



CAMP FOSTER YMCA

PARENT SURVIVAL KIT

DAY CAMP (2025)

WELCOME TO CAMP!

Dear Parent,

Thank you for enrolling your child in Summer Day Camp at Camp Foster YMCA.

We are dedicated to providing your child a safe, positive, and memorable outdoor experience. This packet is designed to help your family prepare for day camp. It includes the link to all of the forms, information, and policies/procedures you need to ensure a wonderful experience for your child. Please feel free to contact us any time with questions about camp at 712-336-3272 or info@campfosterymca.com.

Keep the Flame Alive!



DROP-OFF/PICK-UP INFORMATION

DROP-OFF

Camper Drop-Off at CAMP
8:00AM-8:45AM

PICK-UP

Camper Pick-Up at CAMP
3:30PM-4:00PM
ID REQUIRED

FOR MORE DETAILS SEE
PAGE 5

IMPORTANT!

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

- Group Mate Request Policy: Pg. 3
- What to Bring: Pg. 4-5
- Healthcare Info: Pg. 8
- Directions: Pg. 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 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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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

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

Mallory Wagner | Overnight Camp Director | mallory.wagner@campfosterymca.com

Madeline Look | Day Camp and Community Programs Director | madeline.look@campfosterymca.com

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

MISSION & VALUES

The mission of the YMCA is... To put Christian principles into practice through programs that builds healthy spirit, mind, and 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

Safety is always our top priority at camp. We offer excellent staff to camper ratios so you can rest assured that your child will receive the best care and attention possible.

We recruit outstanding counselors on the basis of their values and proven abilities to work with children. Our programs, summer staff supervision, and trainings are led by full-time, year-round professionals. All staff members must complete a rigorous application process that includes reference, background, and sex offender list checks. Our staff members also participate in extensive 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.

DAY CAMP PROGRAM

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
- Teamwork and Community Skills
- Problem solving skills
- Affinity for nature

Group Mates

Children are placed in age-appropriate groups for the entire week. Each group is led by two trained staff members. Most of the activities are done within activity groups; however, children occasionally have opportunities to choose their own free choice activities. **If a child wishes to be in a group with ONE other friend (must be the same age), please fill out the Bunk Mate Request Form in your online account at least one week prior to their camp session.** Please note that children enrolled in specialty programs will be grouped with other children in the same specialty groups. **We reserve the right to place children in groups where we feel they will have the best experience possible.** Please encourage your child to make new friends during day camp.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00-8:45	Drop-Off At Camp
8:45	Tribe Time
9:30	Rotation 1
10:15	Rotation 2
11:00	Rotation 3 (M-W-F) (T-Th - All Camp Game)
11:45	Lunch (Explorers go home)
12:45	Swim Time
1:30	All Camp Game
2:30	Free Time
3:00	Campfire/Chapel
3:30-4:00	Pick-Up At Camp

The schedule will vary for children enrolled in specialty programs.

WEEKLY THEMES

Each week will have a different theme to put a creative twist on day camp! You will receive an email about a week before the start of the session regarding special events relating to the theme for the week.

Session 1: June 9-13	It's The Final Countdown!
Session 2: June 16-20	Under the Sea
Session 3: June 23-27	Fairytale Forest
Session 4: June 30-July 4	Red, White, and You!
Session 5: July 7-11	Secret Agent
Session 6: July 14-18	Medieval Times
Session 7: July 21-25	Treasure Hunters
Session 8: July 28-August 1	Wild West

CAMP LIFE

What to Wear

Because we feature an outdoor day camp, we will make use of the outdoors as much as possible. We suggest the following clothing and accessories:

- Gym shoes with socks (please bring only tie-up shoes)
- Shorts and a shirt (clothing will get dirty)
- Light jacket as necessary (raincoat or poncho on rainy days)

Please do not allow your child to wear clothing that is too revealing or contains messages that are inappropriate for a summer camp environment.

CAMP LIFE Continued

What to Bring

Campers need to bring these items to camp each day:

- *Sack lunch (refrigeration is not available)
- *Snack and/or add money to your Camp In Touch store account
- *Swimsuit and towel/water shoes (flip flops ok for pool area only)
- Water bottle
- Bug Spray
- Sunscreen
- A backpack or bag to carry all of their items

* EXPLORERS

Explorers 1/2-Day Campers do not need to bring a lunch or swimming gear to camp because they will depart before lunch and swimming.

