



YWCA Cambridge

**SUMMER
DAY CAMP**

*at Shades Mills
Conservation Area*

Parent/Guardian Manual

Shade's Mills Conservation Area




450 Avenue Rd, Cambridge, ON N1R 5S4

(July 2 - August 27, 2025)

Camp Contacts



NOOR SABAH

Director of Summer Camp

-  **Camp Cell:** 226-220-6285
-  **Head Office:** 519-267-6444 ext. 228
-  camp@ywcacambridge.ca



KRISTINA LYMAN

Director of Child Care Services

-  **Head Office:** 519-267-6444 ext. 222
-  k.lyman@ywcacambridge.ca



KIM DECKER

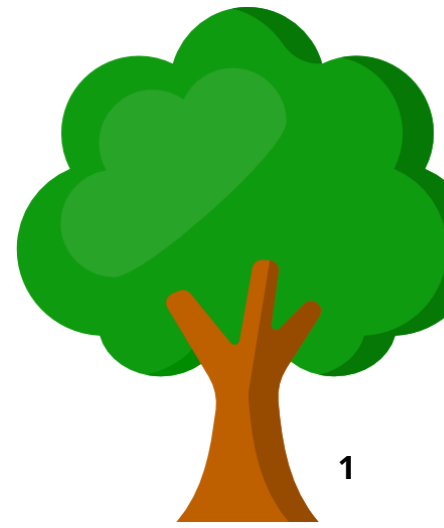
CEO

-  **Head Office:** 519-267-6444 ext. 231
-  k.decker@ywcacambridge.ca

KAREN MANNING

Behaviour and Inclusion Supervisor

-  **Head Office:** 519-267-6444 ext. 223
-  k.manning@ywcacambridge.ca



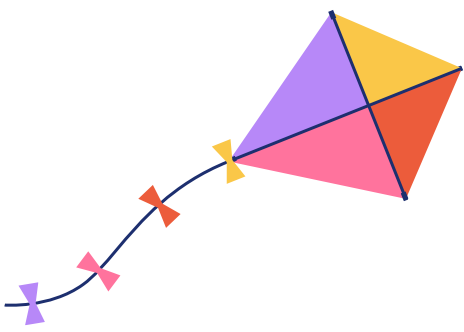


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Our Camp Program

2025 Summer Camp Programming Update

This year, at both of our indoor and outdoor summer camps, we will be offering specialty themed camps, embedded into our everyday camp programming!

Rather than individually-themed camps like Campers Cooking, Art Exploration or Mad Scientists, we will be incorporating elements of all of those themes into every week at camp. Campers will engage in lots of fun activities, exploring STEM education, learning new “survival” techniques, and developing new skills!

Campers will learn:

- Several art concepts in a diverse range of media and practices, such as drawing, painting, pastel, clay work, collage, and mixed media,
- About the plants and animals of woodlands, prairies, and wetlands by exploring a new habitat each day and engaging in lots of engaging projects, and
- Basic survival skills, like how to build a shelter, make a fire without a match and how to create a survival kit, as well as search and rescue techniques.
- Campers will look, listen, touch, and smell with many hands-on activities in this camp!
- At our outdoor camp located at Shade’s Mills Conservation Area, our camps will include boating, swimming and fishing each week. Schedules for these activities will be posted for families and provided before camp begins.
- In both our outdoor and indoor camps, some weeks will include exciting field trips – fees for these weeks will be reflective of the additional programming.

Camp will run from July 2 - August 27, and is offered to children aged 4-12 years old who are placed in groupings according to their age.

All of our camps focus on a diverse array of activities designed to help campers explore our environment and foster a connection to our natural world and with each other.

***Please note we are closed July 1 & August 4 for the Statutory Holidays.**

Camp Hours

DROP OFF	PICK UP
No Extended Care	
9:00 a.m.	4:00 p.m.
With Extended Care \$55 per 5-day week / \$44 per 4-day week / \$33 per 3-day week <i>Arranged during registration</i>	
7:30 a.m.	4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.



Arrival & Departure

- Parents/guardians will receive a gate pass via email on the Friday before their week of camp.
- This gate pass is to be kept and will give you access to the conservation area for the week.
- This pass is only to be used for pick up and drop off at our camp.
- Please obey the speed limits within Shade's Mills as speeding tickets will be issued.
- The Arrival and Departure area for camp is located at the **Toyota Nature Centre within Shade's Mills**. However, parents/guardians are not to enter the centre unless approved by the Camp Director.
- The area is well signed to help you (follow the signs).
- Parents are asked to allow sufficient time during transitions to ease their child into or out of camp and to allow for discussion with staff at those times.
- Our counsellors are on different shifts; therefore, you may or may not see your child's counsellor on a daily basis. Any information passed on to a counsellor at drop off or pick up time will be communicated to your child's counsellor.
- Drop off and Pick up will take place at the **Toyota Nature Centre**. A staff member will sign your child in and out of camp. ID will be required at pick up.
- All children must be signed in and out of camp by an adult with a member of staff. We will not release a child without authorization.
- Anyone under the age of 18 will not be authorized to pick up any child.

