



CAMP FOSTER YMCA

PARENT SURVIVAL KIT

RESIDENT CAMP (2018)

WELCOME TO CAMP!

Dear Parent,

Thank you for registering your child for summer camp at Camp Foster YMCA! An overnight camp experience can facilitate an amazing growth experience for a child. The staff at Camp Foster guarantees that your child will be exposed to our core values in the programs we offer. We are excited to partner with you in the effort to raise a strong child with a solid values structure and a positive self-image.

We look forward to our week with your child and to a summer filled with memories that will last a lifetime. Please review the following information to help prepare yourself and your camper for their week. If you have any questions please feel free to contact us at any time. Thank you for entrusting your child to us!

Keep The Flame Alive,
The Camp Foster Staff



CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT INFORMATION

CHECK-IN

Sunday at 2:00 p.m.
for all campers

CHECK-OUT

Half-Week Campers:
Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.

Full Week Campers:
Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

For more details see page 14

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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

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- Packing List: Page 6
- Care package & Cell phone policy: Pg 8-9
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STAY CONNECTED ALL WEEK LONG

While your child is away at camp stay in touch with us! Throughout the week we will share updates and post the final slideshow of the week on multiple social media sites. You can find Camp Foster on the following social media sites:

- Facebook: Camp Foster YMCA
- Instagram: Campfostersparky
- Twitter: CampFoster
- Bunk1: See Page 8

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ABOUT CAMP FOSTER

MISSION & VALUES

The mission of the YMCA is... To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, 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 (one staff member for every five campers) 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.



THE CAMP FOSTER EXPERIENCE

RESIDENT CAMP PROGRAM

What My Child Can Expect At Camp Foster

Camp Foster YMCA is a 100+ year old program that allows kids to be kids! Camp is a place where campers learn to canoe, sail, swim, ride horses, make friends, rifle and archery, explore the great outdoors, and create art. In addition, camp is so much more than that! Camp Foster is a place where campers and counselors alike learn side by side, get out of their comfort zone, and build a respectful and caring community where each person can be themselves. It is this sense of being part of something that translates to loyalty and pride to both counselors and campers since 1912.

Our program is designed to encourage campers to take healthy, safe risks that push them both mentally and physically with the guidance of our skilled counselors. This helps each child gain confidence, grit, and learn to work as a team. Our program incorporates the natural surroundings and requires a positive attitude, age-appropriate independence, and teamwork.

Successful participation at Camp Foster means that each camper can

- Live with campers in a cabin that are of similar age and can safely and cooperatively take part in scheduled group activities, free time, and play time with their cabin mates and the camp community.
- Exhibit behavior that is in line with Camp Foster's five values of respect, responsibility, caring, honesty, and fairness and does not need more than the usual amount of individual attention.
- Be responsible for their own personal hygiene, health, and safety or be able to ask for assistance from a counselor to assist.
- Walk moderate distances over uneven surfaces that are part of Camp Foster's natural surroundings.
- Enjoy off-site trips that will require staying in a tent outdoors for the night.
- Understand and respond to group instructions.
- Join in on activities, such as: singing, games, campfires, family-style meals, overnight trips, and other fun stuff!
- Contribute to the Camp Foster community.

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

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

Fax Number

712-336-2026

General Email Address

info@campfoasterymca.com

Camp Foster YMCA Professional Staff Team

Josh Carr | Executive Director | josh.carr@campfoasterymca.com

Abbie Parker | Director of Camping Program | abbie.parker@campfoasterymca.com

Valarie Hinrickson | Office Manager | valarie.hinrickson@campfoasterymca.com

Beth Mosbach | Groups/Conferences & Day Camp Coordinator | beth.mosbach@campfoasterymca.com

Kevin Godfredsen | Property Manager | kevin.godfredsen@campfoasterymca.com

PROJECT 130 – CAMP for ALL

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

Camp Foster sends over 260 kids to camp each year through our annual campaign efforts. Project 130 is a Camp Foster initiative to generate funds to send 130 **MORE** children to Camp Foster so they can experience all that camp has to offer. 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.

As part of the YMCA we build our program on healthy living, youth development, and social responsibility. As part of teaching social responsibility to Camp Foster campers we will talk about Project 130 with your camper. During their stay at camp, campers will have the opportunity to donate towards Project 130 with their store money if they choose. We do this by hosting special events (like pieing a counselor in the face), or selling special items (like bracelets or food items). 100% of these purchases at the camp trading post will go towards Project 130. This is not mandatory for campers to participate in. Please have a conversation with your camper about giving to Project 130 and how that looks for your family.

For more information about Project 130 or to donate online: www.campfoasterymca.com/project-130



BEFORE CAMP BEGINS

POLICIES / PROCEDURES

Payments

Payment for the full balance is due three weeks before your camper's registered session.

If there are challenges making your payment before the start of your camp session, please contact the Camp Office for assistance.

