

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents

Important Points:

- This is an educational program, an extension of the school.
- SAFETY of your child and everyone at camp is top priority.
- Students are under constant adult supervision.
- The camp staff is trained in first aid and CPR; quick access to 911 services is available.
- The school (not camp) is responsible for distributing medications to students.
- Life jackets are mandatory for all boaters. All instructors are trained in either Lifeguarding or American Red Cross Small Craft Safety.
- All classes are either outdoor education or environmental education based and aligned with the WA State EALR's .
- The cabins are heated. Restrooms and showers are inside each cabin.
- Camp can accommodate most special dietary requirements with advance notification.

Q. Is the camp wheelchair accessible?

A. Most of main camp is wheelchair accessible, including our dining hall, shower house, Program Lodge, and Environmental Center. We have a few handicap accessible cabins. Most trails around camp are gravel. Main camp does not have too many hills, but once you get out of main camp there are a lot of hills to get places.

Q. Will there be opportunities for recreation?

A. The program is designed to be both educational and fun, and to keep students occupied and interacting all the time. Every afternoon we offer an open Recreation time where students may move around camp with a buddy to some of the following program areas that may be open: Boating, Archery, Camp Crafts, Bouldering, Big Canoe, Reptiles, Touch Tanks, Ball

Courts, and seasonally the pool.

Q. What about medication and health care?

A. Safety is our highest priority at camp. School personnel are responsible for medication oversight and student health care. Many schools send a nurse to help with medication administration. All YMCA staff members have first aid, AED and CPR training. Staff members carry first aid kits, and first aid kits are located in key places throughout camp. The camp also maintains AED's, oxygen, and backboards. Each student will need an up-to-date medical form, to be kept on hand with the school personnel. All student medication will be kept by the Teachers or nurse. Should your child need special medical care, the

Q. What about allergies to peanuts and tree nuts?

A. Peanut and tree nut allergies are so common, and though our kitchen is not "peanut or tree nut free", during the school year we do not serve any peanut or tree nut products or anything that has those items in them.

Q. Where is the camp?

A. YMCA Camp Seymour is just 20 minutes west of Tacoma off Hwy 16. See our website for directions.

Q. My child is going to camp. What should I worry about?

A. Camp Seymour has been running programs since 1905, and the Outdoor and Environmental Education program has been running since 1988! Our program creates an atmosphere where children are given an opportunity to learn in a natural environment. Students learn more about themselves and their place in the world, about relating to each other and being part of a community. We hope that what they learn from our program will help them become more responsible citizens of our planet.

With these purposes in mind, physical and emotional safety is critical, and paramount to the success of the program. There should never be a time when a child is left unsupervised. YMCA staff members are carefully selected, have background checks, and are trained in all areas of camp operation. The program is highly successful, with excellent staff and a carefully developed curriculum. It is designed to be an extension of the classroom experience; much more than simply a fun field trip.

Q. Who supervises the students?

A. Each school sends teachers of the students, whose role is to oversee the entire program. The school also selects either parents, college students, high school leaders, or teachers themselves to be cabin students. The school is responsible for screening and training chaperones as well as supervising students during programs during the day. Chaperones are responsible for the students at night in cabins. Camp Seymour recommends that schools have two chaperones in each cabin. YMCA staff members teach classes, and facilitate the overall program but will not be staying in cabins with students.

Q. What about food allergies, or diet concerns?

A. Every student will have a completed medical form on file, and any medical or diet concerns should be noted on it, so that the teachers can inform the camp staff. The kitchen staff serve a healthy well-rounded menu with a fruit bar at each breakfast and a salad bar at lunch and dinner. Our kitchen staff are able to work with some allergies, but please inform the teachers a month in advance if your student had food allergies, so everyone can plan accordingly. With some allergies, we do request that campers bring supplemental food. We would be happy to store this in our kitchen. If your child has very special needs, please give us a call, and we will be happy to help!

Q. Can students wash clothes while at camp?

A. There are laundry facilities at the camp. They are available for "accident use," such as wet beds, or running out of dry clothes. Normally, students should not need to wash clothes while

staying at Camp.

Q. What about the rain?

A. We live in WA, and it rains here! We run our classes rain or shine, which is why we bold **"Appropriate Raingear"** on our packing list. That being said, safety is our first concern, and we want to be completely prepared for any weather. As long as students can be happy and safe outside, the program will include outdoor activities. In the event of extreme wind we will cancel some activities and monitor others keeping the camper's safety in mind at all times. All YMCA staff members are trained to monitor and recognize severe weather.

Q. What are the duties of a chaperone?

A. Chaperones supervise children during classes, evening activities, break times, and overnight in cabins. Most of the time chaperones will not be responsible for leading activities or teaching, their role during programs is to maintain safety and order. This responsibility is not to be taken lightly, keeping in mind student safety and the goals of the program.

Q. Do I have to pay to be a chaperone?

A. Camp charges per person for each student, adult, and faculty that comes for the program. Some schools choose to offset this cost for adults.

Q. Are students always supervised?

A. Yes. Always. Students travel with buddies and in groups always too.

Q. What is the program?

A. Each school (the teachers) chooses their own program schedule and activities. The classes offered in the Outdoor and Environmental Education program at YMCA Camp Seymour are

aligned with the WA State Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

Q. How do I learn more?

A. Interested in other programs at the camp? YMCA Camp Seymour offers programs for all kinds of groups, including churches, scout groups, families, and corporate groups. There are opportunities for your community, or volunteer service. Please check out the rest of our website for more information.

Q. What should I do to prepare my camper or myself if I am chaperoning?

A. If your child has never stayed away from home overnight, try it out before coming to camp with a family member or a friend. Staying overnight for the first time with 10 other classmates might be a little more challenging than staying at Grandma's house.

Get outside and walk! Camp Seymour is part of a nation-wide effort to fight childhood obesity; this effort is called, "Activate America." There is a lot of physical activity that happens at Camp, including walking up and down hills multiple times a day. We encourage participants to increase their activity level before coming to camp.

Q. What should I pack for my camper?

A. See the teacher's planning manual for a student packing list.

Q. I am a chaperone. What should I pack?

A. See the cabin leader's manual for a chaperone packing list.