What NOT To Bring

Please DO NOT bring cell phones, gum, toys, pets, fireworks, explosives, knives, weapons, electronics, good jewelry, expensive or irreplaceable items, drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes. Children who bring tobacco, alcohol, drugs, fireworks/explosives, or weapons will be immediately dismissed from camp without a refund. Other prohibited items will be sent home or held in the Camp Office until the end of the day.

Lunch

All campers (except Explorers 1/2-day campers) must bring a sack lunch each day. Refrigeration is not available at camp. Children will be active, so please send a snack for later in the day and/or fund their store account. Please write your child's name on their lunch.

Trading Post (Camp Store)

The Day Camp Trading Post is open to your camper daily. At the Day Camp Trading Post your camper can purchase snacks, drinks, and other small souvenirs. Day Campers will visit the Resident Camp Trading Post on Wednesdays during their time at the waterfront and that is when they will have the opportunity to purchase apparel and other larger merchandise. You can add money to your camper's store account in your [Camp In Touch account](#) online. We encourage you to talk with your camper about the money they have and how to best utilize it. Money can be added all at once or throughout the week, whatever works best for your family. Balances will transfer from week to week if your camper is enrolled in multiple sessions. Any balance of \$5 or less at the end of your camper's time with us will be donated to Project 130.

Care Packages

Parents may purchase pre-packaged care packages that Camp Foster puts together. Care package prices range from \$20-60. Parents should fill out the order form in their [Camp In Touch account](#) prior to the start of their camper's session.

CHECK-IN/OUT AT CAMP

Drop-off Procedures at Camp Foster YMCA

Please plan to arrive at camp between 8:00AM-8:45AM each day. Please do not arrive earlier as there will not be staff available to assist you. Drive slowly to the Day Camp Area where staff members will be waiting to greet you. Please remain in your car at all times.

Pick-up Procedures at Camp Foster YMCA

Please plan to arrive at camp at **3:30PM-4:00 PM** each day. Please arrive on time as there will not be staff available to stay later with your child. Please follow the same procedures as drop-off. Please remain in your car – when you reach the front of the line, a staff member will bring your child to you. For the safety of all children, in order to pick up your child, you must either be the child's parent/guardian or a person authorized to pick up the child on the Authorized Grown-ups Form in your [Camp In Touch account](#). No child will be released until photo identification is presented and the child is signed out with an authorized staff member. **Explorers depart at lunch time. **

Please call the Camp Office (712-336-3272) if your child will be absent from day camp. If your child is absent from camp on any day, and you have not notified us of the absence, we will call you to verify that they are not in attendance.

Communication

We will be using the Remind app for faster and more effective communication. The week before your camper's session, you will receive an email with information for the upcoming week. It will also contain a link and class code you will need to get signed up for that week's Remind app group. The Remind app will be used to communicate last minute information throughout the week. It is very important that you sign up for the app!

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. 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.*

PAYMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS

Payments

Payment for the full balance of camp is due by **May 15, 2025**.

CANCELLATION/TRANSFER POLICY

- **NEW! For all registrations, unless registration takes place less than 14 days from the date of a session,**
 - 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.
- **NEW! Cancellations within 14 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, or other symptoms of illness, 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, 2025. 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. An email of enrollment will be sent to the email on file. If this occurs, the appropriate charge will be placed to the card on file. The above policy will apply to any new registrations. In order to avoid non-refundable charges, you need to remove your child from the wait list if they can no longer attend. **You can remove your child from the wait list by emailing that request to info@campfosterymca.com.**

PROJECT 130

PROJECT 130: Doesn't Every Child Deserve to Know the Joy of Camp?

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. All week long at Camp Foster, kids learn the value of giving to others. We all have a role to play. No gift is too small. Giving back to others and our mission of putting Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all is what Camp Foster is all about. There's only one question left to ask: ARE YOU IN?

Donate online at: www.campfosterymca.com/project-130

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

POLICIES / PROCEDURES

Child and Sexual Abuse Policy

The Camp Foster YMCA Association 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. 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.

Swimming

All campers (except Explorers 1/2-day campers) will have pool swim time throughout the week (swimming is prohibited in the lake). Lifeguards are always on duty and counselors swim with campers to ensure their safety. If you prefer for your child to swim with a lifejacket, please send one from home with them to camp.

For the safety of our campers, all are required to be evaluated and classified according to swimming ability. These evaluations are done on Monday 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 ears above the water.

Campers who successfully complete these standards are eligible to swim in the deep end of the pool. Campers who are not proficient can retest throughout the week but will not have full aquatic access. Other options will be provided.

Severe Weather

Camp Foster YMCA has specific policies that are followed when the threat of and/or when severe weather occurs. We have two concrete storm shelters which provide plenty of safe space for campers in the event of severe weather. To keep parents up to date when storm procedures are in place, we will send out text messages and messages on our camp Facebook page.

