuse situation occurs on YMCA property or at a YMCA sponsored event. We encourage all parents to report any suspicious activity to a professional staff member. Our complete staff code of conduct and policies regarding this subject are available to anyone upon request.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CAMPER

Mail is very important to campers and staff alike. Feel free to bring it on Sunday so your camper has something from you on Monday. It is important to note that mail sent later than midnight on Wednesday does not arrive here before the camper leaves on Saturday. Do not worry if you do not receive mail; it means they are active and happy. You can send mail to the addresses below:

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US MAIL:

Camper's Name
 Cabin Name (if known)
 Camp Foster YMCA
 PO Box 296
 Spirit Lake, IA 51360

UPS/Courier Service:

Camper's Name
 Cabin Name (if known)
 Camp Foster YMCA
 1769 260th Ave.
 Spirit Lake, IA 51360

Care Package Policy

Receiving a package while at camp is a very fun experience. Campers are only allowed **FLAT PACKAGES**. We encourage parents to send magazines, coloring or activity books, playing cards, etc. These items are cool to use during FOB (rest hour). **We ask that you do not pack food as we have many campers with food allergies, and we try to keep our cabins food free to discourage pests.** Packages that are not flat will be returned to the parent/camper at check-out. Counselors will also be advised to remove packages that are full of food from the cabin. These will be returned at check-out. Thank you for following this policy. If you have questions, please contact our leadership staff.

Feel free to bring the care packages with you on Sunday and save the postage. If your child has forgotten an item that they will need (shoes, etc.), please mail it to camp with a note identifying who it is for and which cabin. Our staff will then deliver it to your camper.

Camp Foster YMCA Care Packages and Cabin Parties — A Variety of Options!

Parents may purchase pre-packaged care packages or cabin parties that Camp Foster puts together. Prices range from \$25-\$75. Parents may fill out an order form in their CampInTouch account prior to their camper's arrival at camp or fill one out at check-in.

Emailing & Photos

You may email your camper for a small fee through Bunk1 on our website: www.campfosterymca.com. Click the Bunk1 logo in the upper right corner and register using the Bunk1 code that is provided to you in your Camp In Touch account. For your camper's safety, please do not share this code. To view photos please log onto Bunk1 & select the appropriate folder. You can also purchase photos for a small fee.

This summer we will only be posting a limited number of photos on Monday and Wednesday. We will then upload a ton of photos on Friday night. We encourage you to sit down with your camper once they are home and go through the photos together to reflect on their camp experience. Hearing their stories while seeing the photos will be priceless!

Please contact us with questions at info@campfosterymca.com. We do not accept emails to campers at this address.

Birthdays

If your child is having a birthday while at camp, please let us know so we can make it extra special. Please contact the camp office to make arrangements if you would like to send something special. We have relationships with a few vendors in town that we can direct you to, in order to make this special day the best while at camp!

Phone Use

Our policy on phone calls has been made in the best interest of our campers. All phone communication by campers is under the guidance of professional staff. It has been our experience that phone calls to or from home make camper adjustment more difficult and actually create homesickness. Campers having a cell phone takes away from the full camp experience.

Professional staff are happy to discuss camper concerns with a parent at any time. **Campers are not allowed to have cell phones while at camp. If a camper is found with a cell phone, it will be confiscated and kept in the office until check-out. Tablets, smartwatches, and other communicative electronics are also not allowed.** If a call home is needed, we will work with you and your child and arrange a time to make this call with one of the members of our leadership team present. Please do not tell your camper they can call home whenever they need to as this can actually increase homesickness.

CABIN GROUP PLACEMENT

Building New Friendships and Skills

Each camper lives in a cabin with nine other campers of similar age and two counselors. Cabin life is designed to foster progression, just like our programs. Older campers move from our Hillside and Double cabins into age-appropriate Lakeside and Tent City cabins. Campers do many activities together as a cabin group which facilitates strong friendships, but they also enjoy the opportunity to interact with other campers throughout the day. The relationship between the staff and campers is a key to growth for your child. Staff make every effort to make cabin life a positive and growing experience.

Cabin Mate Requests

Meeting new people while on your own at camp is an invaluable experience, but we understand some children feel more comfortable with a friend. All Cabin Mate requests need to be turned in TWO weeks before your camper's stay at camp. Requests made after that time may not be met. Please do not assume that siblings will/will not be placed together. You can make a cabin mate request by filing out the form in your CampInTouch account or by emailing your request to info@campfosterymca.com.