Absence or Late Arrival

Camp cell: 226-220-6285 | camp@ywcacambridge.ca

- Please notify the camp via phone (call or text) or email if your child will not be in attendance or late.
- If you know in advance that your child will be absent or late, please let us know which day/days they will not be attending camp.
- **If you are arriving late**, Please locate a YWCA staff member and they will help your child/children find their group.

Successful Campers and Parents

How to ensure a positive camp experience for your family

Prerequisite skills for all campers:

- Can open their own backpacks and lunch bag, including their lunch containers, or be comfortable asking for help from camp staff.
- Be able to independently use the washroom with minimal assistance. Will ask to go when they need to go and be comfortable asking for help if they need it. Will let a camp staff member know if they had an accident and need help.
- Be able to pack their own bags and keep track of their own belongings.
- Be able to ask for what they need. For example:
 - Help with filling water bottle.
 - Changing in the washroom or the tents.
 - If they are not feeling well, they are able to inform staff.
 - If they feel left out or are being bullied, they are able to inform camp staff.

Prerequisite skills for parents:

- Label, label, label! All belongings should be clearly labeled with your child's name
- Be proactive by practising the skills mentioned in the successful campers requisite skills section – practise opening lunch containers, applying sunscreen, packing belongings, and asking for help, etc.
- Practise with your child to help them state their needs so they can ask for help if they need it.
- Ask about your child's day every day – talk to them about their friends and how their day at camp went. If you suspect your child felt left out or excluded in any way, please bring it to camp staff's attention right away. We want to fix any issues as soon as we can!

Behaviour Guidelines

- Our staff respects the children and expects their respect in return.
- It is the goal of the YWCA camp staff to promote friendly, constructive, respectful relationships between children, and between the children and the staff. The techniques of child guidance are used to support this objective, including the use of positive reinforcement.
- Some techniques that counsellors use regularly include re-direction, positive statements, and establishing limits, giving ample warning prior to transitions, logical and natural consequences, modeling appropriate ways of interacting and providing choices.
- If you have questions or concerns regarding behaviour management, be sure to speak to the Camp Director and / or Behaviour and Inclusion Supervisor.
- Consistency is a valuable tool when dealing with behaviour issues. If you are handling certain behaviours at home, we would like to discuss the techniques you are using in order to give your child a consistent approach.



Camp Readiness & Behaviour

In order to support the success and safety of all campers, it is important that they are “Camp Ready.” Individuals who are not demonstrating that they are “Camp Ready” may be withdrawn from the program at the sole discretion of the YWCA management staff. The following criteria have been developed:

- Camper is able to take direction and instruction from a staff person.
- Camper is comfortable in and able to interact in a group environment.
- Camper is able to participate in the camp program, including remaining with their group at all times.
- Camper is able to participate in camp programming without risking their personal safety or that of others.
- Camper is able to attend school successfully.
- Camper is able to follow camp safety protocols is aware of potential dangers / hazards.

When a child has started Camp and is not meeting the above following criteria, we will take the following steps:

1. Staff directs the child to more appropriate behaviour.
2. The staff member will document the situation.
3. The child will be reminded of behaviour guidelines / rules and discussion will take place.
4. The situation will be further discussed with the Camp Director and Camp Assistant Director. After the discussion, a plan will be created and implemented Immediately.
5. If the behaviour persists, the parents / guardians will be notified of the challenging behaviour.
6. If following the above steps and the problem persists, the camp Management team will schedule a follow-up discussion with the parents/guardians.
7. If the problem continues after following the steps above and a child continues to disrupt the program, a meeting will be set up with the parents/guardians, Camp Director, Behaviour and Inclusion Supervisor and Director of Child Care Services to develop a solution.
8. If the problem persists after all above actions have been taken, the Director of Child Care Services will then consult the CEO of YWCA Cambridge to discuss a plan of action.

NOTE: If the child's camp spot is subsidized by the Waterloo Region, then the Region will also be notified of the situation.

