



**YMCA of  
Simcoe/Muskoka**  
Camp Kitchikewana



# YMCA CAMP KITCHIKIEWANA

2024 FAMILY HANDBOOK

*Tower Code*

1. Only jump off the tower
2. No diving
3. No use of rescue equipment
4. Swim out of covered area immediately (jumping)





# WELCOME!

## Dear YMCA Camp Kitchikewana Families,

Welcome to the Family Handbook for the 2024 season at YMCA Camp Kitchikewana! **Thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Kitchikewana for your campers to experience this summer.** We have created this information package to help familiarize you with some of our important systems and procedures, and to try to answer as many questions as we can prior to your camper's time with us. Please read through it and let us know if you have any further questions that aren't addressed here. In addition, spend some time discussing some of this information with your camper! What to pack, what a typical day looks like, and generally having an idea of what to expect can really help build a camper's excitement for camp.

**We can't wait to have your camper on the shores of Beausoleil Island; thank you for entrusting us with the care of your camper.** We will be sending lots of communications prior to and during your camper's session, so please ensure the camp office has your most up to date email address and other contact information.

Please feel free to reach out if you require any further information!

This year, our camp office is part of the YMCA's Community Care team with expanded hours and support. For registration and general questions please contact:  
(705) 792-7822 | [camp.kitchikewana@sm.ymca.ca](mailto:camp.kitchikewana@sm.ymca.ca)

Take care,

**Dylan Lalande**  
**Director,**  
**YMCA Camp Kitchikewana**



# LOCATION

## Where is YMCA Camp Kitchikewana?

YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is located on Beausoleil Island, and is proud to be a part of Georgian Bay Islands National Park and Historic Site. Being situated on a National Park is an excellent way for your camper to connect with nature while at camp.

As YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is on Beausoleil Island, it is accessible by boat only. The closest town on mainland is Honey Harbour, ON, which is a 15 minute boat ride away from the island.

## Georgian Bay Islands National Park Fun Facts

- » GBINP has the largest diversity of reptiles & amphibians in Canada.
- » There are 4 priority species that require special protection, including the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake.
- » The park is located on a Transition Zone between biomes: the North end of the island is rocky Canadian Shield, and the South end of the Island (where we are) is made up of forested and sandy St. Lawrence Lowlands.
- » There have been artifacts found on Beausoleil Island dating back 7,000 years!





# OUR COMMITMENT

## **YMCA Camp Kitchikewana's Commitment**

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We believe in offering a safe, educational, and fun experience under the guidance of trained leadership. Through outdoor skills and activities, as well as a group living environment, we encourage campers to challenge themselves, to have fun, and to engage in a healthy lifestyle. We recognize camper's independence and celebrate their individuality. Here are a few of the ways that we commit to creating an incredible experience for your campers:

### **Code of Behaviour**

Everyone has the right to feel safe at YMCA Camp Kitchikewana. With this right comes the responsibility to respect all community members and to take pride in making camp an awesome place.

*This means that everyone is to be made welcome, regardless of:*

- » Race
- » Gender
- » Religion
- » Sexual Orientation
- » Social Status
- » Physical, Emotional & Mental Ability
- » Age

## **YMCA Core Values**

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**Kindness** - We are friendly, caring, and committed to cultivating relationships built on compassion.

**Integrity** - We are honest, trustworthy, and take responsibility for our decisions and actions.

**Inclusiveness** - We embrace diversity and strive to create places, programs, and experiences where everyone belongs.

**Respect** - We believe in each other - our strengths, perspectives, and passions.

**Optimism** - We approach things with an open mind, an emphasis on happiness, and are inspired by the potential of all people.

## **YMCA Camping Quality Eight**

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The Quality Eight were developed by YMCA Camping professionals to guide YMCA camps in their programs. YMCA Camp Kitchikewana strives to make the Quality Eight an integral part of every camper's experience.

1. YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is **FUN**
2. YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is **SAFE** socially, emotionally, and physically
3. YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is a place of **FRIENDSHIP**
4. YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is a place of **BELONGING**
5. YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is a place where campers **LEARN** and are **CHALLENGED**
6. YMCA Camp Kitchikewana treasures the **NATURAL WORLD**
7. YMCA Camp Kitchikewana meets personal **LIFE NEEDS**
8. YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is a **PLACE TO RETURN TO**

# STAY CONNECTED!

## **Getting in touch with your camper during camp**

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Every camper enjoys getting mail at camp! A positive letter from home can help alleviate any feelings of homesickness by reassuring your camper that everyone is happy at home.