- Children are placed into cabins with campers in which there are **no more than 18 months difference in age**.
- In order to facilitate unity, we strive to limit the number of campers from one city or school in each cabin. This way your child can have the opportunity to meet children from all over the country.
- We do allow campers to make **TWO** cabin mate requests. Campers who mutually request each other will have a better chance of being placed in a cabin together. **We do not guarantee cabin mate requests**, but we will make every effort to honor them. Campers who request each other must stay within the age range indicated above. We recommend that siblings do not be placed in the same cabin.
- **Cabin mate requests of groups over three will be split up in order to decrease the impact of cliques.** If you know this may be a concern, it is helpful to talk to the other parents and to include a note on suggested pairings weeks prior to their camp session.
- We will make our best effort to contact you prior to your campers session to discuss any cabin placement issues we have run into.

We really do want your child to see their buddies at camp and share this great experience, but we find it is best if they do not all live together. Your campers will have plenty of time to interact each day, even if they are not placed in the same cabin. Refunds will not be given if cabin mate requests are not honored.

SPECIAL NEEDS & ACCOMMODATIONS

Campers with Special Needs

To best serve your child at camp, we need to know if your child has extreme specific medical conditions (seizures, diabetes, allergies etc.) By knowing this information in advance, we can make the staff aware of this condition and be prepared to help your child if any emergency should arise.

Campers with special needs can have a successful camping experience if:

- 1) They can relate well in an environment of 10 youth, with adult supervision, and
- 2) Can function well at school without a full-time aide.

Parents are asked to notify camp as early as possible if your child:

1. Is diagnosed with any medical condition that is aggravated by physical activity, heat, or humidity.
2. Suffers from any life-threatening allergic reactions.
3. Has had any organ transplants.
4. Is diabetic.
5. Has special dietary needs—please notify camp at least three weeks in advance.

The more you share with us before camp, the better we can work together to make your child's transition to camp and time at camp as positive and rewarding as possible. Our camp director will talk with you regarding your child's specific needs to best determine the appropriate measures we need to take while your child is at camp.

Sensory Needs

Camp is fun, but at times it can be a fast-paced, high-energy environment. If your camper can become easily overstimulated, we recommend sending appropriate equipment with them to help them succeed. For example, some campers become overwhelmed by the loudness of the dining hall or campfire and may want to remove themselves from the environment. We want your camper to be able to participate in the fun of these atmospheres without becoming overwhelmed and we want them to have the tools they need to make this possible. Camp will have some equipment on hand (noise cancelling headphones), but if your camper has their own equipment, please send it with them.

Bedwetting

Our staff is trained to deal with bedwetting discreetly, working with your child one-on-one. Every effort will be made to prevent accidents and comfort the child. Our younger campers will be assigned to a cabin with a bathroom attached. We encourage parents to visit with the counselor about bedwetting at check in to increase this partnership for caring for your camper.

Homesickness

Homesickness is normal for a camper's first time away from home. Studies show that 83% of people experience some sort of homesickness while at camp. The staff makes every effort to help campers overcome homesickness by helping them learn to accept the natural feeling of missing family and friends. We keep our campers busy and try to interest them in new and fun activities and friends. Taking a youngster away from camp too soon may make it difficult for your child to overcome homesickness. Encouraging your camper to contact you on a cell phone actually increases homesickness and makes it more difficult for the child to adjust. The Camp Director will contact you if we need assistance in dealing with the most difficult cases.

Cell Phones/Electronics at Camp

At Camp Foster we have an unplugged policy which means any data or Wi-Fi connected device (cell phone, tablet, smartwatch, etc.) is not allowed at camp. Our goal is to have campers create REAL relationships and have ACTUAL conversations without the glow of a screen. Please do not send your camper with these devices. If your camper is found to

have one of these devices, it will be taken to the office and stored in the Camp Director's office. All devices will be returned at check-out. We encourage you to have a conversation pre-camp about why going unplugged for a week will be so awesome! If you have questions about this policy, please reach out to our camp directors.

Severe Weather

Changes in weather are a normal occurrence during the summer and Camp Foster YMCA has specific policies that are practiced and followed when the threat of and/or severe weather does occur. Please watch our Facebook and Instagram accounts for updates on weather and any program changes.

CAMP TRADING POST

Spending money at camp is put into a trading post/store account. [Store money should be deposited via your camper's CampInTouch account.](#) We can take trading post money at check-in if needed. You will be able to see how your camper is spending their money while at camp through the CampInTouch account.

