



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

2016 OVERNIGHT PARENT HANDBOOK

YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities Mission

The Y's mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

Camp St. Croix Mission

Camp St. Croix builds community and teaches respect for self, others and nature through summer camp, outdoor education and retreats.

Open House

Join us for a new and prospective parent open house on Sunday, June 5th, from 11am to 2pm at Camp. We'll have brats and veggie burgers on the grill between 11am and 1pm. It's a great chance to tour camp, meet summer staff, and get all your questions answered. It's free and there's no need to register.



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Contact Information

YMCA Customer Service Center. 612-822-2267. Call them about registration, payments, financial assistance, cancellations, etc...

Camp St. Croix Office. 651-436-8428. Call here for general info about programs, logistics, transportation, etc...

John Bussey, Program Director. 612-465-0566. Call him if you have specific questions about programs, concerns about a camper, etc...

This Document

This document undergoes occasional changes. You can always find the most up to date version at campstcroix.org/forms_publications/



Registration and Forms

Registration

Registration can be completed online at campstcroix.org, by calling the YMCA Customer Service Center at 612-822-2267, or by downloading a registration form from campstcroix.org.

Camp will send you a confirmation within three weeks of receiving your registration and deposit.

The balance for your session is due May 1, 2015 unless you have a pre-approved payment plan established with the Customer Service Center.

Changes and Cancellations

Call the Customer Service Center if you must change or cancel your registration to camp and they can walk you through the process.

We charge \$25 for any change of session.

Cancellations made one month or less before your camp session start date are non-refundable.

Cancellations made more than one month prior to your session's first day will result in a loss of your deposit, but you'll get the rest of your money back.

We occasionally make exceptions for medical issues with a doctor's note, so call and ask if that is the case.

Forms

All forms are available at campstcroix.org, under the 'forms and publications' tab.

A *Camper Personal History* must be completed and physical brought in person on the first day of your camper's session; it may not be submitted prior.

The *Medication Release Form* must be submitted if you are sending medications, prescription or non-prescription, with your camper to camp.

The *Camp Store Form* may be submitted if you would like your camper to be able to shop at the camp store.



First and Last Day

Transportation

St. Croix Overnight Camp does not provide transport to and from camp; you are responsible for getting your child to and from camp on the first and last days of camp.

Pro Parent Tip

Don't arrive before 1pm on drop-off day, we will ask you to wait or return with your camper at 1:00pm. 2:30pm is when the lines are shortest and you get to meet all of your camper's cabin-mates.

Definitely don't forget your ID on pick-up day.

Directions

Camp St. Croix is located in Hudson, Wisconsin, just two miles south of Interstate 94 off of Exit #2.

From Interstate 94 head south at exit #2, Carmichael Road. St. Croix is on the west side of the road, just after Coulee Road and across the street from Rivercrest Elementary.

Drop-Off

Please arrive at camp between 1:00pm and 3:00pm to drop-off your camper.

Don't forget to bring your forms: Camper Personal History, Medication Release Form (if you are sending medications with your camper), and the Camp Store Form (if you would like your camper to be able to shop in the camp store).

Please call us if you will be arriving late.

Pick-up

Please pick up your camper between 1:00 and 3:00pm on the day their session ends. If you arrive before 1:00pm you will be asked to wait until or return at 1:00pm.

Early pick-up is at 8:00am. If you absolutely must pick up your camper early you can arrange to do it at that time by contacting the program director.

Campers can only be picked up by someone listed on their Camper Personal History and carrying their photo ID.

Pro Parent Tip

Print and complete your Camper Personal History, Medication Release Form, and Camp Store Form before you head to Camp, that way you won't have to fill them out when you arrive.

Summer Samplers and Boots and Saddles.

Summer Samplers and Boots and Saddles sessions are slightly unique.

Sunday-Tuesday Summer Sampler pick-up is at precisely 3:00pm and Wednesday-Friday Summer Sampler drop off is at precisely 1:00pm. This arrangement gives us more quality hours with the kids at camp.

Boots and Saddles campers perform in a horse show at 2:00pm five minutes



Life at Camp

Cabins. Campers spend their session with two counselors and a group of other campers in a cabin group. Our counselors are well trained and love their jobs (they're not in it for the money, we assure you).

Our cabins include rustic outposts, 'villages' of clustered cottages, and independent cabins. Campers are assigned to their cabin based on age and gender.

Pro Parent Tip

Don't be alarmed if you get a call from St. Croix while your camper is at Camp. Camp likes to get parent input on even minor health, homesickness, and behavioral issues. It's a low bar to call home.

Cabin Activities. Cabin groups do a lot together; they paddle, sail, climb, play sports, make art, geocache, swim, play music. It's during these activities that the strongest relationships, those with cabin-mates, are formed.

Units. It's also common for the cabins of our various units (pioneers, trailblazers, climbers, sailors, etc...) to spend time together playing games, singing songs, and roasting marshmallows around camp fires.

Camper's Choice. Each camper also gets to follow their own passion; on the day they arrive at camp your camper will be able to choose how they want to spend their mornings by signing up for their 'camper's choice' program. Wilderness survival, music and theater, adventure sports, and nature are just a few of the options.

Food. St. Croix campers eat very well; our kitchen takes great pride in providing a tasty, well-balanced diet. If your camper has dietary restrictions or allergies please note them on their Camper Personal History.

Health and Safety. St. Croix campers are well looked after. Our first aid and lifesaving certified counselors are supported by our health professional (an RN) and supervised by our consulting physician. We are two miles from the Hudson Hospital for emergency care.