A few tips and notes on sending letters:

1. Send your letter earlier than you send your camper! Mail takes up to a week to arrive at camp, so if you send it a few days early, your camper will have mail sooner once they arrive at camp.

### **Letters can be mailed to camp at:**

CAMPER NAME, CAMPER SESSION

PO Box 71

Honey Harbour, ON

P0E 1E0

2. Remember to send your camper with a way for them to write back! Some campers have never written a letter before, so a pre-addressed envelope with a stamp and some blank paper is best, as we do not provide these items to campers. We encourage campers to write home throughout the session.
3. If you get an unhappy letter from your child, try not to panic. Whatever made them unhappy has likely been resolved in the meantime by the camper's counsellors. If you have any concerns, please call us so that we can look into whatever the issue may be and ensure that it has been resolved.
4. If there are any circumstances that change while your camper is at camp that may upset them, please contact us directly and we can discuss the best way to inform your child. The camp phone is not for camper's use, though we will make exceptions in extenuating circumstances.
5. Please refrain from telling your camper that they can call home or leave early if they choose. We find that when campers hear either of these options, it almost always increases levels of homesickness. If you are at all concerned about your camper, please feel free to call camp. We look forward to working with you to ensure that your camper has the best possible experience.
6. Please do not send food. It risks exposing other campers to potential allergens, and can also cause issues with wildlife around camp. Campers receive a full, healthy diet at camp, including snacks. Care packages including magazines, cards, crossword puzzles, etc. are encouraged.

## **Bunk Notes**

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Campers will be able to receive electronic letters from home through a company called Bunk One. We print all of the letters each afternoon and they are delivered to campers in the evening. There is a fee associated with this service, as Bunk One is a 3rd party company. More information on this service will be provided in the spring!

# CAMP LIFE

## A Day in the Life!

### Typical Day Schedule

7:30 a.m.	Morning Dip
8:00 a.m.	Hopper
8:15 a.m.	Flag raising, breakfast
9:00 a.m.	Cabin Cleanup
9:45 a.m.	Cabin Choice Activity
10:45 a.m.	Section Season
12:00 p.m.	Hopper
12:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Rest Period
2:15 p.m.	Skill #1
3:15 p.m.	Snack
3:30 p.m.	Skill #2
4:30 p.m.	Awesome Time (free choice time)
5:30 p.m.	Hopper
5:45 p.m.	Dinner
7:15 p.m.	Evening Program
8:15 p.m.	Campfire & Evening Snack
8:45 p.m.	Waterbug & Juniors to cabins
9:00 p.m.	Intermediates to cabins
9:15 p.m.	Seniors to cabins
10:15 p.m.	All lights out, cabin lines quiet





# CAMP LIFE

## Skill Choices

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### Traditional Campers

Your camper will have the opportunity to choose, in order of preference, the skill options they would like to participate in for the two-week session. We aim to put campers in two of their top three skill choices.

**Skills choices are:** Swimming, Lifesaving, Kayaking, Canoeing, Sailing, Drama, Guitar, Arts & Crafts, Island Explorers, and Mountain Biking.

**Note:** Due to the size of our bikes, campers signing up for Mountain Biking should be at least 4'10" or 148 cm tall.

**Note:** Campers taking a skill at a high level such as Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross, or CANSail 3 and 4, will only have one skill selection. They will attend the one skill for both skill periods in order to allow for enough time to complete the level.

### Waterbug Campers

Waterbug campers will be introduced to some of the many different skill areas during program sessions and have a chance to become comfortable with the equipment and movements required for the skill areas they try out. Waterbug campers do not make skill choices, but can spend time at their favourite skill areas during awesome time..

### Sailing Camp

Sailing Camp participants receive three hours of sailing instruction daily. Please note that sailing participants will not participate in Kitchikewana Clubs. Weather permitting, Sailing Camp participants will take place in a sailing trip around the south end of Beausoleil Island.

### Swim Test

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Please note: all campers will complete a swim test at the start of each session. The test includes a deep water entry, treading water for one minute, and a 50 metre swim (any style, no time limit, without touching the bottom). Success of the swim test enables campers to swim without a life jacket during supervised times. Campers who do not complete the swim test must wear a life jacket while swimming, and may attempt the swim test again at any point during the camp session. All campers and staff must wear a life jacket at all times when in any boat.