The Trading Post is open daily. Campers may purchase t-shirts, hats, snacks, drinks, and other fun items. Every child spends differently, but \$40—\$60 is a good range. The Trading Post will be open at check-in and check-out so parents can assist their child with larger purchases, if needed.

ACCOUNT BALANCES AT THE END OF A SESSION

If your camper is registered for multiple sessions, their balance will transfer to the next session. At the end of their last camp session, if there is a balance of \$5 or less, this will not be returned and will be a donation to Project 130. Balances of \$5.01 or more will be returned to you, unless otherwise designated at check-in. As mentioned, you will have an opportunity at check-in to designate your camper's remaining store account balance to our staff appreciation fund. The staff appreciation fund is an extra way to say "thank you" to our staff. Store accounts are closed out on Friday evening and will not be accessible for purchases at check-out.

WHILE YOUR CHILD IS AT CAMP

SWIMMING ASSESSMENT

For the safety of our campers, all are required to be evaluated and classified according to swimming ability. These evaluations are done shortly after check-in in our pool. Campers are not allowed to swim in Lake Okoboji at any time.

The test standards are as follows:

- ➔ Swim one length of the pool (25 yards) using the front crawl and without resting, swim back half way using any stroke.
- ➔ Tread water for 90 seconds keeping their head above the water.

Campers who successfully complete these standards are eligible to swim in the deep end of the pool, use any camp watercraft, and take water-ski lessons, if registered. Campers who are not proficient can retest throughout the week but will not have full aquatic access until passing. Other options will be provided. Camp Foster serves many young campers during some sessions, and we make appropriate program adjustments to avoid scheduling water activities for young children who do not yet have the endurance to successfully complete the swimming standards.

LOST & FOUND

Please label all clothing and items with the first and last name of your child in permanent marker. We will make every attempt to identify and return all items at the end of each day and week. If you discover that your camper has left an article behind, please inform us and we will do our best to locate any missing items. If items are found, they will be returned once payment for the return has been secured. All items left behind are stored at camp for one week and then donated to a local charity.

Camp Foster YMCA is not responsible for any lost or damaged personal items. Campers are encouraged not to bring valuable items or clothing to camp.

Search & Seizure

For the safety of all campers, if there is cause to suspect a camper has illegal, stolen or prohibited items at camp, we reserve the right to search and seize any items of cause. If this happens, we will make every effort possible to contact parents/guardians.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The daily schedule allows for flexibility and theme development. This is what makes Foster magical! Overall, the schedule gives the necessary balance of structure and freedom to the staff and campers.

***This schedule is subject to change.*

- 7:15 Rise and Shine
- 7:15 Early Morning Clubs (optional) or personal grooming time
- 7:45 Flag Raising/Chapel Chat: a fun, non-denominational devotion time that focuses on character development.
- 8:15 Breakfast
- 9:00 Clean Cabin Time
- 9:45 Morning Instructionals
 - 7–12-year-old campers will travel as a cabin group to three preplanned program areas.
 - Teen campers get to choose the morning classes that fit their personal interests.
 - Boots & Saddles/Watersports campers will participate in their assigned program during this time as well.
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:30 Foster On Break (FOB) = Quiet Cabin Time
- 2:30 Free Time. Watersports may occur at this time.
- 4:30 Cabin Time Activities
- 5:30 Supper
- 6:30 Cabin Time Activities
- 7:15 Evening Program
- 8:45 Campfire Program

Lights out 30 minutes after campfire followed by cabin devotions

**Teens have special programs at least two nights a week after campfire.*

CAMPER EMOTIONAL NEEDS

Building Positive Relationships

A key philosophy of Camp Foster YMCA is the importance placed upon cabin group interaction. The relationships between campers and their counselors is one way we teach values and leadership skills. These friendships bring a sense of accomplishment to the campers increasing their sense of self-worth.

Camper Behavior Policy

Camp Foster's goal is for all children to experience the values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and fairness within our program. Camp Foster YMCA is committed to the physical and emotional safety of every camper. Through our staff leadership and program design, we will make every effort to prevent and manage incidents of inappropriate behavior in fair, reasonable, and consistent ways.

We expect our campers to exhibit behavior at camp that is consistent with our values. Inappropriate behavior will be discussed with the child when it occurs. Negative behavior affects more than just the camper involved in the misconduct; it affects all of those around them. Parents will be notified, at the camp director's discretion, when your child is involved in disruptive behavior, whether initiating or receiving, (before, during, or after camp) and your input will be vital in our decisions.