We will treat bumps, bruises, and scrapes and be in touch with you if anything else comes up. WE always call home if an injury or illness impedes a camper's enjoyment of camp.

Communication. Campers may not have cell phones; the ability to contact home tends to feed feelings of homesickness and inhibits cabin integration. If you would like to be in contact with your camper you may send a care package (no food as it can bring unwanted furry guests to the cabins). Mail your care package to:

Camper Name and Session Start Date
c/o YMCA Camp St. Croix
532 County Road F
Hudson, WI 54016.

Homesickness. For many campers, a week away at St. Croix will be the longest time they've ever been away from home. The challenge can be significant for both kids and their parents. St. Croix counselors and instructors are very experienced in coaching campers through their experience and we believe that overcoming the challenge of homesickness can be a hugely positive experience.

Pro Parent Tip

Don't send your camper with a cell phone or other electronics. Much of camp's value is that it forces young people to enjoy the natural world and to make new face to face friends. Both of these are impeded by cell phones.



Notices

Diversity and Inclusion

It is the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities' vision to serve relentlessly with our community until all can thrive in each stage of life. At Camp St. Croix we make sure that all really does mean all; we gladly welcome campers of all backgrounds, walks of life, and genders. We cherish diversity and want to make sure all feel enthusiastically at home at Camp St. Croix.

Please contact us if you have perspective on your camper that may help us support your camper better while they are at camp (e.g. what your transgender camper needs to feel at home).

Camper Behavior

Caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility are the YMCA's core values and the foundation

- We expect campers to take responsibility for their actions.
- We expect campers to respect themselves, one another, the environment, and camp equipment.
- We expect campers to be honest with one another and their counselors.
- We expect campers to care for themselves and one another.

St. Croix staff do a great job at coaching campers who behave inappropriately. If we find that we are unable to redirect your camper's behavior we may be in contact with you.

We reserve the right to send a camper home, without refund, if consistent misbehavior affects the experience of other campers.

Risks at Camp

Camp St. Croix is a member of the American Camp Association, meaning we are rigorously held to account on over 300 pages of standards regarding health and wellness, transportation safety, aquatic safety, and more. These standards guide us to use the best practices regarding ticks and other insects, sun exposure, hygiene, bullying prevention, staff medical training, and many more.

Nonetheless, like all other experiences in life camp is not risk-free. We simply cannot guarantee that no harm will befall a camper. Please refer to our waiver at [campstcroix.org/ forms_publications/](http://campstcroix.org/forms_publications/) if you would like to review our indemnification policies.



Packing: Traditional Camps

The following is a suggested packing list for a week of traditional camp; decrease for shorter stays and increase for longer ones.

Bring

- A sleeping bag and a twin sheet
- A pillow
- A pair of pajamas
- Two pairs of old tennis shoes or sandals with backstraps for daily wear (no flip flops)
- Two pairs of shorts
- Two pairs of long pants
- One or two long-sleeved shirts
- Three t-shirts
- Five pairs of underwear
- Five pairs of socks
- One or two sweatshirts
- Swimming suit (trunks for boys; one piece for girls)
- Rain jacket or poncho
- A bath towels and washcloths
- A beach Towel
- A hat
- Personal toiletries
- A flashlight (headlamps are great)
- A bandana
- Water bottle
- Insect repellent and sunscreen
- One or two ditty bags

Consider Bringing

- A camera (disposables are a good idea)
- Journal and pen
- Paper, envelopes and stamps for letters (pre-addressed post cards work well)
- Books and small games
- Medications (along with a Medication Release Form)

Do Not Bring

- Cell phones
- Music players or video games
- Food or drinks
- Fireworks
- Knives or weapons

Pro Parent Tip

Print and complete your Camper Personal History, Medication Release Form, and Camp Store Form before you head to Camp, that way you won't have to fill them out when you arrive.

Lost and Found

We display our lost and found as we accumulate it for campers to see and parents to peruse on pick-up day. If you return home and realize you have left something give us a call and we'll try to find it to tell you it's there. Unfortunately we can't send items home for individuals.



Packing: Adventure Camps and LDP

In general, what one would pack for St. Croix Traditional Camps isn't too different from what you'll want if you'll be hitting the trail on your camp session. Here are a few notes and a few additional suggested items

- On trail you want a compact, efficient sleeping bag, consider a mummy-style bag.
- Camp provides a basic sleeping pad for everyone but many campers like thermarest style pads (sailors, don't worry about this).
- Rain jackets matter a lot; bring one that is durable and breathable so you can comfortably be active in it.
- Down is lightweight and wool and synthetics are warm when wet; tend toward those fabrics and fills instead of cotton for clothing and sleeping bags.
- Good long underwear and wool hats are great for keeping you warm without much bulk.
- Pack in a cheap crushable duffel bag (like an Outdoor Products Basic Duffel) and bring a light backpack or messenger bag along.

Pro Parent Tip

Don't feel the need to go buy lots of new things if you already have gear that will do. With very few exceptions, high-end gear doesn't improve your camp experience. In fact, most St. Croix staff pride themselves on taking good care of old gear and using it until it's worn out.

Farming Camps

- Gardening gloves
- One or two extra t-shirts

Climbing Camps

- Lightweight stretchy pants
- Climbing shoes*
- Climbing harness*
- Climbing helmet*
- *Camp provides these for climbing campers, but some campers like to use their own.

Sailing Camps

- Gloves (neoprene or waterproof are great)
- Wind shirt (optional)

Horse Camps

- Sturdy riding boots
- Durable riding pants

Canoeing Camps

- Sturdy portaging boots
- Two or three pairs of wool socks