Refund/Cancellation Policy:

- \$50 of the \$100 per session is not refundable or transferable.
- After May 31, the entire deposit is not refundable or transferable. All bus fees and specialty camp fees (including water sports) are non-refundable or transferable and charges will still apply.
- Cancellations within 7 days of session or no shows will result in a loss of all fees paid, and charges will still apply.
- **All session changes and cancellations must be made in writing.** You may email changes to info@campfosterymca.com.

CAMP FORMS: DUE JUNE 1

BELOW IS A CHECKLIST OF FORMS THAT NEED TO BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO CAMP FOSTER BY JUNE 1. THESE FORMS HELP US PREPARE OUR STAFF FOR YOUR CAMPER'S ARRIVAL.

FORM CHECKLIST

- Health Form & Camper Information Form
- Copy of health insurance card, front & back
- Care Package Form (optional, can be returned at check-in)
- Lice Treatment Permission Form (can be sent with camper to be turned in, in the case that lice is found.)

Forms can be found at <http://campfosterymca.com/camp-forms/>
Or call the camp office {712-336-3272} to arrange for us to mail them to you.

Forms can be returned via email to: info@campfosterymca.com
Or mailed to Camp Foster YMCA attn: Camp Forms P.O. Box 296 Spirit Lake, IA 51360

PACKING LIST

Please send old clothes that can get dirty. It is recommended that all personal items be marked. Camp Foster is not responsible for damaged or lost clothing items. **ITEMS TO PACK FOR CAMP INCLUDE:**

| | |
|--|---|
| 2 swimsuits (camp appropriate—no tie straps, please) | 1 pair of shoes that can be worn in the lake* |
| 6 pair of socks | <i>*water shoes, strap on sandals are ok for this</i> |
| Daily change of underwear | 1 pair of tennis shoes or closed toe shoes |
| 1 pair of sandals or beach shoes | 2 sweatshirts |
| 3 pair of jeans or sweats | 1 raincoat/poncho |
| 4 pair of shorts | 1 jacket |
| 6 shirts/t-shirts (some dark) | Pillow and pillow case |
| 1 pair of pajamas | Soap |
| Baseball cap | Extra sheet or lightweight covering |
| Sleeping bag (campers may go on campouts) | Flashlight |
| 4 bath towels and washcloths | Personal toiletry items |
| Laundry bag | Sunscreen |
| Toothbrush and toothpaste | Shower sandals |
| Stationery/envelopes or postcards/Stamps | Insect repellent |
| Camera (not a camera phone) | Book/Magazine for quiet times |

- If you are registered for **Boots and Saddles**, bring extra jeans and a pair of boots with a sturdy heel. For your comfort, you may bring your own riding helmet but one will be provided for all riders.
- PG-13ers who elect to play paintball will need long pants, long sleeve shirt, and closed toe shoes to participate.

For your child's security and safety of other campers, please DO NOT pack these items to bring to Camp Foster:

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Junk food, soda pop, peanut products | Electronic games | Cell Phones | Firearms |
| Tobacco products | Radios/CDs/MP3s/I-Pods | Expensive jewelry | Squirt Guns |
| Fireworks | Knives | Animals | Alcohol |
| Expensive clothes | Inappropriate clothes | Non-prescription drugs | |

Campers wearing inappropriate clothing will be asked to change. Due to the activity level at camp, spaghetti strap tees are only allowed to be worn over swimsuits or sports bras. Girls, please do not bring swimsuits with ties because of our high activity level.

Any camper discovered with tobacco products, alcohol, non-prescription drugs, firearms, or knives is subject to being sent home immediately.

We DO NOT allow CELL PHONES at camp. If your camper is found to have a cell phone it will be taken to the office and stored in the Camp Director's office. All phones will be returned at check-out.

HEALTHCARE

Health Form

It is a standard of the American Camping Association that all campers have a current health history on file. It is critical that we have an annually updated record of a camper's past and present health status. **A new health form needs to be completed before your camper attends Camp Foster each summer.** Please fill out the health form as completely as possible as this helps our health staff become familiar with your child and serve their needs as best possible. Information from health forms will be shared confidentially with camp staff as needed.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE HEALTH FORM AND MAIL ALL FORMS TO CAMP BY JUNE 1. It is best to mail or email these to us for review prior to camp. Faxed copies are often of poor quality.

Insurance Information

Since Camp Foster does not have a camper insurance policy, you must accept responsibility for any medical, surgical, or medication charges that may be incurred on your child's behalf. For that reason, it is extremely important for you to attach a copy of both sides of your insurance card. Our camp is equipped with a health lodge and live-in Health Director. A medical clinic and hospital are within 10 miles of Camp. Health and safety are the primary concerns in all camp activities. The Health Director can meet with parents as desired or necessary on opening days after check in.

Communicable Diseases

The term "communicable disease" means an infectious or contagious disease spread from person to person or animal to person. In regard to the treatment of communicable diseases, Camp Foster will follow guidelines established by the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

Once the camp administration, in conjunction with the camp health director, decide the camper's condition poses a health threat to other campers, the camper will be excluded from camp for the duration of the period of contagion. In extreme cases, the camper will be sent home. In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases to other campers and staff, parents should use their good judgment in keeping sick children home from camp.