Staff Qualifications & Training

The following are areas in which staff members are trained:

- Standard First Aid with CPR Training
- High Five – Principles of Healthy Child Development
- Inclusion Facilitation
- Behaviour Management
- Fire Safety
- Waterfront Safety Training
- Missing Child and Other Emergency Procedures
- Vulnerable Criminal Record Check (staff older than 18 years of age)
- Health and safety procedures
- Hands-on training with camp leaders during the first week

Food at Camp (Lunches & Snacks)

- Our summer camp is environment friendly. We ask that campers come with reusable containers or items that can be recycled. Containers should be labeled with the child's first and last name.
- Children should come to camp with a minimum of four snacks and a lunch. If a child is staying for extended hours, please include extra snacks for those times. You know your child best – if they are a big eater, please provide enough food for the entire day.
- Please do not pack siblings' lunches together as they may not be together at lunch time.
- We are a NUT AWARE camp. Do not pack any food containing nuts. This includes anything made in a facility that handles nut products. For example, Nutella and granola bars which may contain nuts.
- Should your child be allergic to certain foods, please indicate this on the registration form and keep the YWCA camp staff up to date of any changes.
- Make sure to pack a good quality refillable water bottle.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND GUM WITH YOUR CHILD!

What to Bring to Camp

- Backpack with lunch and many snacks (Please keep in mind that your child will be active and outside all day)
- Refillable water bottle
- Several pairs of extra clothing (sweater, extra pants/shorts, extra shirt, extra socks etc.)
- Running shoes or athletic sandals with straps are a must at camp (flip flops, crocs and ballerina shoes can be dangerous).
- Hats
- Rain coat and rain boots
- Bug spray
- Lip balm
- Sunscreen
- Bathing suit with long sleeves

Swim shirt policy: All campers are required to wear a long sleeved bathing suit. If your child does not have a long sleeved bathing suit, then a t-shirt will be required to wear overtop, or they will NOT be allowed swim. Please be sure to pack extra shirts if your child will not be comfortable wearing a wet shirt for the rest of the day. Wearing a shirt helps to protect against sunburn and helps us to identify our campers in the water area. This rule is non-negotiable and applies to every camper – no exceptions! Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

PLEASE LABEL EACH ITEM WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME

What Not to Bring to Camp

- Cell Phones
- Hand held games
- Pokeman/Digimon cards
- Money or other valuables
- Water guns
- Knives or other weapons
- Matches or lighters

PLEASE NOTE THAT YWCA CAMBRIDGE IS NOT LIABLE FOR ANY LOST, DAMAGED OR STOLEN ITEMS

Swimming/Boating

- Children must bring a sun hat, beach towel, sunscreen and a t-shirt every day.
- **The EXTRA t-shirt is mandatory for swim time as all campers are required to wear t-shirts in the water. If a child is wearing a long sleeve swimsuit, they will not be required to wear a t-shirt overtop.**
- The long-sleeved bathing suit and/or t-shirt helps reduce sunburns and protects against the sun's rays.
- Children may also use water shoes during water activities.
- A child may bring their own life jacket.
- Their name MUST be on the life jacket and written in a waterproof marker.
- We have a certified lifeguard on staff.

If your child cannot swim, or cannot pass a swim test, they will be required to wear a lifejacket while swimming at all times. Parents/guardians need to bring a lifejacket for this child.

***GRCA WILL NOTIFY US IF THE WATER QUALITY IS NOT SUITABLE FOR SWIMMING**

Sun Safety



- Programs are planned to allow for low energy, quiet activities in shady areas during the hottest part of the day.
- To ensure maximum effectiveness, parents / guardians are asked to apply sunscreen in the morning before leaving their children at camp.
- Each child must bring their own sunscreen to apply before the afternoon program and after swimming. One bottle is required per child as they may not be with their sibling to share. Sunscreen bottles must be labeled with the child's name. If your child has misplaced or forgotten their sunscreen we do have extra at the camp.
- Counsellors will apply sunscreen to children 5 years and under.
- Anyone above the age of 6 years will apply their own sunscreen under the supervision of the counsellors.
- Children must wear sun hats at all times, when outdoors.
- **Children must wear a long-sleeved bathing suit or t-shirt while swimming (Mandatory).**

Photo Permission

Photographs are taken throughout your child's experience at camp. These photos can be used for various marketing and social media purposes. Please make sure you fully understand this section when providing us with the consent through your registration package submission.