# CAMP LIFE

## Outtrip

**All Traditional Campers will take part in an overnight camping trip during their time at camp.**

- » Waterbug campers will do a day trip to a nearby site on the island for a cookout lunch or dinner
- » Junior campers will do an overnight hiking trip to a campsite on the Island.
- » Intermediate campers will do an overnight canoe trip to McCrae Lake or to a campsite on the Island (will be further in distance than a Junior trip).
- » Senior campers will do a two night canoe trip to McCrae Lake and the Musquash River.
- » Leadership participants will take part in a longer 4-5 day canoe trip to Temagami, The French River, or another wilderness area.
- » All trips are weather dependent and could be cancelled in the case of inclement weather.
- » All Junior, Intermediate, and Senior trips are within a 20 minute motor boat ride in case of emergency.
- » Each overnight canoe trip will have a certified ORCKA Canoe Trip Leader who carries their Wilderness First Aid certification.
- » All trip staff have cell phone or GPS communication methods with camp at all times.
- » Sailing campers will have the option of participating in out-trip with their cabin. All sailing campers will attend a one night sailing out-trip.





# CAMP LIFE

## **Cabin Information**

- » Every cabin consists of 8-10 campers within 2 years (maximum) of age.
- » Each cabin is supervised by two or more awesome counsellors.

## **Cabin-Mate Request**

- » YMCA Camp Kitchikewana will make every effort to accommodate ONE mutual cabin request per participant. Cabin requests should also not be greater than a one year age gap i.e. a 9 year old can only request an 8 or 10 year old. In order to promote positive cabin cohesion, YMCA Camp Kitchikewana is unable to honour multiple cabin requests.
- » In an effort to make Camp Kitchikewana an awesome place for everyone, we ask for your help in preventing cliques. If your child is attending with a friend, please encourage them both to take some time to make new friends and share in the experience of living co-operatively with their peers.

## **All Gender Accommodations**

- » Upon registration for Session 4, campers will have the choice to sign up for an all gender or single gender cabin. It is important to us that all our campers are able to choose an accommodation that makes them feel comfortable and to be themselves.
- » All gender cabins are open to everyone – it is a welcoming space for campers who want to share a space with campers of different genders, who have friends or siblings who are different genders, and for campers who identify as non-binary or genderqueer.
- » Every cabin group will continue to be sorted by age, and we intend to have multiple all gender cabins in order to offer cabin groups that are within a developmentally appropriate age range. Because our cabins are one open space, private changing areas are available for campers.
- » Each of our camper cabins is staffed with at least 2 counsellors. Our entire staff team participates in extensive training each year and will receive additional resources and training focused on creating positive spaces for our campers.
- » We are proud to be a camp that encourages friendship, belonging, and inclusiveness and we want to ensure that we continue to grow and support the needs of all our campers and families.



# HEALTH + SAFETY

## **Camper Health & Safety**

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### **Health History**

- » During registration, you will have an opportunity to include any health information related to your camper. You will also be able to select which over-the-counter medications you approve us administering to your camper while at camp.
- » If there are any health changes or health issues that you would like to discuss regarding your camper, please feel free to connect with us!

### **Injury or Illness**

- » We have many measures in place to ensure the health and safety of your camper, however we are also prepared for when your camper might undergo an illness or injury at camp.
- » Camp Kitchikewana has a Wellness Centre and always has a volunteer nurse or physician on site. In the event of injury or illness, your camper will be assessed and treated by our medical volunteer. In the case that the camper's issue exceeds our abilities to assess or treat (i.e. x-ray, prescriptions, etc.), we will provide transportation to Georgian Bay General Hospital in Midland or Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie.
- » If prescription drugs are necessary as a result of consultation with the doctor, you will be contacted and billed for the amount after camp.
- » If your camper is deemed by a physician or nurse to be too contagious, too ill, or unable to remain at camp, we will contact you and ask you to pick up your child from camp. Until you are able to pick them up, your camper will be isolated from other campers (depending on the severity of the illness) in the Wellness Centre and cared for by the camp staff or medical volunteer.

### **Medications**

- » Prescription medication is administered by the Wellness Coordinator or medical volunteer. Please send all camper medications to camp in their original containers. Clearly label all medications with camper name and dosage. Include a sheet of instructions if the doses or frequency of medication require clarification.
- » You will have the opportunity during registration to indicate which medications you are comfortable with the Wellness Coordinator or the medical volunteer administering to your camper on an as-needed basis.

### **Camper Supervision**

- » Kitchikewana staff are selected for their commitment to safety and the well-being of each camper. Each cabin is supervised by two counsellors. All staff live on site during camp sessions and the Camp Director or Assistant Director is always on site.

### **Lice**

- » Please check your camper's head for signs of lice prior to departure for camp. If you think your camper might have lice, please let us know and treat them prior to coming to camp.
- » We conduct lice checks on the first day of camp. If we find that your camper has lice, we will let you know and treat them at camp. We will bill you for the lice shampoo used.