Search & Seizure

For the safety of all campers, we reserve the right to search and seize any items that are illegal or prohibited at camp.

HEALTHCARE

Health / Confidential Information Form

The Health/Confidential Information Form is required for your child to attend day camp. The form enables us to best meet the needs and interests of your child, so please be honest and thorough. Please note that **you must submit a NEW form each summer your child attends day camp.** The form should be updated with any current medical conditions. [Please complete the health form in your Camp In Touch account by May 15.](#)

Parents/guardians will be notified of an accident/injury/illness of their child if the situation requires significant medical attention, such as a possible sprain/strain/fracture/broken bone/concussion/need for stitches, a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more, loss of consciousness, or the need to visit a doctor. If a camper is sent home for a medical reason, they will not return to camp.

There is a registered nurse on duty in our Health Center and camp staff are trained in emergency procedures and certified in First Aid and CPR.

Medications

During check-in, please bring all medications (prescription and over-the-counter) for the entire week. The medications must be given in their original containers to the day camp staff, who will secure them and dispense them as prescribed. Children may keep rescue inhalers and Epi-Pens with them. The Health Center is stocked with common over-the-counter medications and first aid supplies, which are available, if needed, at no charge.

Health Insurance

Camp Foster YMCA does not provide accident/health insurance. Medical bills incurred at camp are the responsibility of the child's parent/guardian. You and your insurance company will be billed directly for any medical bills.

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. 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.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

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. We expect our campers to exhibit behavior while at camp that is consistent with our values. Inappropriate behavior will be discussed with the child when it occurs. Parents will be notified if your child is involved in disruptive behavior. Our camp directors will work with parents to come to the best solution for campers, families, and our camp community.

In the event that a camper brings drugs, alcohol, weapons, or explosive devices (including fireworks) to camp, parents will be contacted immediately to dismiss the camper. Camp Foster YMCA also reserves the right to store camper’s personal items that may be inappropriate for their time at camp. Items will be returned at the end of the day. 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.

Homesickness

Homesickness can be a common reaction to a new setting. Our trained staff will make every effort to help campers overcome homesickness. We want to partner with you to help kids get through this important growth opportunity.

1. Arrange practice times away from home and without you, such as an overnight with a friend or relative.
2. Discuss with your child what camp will be like—and role play anticipated situations, like making new friends.
3. Do not tell you child that you will “rescue” them if they do not like camp—just reassure them that they will be fine.
4. Arrange for your child to attend camp with a friend.

BUSSING

BUS SCHEDULE – AVAILABLE ONLY SESSION 4 ONLY - \$20 FEE

Spencer YMCA (southwest bus stop lane)

Pick-Up	Drop-Off
7:45AM	4:15PM

Bus Check-in/out

If you would like to sign-up for Camp Foster bussing, please visit your [Camp In Touch account](#) to sign-up. Please be sure to drop-off and pick-up your child from your bus stop location on time. The buses are not permitted to stay longer for late children. **If your child will not be riding the bus on a certain day, please notify the camp by sending an email to info@campfosterymca.com or delivering a handwritten note to the camp office prior to the day of the transportation change; the change needs to be in writing.** If the bus does not arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled time, please call the Camp Office – we should be able to tell you the approximate arrival time. Parents/guardians are responsible for children before pick-up and after drop-off. If your child will be walking to/from the bus stop, we **MUST** have a written permission slip signed by the parent/guardian.

Bus Rules

If your child will be using bus transportation, please discuss these rules with them:

1. Campers should follow the directions of the day camp staff at all times.
2. Campers should remain seated while bus is moving.
3. Campers should keep their hands to themselves.
4. Mischievous behavior will not be tolerated.

Special Notes about Bus Transportation

- ➔ Children enrolled in the Explorers ½ day camp may use bus transportation in the morning, but there is no noon time bus transportation. They must be picked-up at Camp Foster every day.
- ➔ Please notify the Day Camp Director in advance if your child will be transported to/from a YMCA childcare program at the bus stop.

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP

Camp Foster YMCA is located along county road M-56 on the east side of East Lake Okoboji.

From Spirit Lake

1. Proceed 1/5 of a mile east of Spirit Lake on Iowa Highway 9 and 71
2. Turn East onto County Road M-56
3. Camp is four miles South on M-56

From Milford

1. Proceed to the stoplight on 13th Street at St. Joseph Catholic Church
2. Turn East onto County Road A-34 (proceed 4 miles)
3. Turn North only County Road M-56
4. Camp is four miles North on M-56