Camp Fees

- Deposits made at the time of registration are nonrefundable. Any cancellations or session changes must be done prior to March 1, 2025 to be eligible for a refund. Any cancellations after **March 1, 2025** will require a medical note. If there are restrictions imposed by government agencies that prevent us from operating camp, refunds will be issued.
- All camp fees for July and August must be made in full by **May 16, 2025**.
- Payment plans are available for selection when registering your child through our Campbrain platform. If an additional payment plan is required, this will be treated on a case-by-case basis upon direct request to the Camp Director.
- Single day refunds will not be issued.
- Subsidized families through the Region of Waterloo should contact the Camp Director or coordinate fee payment and to customize a fee payment plan.
- Payment can be made by credit card / EFT via the Camp Brain Portal, cash in person at our Main Office (102 - 55 Dickson Street, Cambridge). Please schedule with the Camp Director for payments at the office.

NOTE: Please retain your receipts for tax purposes. These will be available through the Camp Brain portal. No refunds will be issued for any payments made after May 16, 2025.

Medication

If medication needs to be administered at camp, a parents/guardians must fill out the appropriate form, recording the dosage. All medication must be prescribed by a doctor and be in a labelled container from the pharmacy.

Please give any medication to the Camp Director or staff person so it can be locked away or placed in a staff members fanny pack. Do not leave medication in your child's backpack.

Suspected Child Abuse

The *Child and Family Service Act* of Ontario protects children and gives them the right to be understood, loved and respected within the framework of a caring family and community. All individuals who work or volunteer with children are obligated by law, through this Act, to report anything of an unusual or suspicious nature to Family and Children's Services. This may include, but is not limited to: marks on a child's body, signs of neglect (dirty body/clothing, extreme hunger), play that is violent or sexually explicit or any information shared by a child that would cause a staff person concern for the child's safety.

The procedure at YWCA Cambridge for reporting to Family and Children's Services is very straightforward:

1. The staff person with a concern talks to the child, apprises their Supervisor of that concern and the intention to make a call to Family and Children's Services (F&CS).
2. The staff member places the call to F&CS giving the information clearly and concisely.
3. The phone call and conversation with the child are documented by the staff person and that documentation is reviewed by the Supervisor.

Note: In order to ensure the safety of the child and maintain confidentiality for staff, parents/ guardians are NOT notified by YWCA Cambridge when a call is made to Family and Children's Services.

Inclement Weather

Camp will continue during inclement weather conditions. Proper clothing for such a day is essential (rain wear, sweaters, boots etc). Parents/ guardians will be called to pick up their child/ children in the event of severe weather warnings.

The following guidelines will be used by camp staff to determine length of time outside:

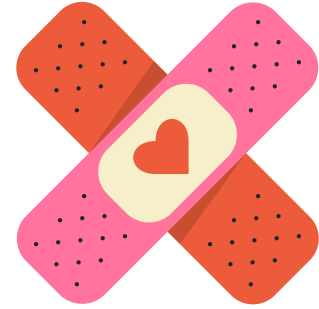
- Air quality- Smog alerts (reference guide in policy for further detail).
- UV index- if it goes into the extreme rate (11 or above)- reference UV chart.
- High Celsius Index

If there is a high UV index and/or high celsius index, we will do the following:

- Reduce active activities
- Keep children in shade
- Continue to take frequent water breaks

Lost & Found

- Please label all of your child's belongings
- All lost articles are collected daily and kept at camp.
- Please label everything to make identification easier (first and last name).
- Due to the high volume, lost items will only be kept for 2 weeks.
- Last day of camp: all remaining items will be donated.
- We do our best to ensure the campers have all of their belongings with them at the end of the day; however, it is not our responsibility to keep track of their items.



Health & Illness

If your child becomes ill while at camp, they will be isolated and a member of staff will call you at the numbers listed on the registration form to come and pick them up. The staff will make the decision to call you based on the best interest of your child and the health of the other children in the program. Please note that if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms, they will not be allowed to stay for the program:

- Undiagnosed rash
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- High fever
- Lethargy/ unable to participate in the program

Your child must stay at home and can not return to camp until they are 24 hours symptom free.

If your child has a minor accident while at the camp, the staff will administer basic First Aid, and inform you of the incident upon your arrival. Should the Camp Director feel your child would be better off at home, they will contact you to pick them up.

If your child has an injury deemed more serious by the Camp Director, your child may be transported immediately by ambulance or taxi to the hospital at your expense. You will be called and asked to meet us there.

It is YWCA Cambridge's policy to notify parent/guardian by phone when a child sustains a head injury.

The above procedures have been designed to keep parent/guardian informed and reduce concerns should unusual incidents occur.