In the event that a camper brings drugs, alcohol, weapons, or explosive devices (including fireworks) to camp, parents will be contacted, and the camper is subject to being sent home immediately. Camp Foster YMCA also reserves the right to store camper's personal items that may be inappropriate for their stay. Items will be returned at the end of the week. If a camper is destructive to camp property (breaking windows, graffiti, etc.) the parent will be contacted for appropriate payment and/or dismissal from camp. Camp Foster YMCA reserves the right to dismiss any camper due to violence, bullying, or other destructive behavior. Registration fees will not be returned.

Camper Information Form

Please remember to fill out the Camper Information Form (and other forms) in your Camp In Touch account. By filling out these forms, you help us prepare for your camper and give them the BEST possible experience during their time here at Camp Foster.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Charter Bus Service

This special transportation option is offered on a limited basis, on a first come, first served registration. A MINIMUM of fifteen (15) campers per session is necessary to run the bus. We reserve the right to cancel the bussing completely due to low enrollment numbers. If this happens, you will be issued a credit of bus fees paid.

Any bus cancellations made by the camper family after May 15 will result in a complete loss of bus fees paid and unpaid charges will still apply and be due on the account. Any cancellations need to be made in writing by emailing info@campfosterymca.com.

All bus drivers have passed a DOT physical, passed a drug screen, passed a criminal background check, have a Class B CDL with passenger endorsement, and meet all DOT requirements. Additional staff is assigned to each bus to supervise in transit.

Sunday Pick Up

Omaha-Downtown YMCA @10am (Available session 5, 6, 7)

Sioux City -McDonalds parking lot on I-29/Singing Hills Blvd @ 12:15pm (Available session 5, 6, 7)

Kansas City – Visitation School @ 8:00 a.m. *SESSION 8 ONLY*

Saturday Drop Off

Omaha-Downtown YMCA @1:45pm (Available session 4, 5, 6)

Sioux City -McDonalds parking lot on I-29/Singing Hills Blvd @ 11:45am (Available session 4, 5, 6)

Kansas City – Visitation School @ 4:30 p.m. *SESSION 8 ONLY*

Bus Check-in Process:

- Campers will have their temperature taken before they board the bus. Campers found with a temperature above 100.4 will be asked to return home *(see page 7 for additional information)*.
- A screening questionnaire will take place before boarding the bus.
- Custodial care will not be transferred to camp before the camper has completed the two steps above.
- Medications will be turned into the bus monitor and then turned into the nurse upon arrival at Camp Foster.

CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT

Check-In at Camp Foster is on Sunday

NEW THIS YEAR! The entrance to Camp will not open until 1:30PM. If arriving early, we encourage you to explore the Okoboji area. If there is a line of vehicles on the camp road when you arrive, please leave access for emergency vehicles, and do not block the roadway. We will not start check-in until 2PM. Check-in ends at 4PM.

CHECK-IN PROCESS:

- Camp Foster staff will direct you to a parking spot. **Please leave luggage in your vehicle** and proceed to check-in at the dining hall. If you have any medications, please bring them with you.
- All campers will have their temperature taken and they will be asked a series of screening questions. Campers found with a temperature above 100.4° or elevated symptoms will be asked to leave, and no refund will be given.
- After the initial screening, campers can proceed to the Sheneberger Character Center basement where they can drop off care packages/mail, deposit any store money and/or order care packages, confirm who is picking up the camper, and learn their cabin assignment. The camp store is also open.
- You will then travel upstairs where medications can be turned in and you can discuss health concerns with the Camp Nurse. The camp cook will also be available if you have any dietary concerns to discuss.
- Once you have gone through all these stations you are done! You will head to the cabin your child has been assigned to. Camp Foster staff is available to help carry luggage and get you to the cabins.

Check-Out at Camp Foster is on Saturdays from 9AM-10:30AM

CHECK-OUT PROCESS:

- Camp Foster staff will direct you to a parking spot. You should proceed to check-out in front of the dining hall. Be sure to bring your photo ID.
- Written permission is needed for campers to leave with anyone other than the person who was authorized at check-in. Photo ID's are required for everyone at check out.
- Once you have checked your camper out, you will be given a "ticket" that you should give to the counselor at your camper's cabin. This lets the counselor know that you have gone through the check-out process and have been safely authorized to pick up your camper. The camp store is also open.
- Half-week campers are checked out on Wednesday between 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.