# HEALTH + SAFETY

## **Food Service**

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- » Campers receive three delicious meals a day with a mid-afternoon and evening snack before bed. All of our meals are healthy, nutritious, and camper friendly. Campers eat “family style”, with campers eating along with their entire cabin group for the whole meal. Every camper will take turns helping to set the table and clear the table.
- » Our kitchen staff are able to accommodate most dietary needs and food allergies. Feel free to reach out if you have concerns about your camper’s specific dietary needs.

### **Here are some examples of a typical food menu:**

#### **Breakfast**

- » Scrambled Eggs & Home Fries
- » Buttermilk Pancakes & Sausages
- » Assorted Bagels, Cream cheese, hard-boiled eggs
- » Available at all breakfasts: yogurt, oatmeal, toast, fruit and cereal

#### **Lunch**

- » Sloppy Joe’s & Coleslaw
- » Chicken Caesar Wraps & Sweet Potato Fries
- » Tacos & Veggies and Dip
- » Available at all lunches: Soup & Salad bar
- » Fresh fruit is served after every lunch

#### **Mid-afternoon Snack**

- » Fresh Fruit

#### **Dinner**

- » Lasagna & Caesar salad, garlic bread
- » Barbecue chicken, roasted potatoes, cooked veggies
- » Spaghetti & meat sauce, garden salad
- » Available at all dinners: Salad bar
- » Dessert is served after every dinner

#### **Evening Snack**

- » Bananas, Bits & Bites, Pretzels, Cereal Bars, Nachos & Salsa

# HEALTH + SAFETY

## **Homesickness & Phoning Home**

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- » It is reasonable to expect that your camper (especially first-time campers) can take some time to adjust to the camp life. Camp staff are trained to detect early symptoms of homesickness, and are trained to respond to individual needs and help children feel comfortable at camp.
- » We do not allow campers to use the phone while at camp. However, if homesickness becomes severe, we will always contact you; if necessary, we may attempt to arrange a telephone call with you and your child.
- » If your child has not attended camp before, or is away from home for the first time, we strongly recommend a sleepover or two for them at the home of a friend or relative. This will give them some experience with feelings of separation from the family prior to their stay at camp. In addition, our Open House provides great opportunities to gently introduce new campers to overnight camping. In preparation for their trip to camp, reassure your campers that they should try camp this year, and if they don't enjoy it, they don't have to return - but they should make all efforts to participate and have fun.

## **Laundry**

- » We do not offer laundry to participants at Camp Kitchikewana unless there is an emergency. Please pack accordingly!
- » Exceptions are made for our Leadership Participants, who will be able to have their essentials washed once, mid-way through their month-long stay. You do not have to pack detergent, as we bring the laundry to a laundromat in town to make it easier on our septic system!

## **Personal Hygiene**

- » We do our best to give campers instructions about personal care and encourage proper hygiene. All campers will have the opportunity to shower or swim at least every other day.

## **Communication from camp**

- » We will have various methods of communication throughout the camp session. We upload photos to Facebook and Instagram throughout the session, as well as provide a few updates via email throughout the session. **Please note:** we guarantee that your camper will appear in a cabin photo at the start of the session. Beyond that, we cannot guarantee that your camper will appear in photos. Chances are, they are too busy having fun! We want to balance providing families with photos while keeping in mind that campers are at camp to be immersed in nature, learning skills, and having fun.
- » If your camper is at Camp Kitchikewana for the first time, you can expect an email from your camper's Section Head mid-session! This email is just a brief update to let you know how your camper is doing, what activities they are enjoying, and any other fun facts about your camper's time at camp! Optional phone calls will be available for guardians who want to follow up with our staff once the email has been received.
- » Guardians of waterbug campers will not receive emails with specific updates about their camper due to their shorter stay at camp, but will receive a general mid-week update regarding the waterbug program and how the younger campers are adjusting to camp life.



# TRANSPORTATION

## First and Last Day of Camp

### Travelling by Bus

We are happy to provide free bussing to any camper who is interested in taking the bus to camp. The campers on busses are supervised by camp staff, and campers can expect to sit with other campers around the same age. Please ensure your camper has eaten a good lunch prior to getting on the bus, as the next full meal they will eat is dinner at 6:00 p.m. We will have an afternoon snack available for campers upon arrival at camp.