Tips for Young Campers (4-6 Years)

- Toileting Tips To Be Ready For Summer Camp:
 - The children will be encouraged to use the bathroom before every transition at camp (going fishing, going to the beach, going hiking etc.). We suggest that you encourage your child to use the toilet during those times by setting them up for success at home (talk about it with them and let them know they should always try to use the washroom when their group is in the Nature Centre).
 - Please encourage your child to let their counsellor know when they need to use the washroom and practise asking at home. Remind them that they can ask to go at any time but try to ask before it's too late!
 - Children should be able to go to the toilet independently and must be able to wipe and clean themselves. Please practise this step at home so they feel more comfortable doing it while they are at camp. We can help if it is necessary, but staff are discouraged from entering the toilet with the children to maintain their privacy. Our washroom facilities have doors that prevent us from seeing if the children do go or not so please encourage your child to ask for help if they do not want to go in by themselves. We can stand and prop the door open a little, so they do not feel alone, and we are more than happy to do this if they ask.
 - Sometimes accidents will happen so please send several sets of extra clothes just in case!
- Counsellor will assist your young camper when they have asked for help or need additional support.
- Consider practising these skills at home before camp starts:
 - Applying sunscreen
 - Opening the lunch box and food containers
 - Change their own clothing i.e., take bathing suit on and off
 - Toileting routine
 - Asking for help if they need it and with a loud voice
- Encourage your camper to communicate/engage with their counsellor. This could include when they may need comfort, experience home sickness, have issues with the daily routine, or trouble with social interactions.

Bullying Awareness & Protocol

Understanding Bullying Behaviour

Kids bully for many reasons. Some bully because they feel insecure. Picking on someone who seems emotionally or physically weaker also might provide a feeling of being more important, popular, or in control. In other cases, kids bully because they simply don't know that it's not OK to pick on kids who are different because of size, looks, race, or religion.

Helping Kids Stop Bullying

Let your child know that bullying is not OK and can bring serious consequences at home, school, camp and in the community if it continues.

Try to understand the reasons behind your child's behaviour. In some cases, kids bully because they have trouble managing strong emotions like anger, frustration, or insecurity. In other cases, kids haven't learned cooperative ways to work out conflicts and understand differences.

Be Sure To:

- **Take bullying seriously.** Make sure your kids understand that you will not tolerate bullying at home or anywhere else. Set rules about bullying and stick to them. If you punish your child by taking away privileges, be sure it's meaningful. For example, if your child is bullying other kids via email, text messages, or a social networking site, stop phone or computer privileges for a period of time. If your child acts aggressively at home, with siblings or others, put a stop to it. Teach more appropriate (and nonviolent) ways to react, like walking away, taking deep breaths or doing a physical exercise like using a punching bag to calm their bodies.
- **Teach kids to treat others with respect and kindness.** Teach your child that it is wrong to ridicule differences like race, religion, appearance, special needs, gender, economic status. Try to instill a sense of empathy for those who are different. Consider getting involved together in a community group where your child can interact with kids who are different.
- **Learn about your child's social life.** Look for insight into what may be influencing your child's behaviour at school/camp (or wherever the bullying happens). Talk with parents / guardians of your child's friends and peers, teachers, counselors, the school principal and camp director. Do other kids bully? What about your child's friends? What kinds of pressures do the kids face at school/camp? Talk to your kids about those relationships and about the pressures to fit in. Get them involved in activities outside of school/camp so that they meet and develop friendships with other kids.

Bullying Awareness & Protocol Cont'd

- **Encourage good behaviour.** Positive reinforcement can be more powerful than negative discipline. Catch your kids being good. When they handle situations in positive ways, take notice and praise them for it.
- **Communicate with the camp.** If bullying is happening at camp, we encourage you to work with the directors and the Behaviour and Inclusion Supervisor to develop an action plan. If your child knows you will be made aware of their behaviour at camp, this can help to increase their accountability for bullying behaviour which will help promote more appropriate and kind choices.

Please ask about your child's day every night. Ask them about friendships, peer relationships and if they are feeling comfortable. If your child shares any concerns about feeling left out, not belonging, or being bullied, please report it to the camp directors immediately. If there are any concerns about your child's counsellor, please let us know as soon as possible, so we can address your concerns. Please let your child know that it is okay to talk about it and that it is not tattling. Our goal is to change any negative experience into a more positive one. We need to know any concerns immediately so we can rectify the situation. Concerns brought forth immediately will allow us to deal with them effectively and quickly so your child can enjoy the remainder of their time at summer camp.

***Please note that we have a zero-tolerance policy regarding bullying at YWCA Cambridge. There is a strict protocol (set out in the behaviour guidance policy) that will be followed by the Camp Director and Behaviour and Inclusion Supervisor. If the steps are not followed and no improvements are observed, then the final authority to remove the child from the camp is at the discretion of the Director of Child Care Services and with the CEO. ***