### To Camp (Sunday)

City	Bus Pickup Location	Time
Toronto (Vaughan)	Colossus Carpool Lot (at Hwy 400 and Hwy 7)	12:00pm
Innisfil	Innisfil YMCA	12:00pm
Collingwood*	Collingwood YMCA	10:45am
Midland	Midland YMCA	12:00pm

\*campers on the Collingwood bus will receive lunch upon arrival at camp

**Please note:** The buses will only wait for 15 minutes for late arrivals. Beyond this time, the bus will leave and it is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to camp.

### From Camp (Friday)

City	Bus Dropoff Location	Time
Toronto (Vaughan)	Colossus Carpool Lot (at Hwy 400 and Hwy 7)	1:30pm
Innisfil	Innisfil YMCA	12:00pm
Collingwood*	Collingwood YMCA	1:45pm
Midland	Midland YMCA	12:30pm

\*campers on the Collingwood bus will eat a bagged lunch on the bus provided by camp

**We encourage everyone living near our bus locations to utilize our bussing.** If you are dropping your camper off in Honey Harbour, you may do so beginning no earlier than 1:00pm on Sunday. If you are picking up your camper on the last day, they will be arriving between 8:30am and 10:00am. We send campers over in alphabetical order beginning with last names starting with the letter A.

**Please note:** If you are dropping off your camper in Honey Harbour, please be prepared for a longer wait time for a boat; we will do our best to get every camper on the boat within an hour of them being dropped off, however we prioritize the campers who arrive via bus.

**Please note:** Waterbug A and C campers will only have access to a bus ride to camp. Waterbug B and D campers will only have access to a bus ride from camp. Waterbug campers must use private car as a mode of transportation for the trip where a bus is not available.

# IMPORTANT INFO

## **Refunds and Cancellations**

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- » A \$400 deposit is required with each registration.
- » Before May 1st, 2024, refunds will be subject to a \$200 administrative fee.
- » After May 1st, 2024, requests for refunds of paid camp fees will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be granted solely at the discretion of the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka and may be subject to an administrative fee.
- » Refunds will not be issued in an instance where the participant is removed from the camp program at the choice or request of the participant or the participant's parent/guardian or due to behavioural issues.

## **Financial Assistance**

- » The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka offers financial assistance! If you are in need, please contact the camp office by phone or email.
- » The financial assistance application can be received by sending an email to [camp.kitchikewana@sm.ymca.ca](mailto:camp.kitchikewana@sm.ymca.ca)

## **Promotional Material**

- » YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka reserves the right to use photographs, or video of the persons named on the application form for its promotional program and social media.

## **Property damage, loss and theft**

- » YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka is not responsible for any loss or theft of participant's belongings or money. Parents/guardians will be responsible for reimbursement of any willful destruction to site and/or equipment, including graffiti, incurred as a result of their child's actions.

## **Program expulsion**

- » Intentional participant behavior that puts the participant or others at physical or emotional risk may result in immediate dismissal from the program. In addition, consumption or possession of alcohol, tobacco, and/or cannabis products and illegal or harmful substances will result in immediate dismissal from the program. Any expenses incurred because of program dismissal will be the responsibility of the participant/parent/guardian. Parents/guardians or a suitable designate must be available to pick up participants should the participant be dismissed from their program. No refund will be given to campers leaving camp prior to the end of the session due to disciplinary action.



# SPRING + FALL

## **Spring & Fall Camp**

**During the spring and fall seasons Camp Kitchikewana operates as an Outdoor Centre serving a variety of groups and functions:**

- » Curriculum fitting outdoor education programs for elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools.
- » Outpost for school or group canoeing and/or hiking trips.
- » Retreats and Getaway weekends including but not limited to Senior Women's Week, Women's Wellness Weekend.
- » Leadership/team building retreats and training for youth, church and adult groups.
- » Facility rentals for alumni weddings, family reunions, group functions and interest groups.
- » Camp alumni events such as volunteer work weekends, reunions and weekend getaways.
- » Family camp programs.

Looking for Information on our outdoor education programs? Get in touch with us to find out more or check out our Outdoor Centre Guide found on our website.

## **Facility Rental**

» In the spring and fall Camp Kitchikewana is available for facility rentals of group functions, such as alumni weddings, family reunions, leadership retreats, conference and special group functions. Give your group the unique experience of being on the island in the beauty of Georgian Bay Islands National Park. Our modern camper cabins can sleep 225 people and we have a large meeting space with our dining hall. We also have several indoor and outdoor meeting spaces. Rentals include food service and programs by request. Please contact us for availability and pricing information at [camp.kitchikewana@sm.ymca.ca](mailto:camp.kitchikewana@sm.ymca.ca) or (705) 345-3128.