Head Lice Policy

Head lice has become more prevalent over the past few years in schools and camps across the United States. Self-contained communities, like Camp Foster, are especially vulnerable to lice. As a camp we must be vigilant and take precautions to minimize lice infestations amongst campers and camp staff.

We ask that two-weeks prior to your child's arrival to camp you, a medical professional, a lice specialist, or a hairdresser check your camper for nits (lice eggs) or lice bugs. Due to the lifespan of lice, we also ask that you have your camper checked once again immediately before their camp stay. We hope by doing these multiple checks that if lice is found it can be treated before coming to camp and be a much more comfortable situation for the camper. For information on lice please refer to the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/lice.

Each camper will go through a lice check during check-in at Camp Foster. Campers will be checked by professionally trained individuals. If lice is found on a camper, that camper will have two options:

1. Be treated by Air Fairies' Premium AirAlle treatment at a cost of \$185 per camper. This cost is paid by the family.
2. Be sent home. There is no refund for a camper that is found to have lice.

Camp Foster will also have our camp counselors checked at the start of their employment and throughout the summer to ensure that they are not part of a lice infestation. Camp counselors will also go through an educational session about how to detect head lice symptoms and be advised to discourage campers from sharing personal articles such as: hats, hair brushes, pillows/cases, hair ties, bandanas, towels, etc.

If we work together we can provide a safe, lice-free environment for both campers and staff. Thank you for taking an active role in lice prevention.

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 criminal background checks, and no one, while employed by us, is allowed to perform private child care 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.

Medications and Health Needs

- All medications should be sent in their original containers with the original pharmacy label.
- Please send enough medication to last the week.
- Do not send over the counter medications.
- Send only necessary vitamins.
- Inhalers and Epi Pins can be kept with the child.

All camper medications must be checked in to the camp Health Director at check in.
The Health Director will dispense all medications as needed.

Medications (Over-the-Counter)

The Health Center is stocked with common over-the-counter medications, such as Tylenol, Benadryl, cough syrup, and topical ointments, as well as first aid supplies, which are available, if needed, at no charge. Claritin is not regularly stocked. Please refer to the Health Form if you have any questions about over-the-counter medications.

Medical Notification Policy

Camp Foster YMCA will make every attempt to notify you before making a doctor's appointment or an emergency room visit for your child while they are in our care. All phone numbers given to us will be attempted in an effort to reach you. All minor medical needs will be cared for by the on-site Health Director without notification to parents.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CAMPER

Mail

Mail is very important to campers and staff alike. Feel free to bring it on Sunday so your camper has something from you on Monday. It is important to note that mail sent later than midnight on Wednesday does not arrive here before the camper leaves on Saturday. Don't worry if you do not receive mail; it means they are active and happy.

| <u>US MAIL:</u> | <u>UPS/Courier Service:</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Campers Name | Campers Name |
| Cabin Name (if known) | Cabin Name (if known) |
| Camp Foster YMCA | Camp Foster YMCA |
| PO Box 296 | 1769 260th Ave. |
| Spirit Lake, IA 51360 | Spirit Lake, IA 51360 |

Care Package Policy

Receiving a package while at camp is a very fun experience. Campers are only allowed **FLAT PACKAGES**. We encourage parents to send magazines, coloring or activity books, playing cards, etc. These items are cool to use during FOB (rest hour). **We ask that you do not pack food as we have many campers with food allergies and we try to keep our cabins food free to discourage pests.** Packages that are not flat will be returned to the parent/camper at check-out.

Counselors will also be advised to remove packages that are full of food from the cabins, these will also be returned at check-out. Thank you for following this policy. If you have questions please contact our leadership staff.

Feel free to bring the care packages with you on Sunday and save the postage. If your child has forgotten an item that they will need (shoes, etc.), please mail it to camp with a note identifying who it is for and which cabin. Our staff will then deliver it to your camper.

Camp Foster YMCA Care Packages — A Variety of Options!

Parents may purchase pre-packaged care packages or cabin parties that Camp Foster puts together. Care package prices range from \$15-\$50. Parents may return care package order forms prior to their camper's arrival at camp or fill one out at check-in.

Emailing & Photos

You may email your camper for a small fee through Bunk 1 on our website: www.campfosterymca.com. Click the Bunk 1 logo in the upper right corner and register using the Bunk1 code that will be provided to you via an email update prior to your camper's week. For your camper's safety, please do not share this code. To view photos please log onto Bunk 1 & select the appropriate folder. You can also purchase photos for a small fee.

NEW FOR 2018 This summer we will only be posting a limited amount of photos on Monday and Wednesday. We will then upload a ton of photos on Friday night. We encourage you to sit down with your camper once they are home and go through the photos together to reflect on their camp experience. Hearing their stories while seeing the photos will be priceless!

Please contact us with questions at info@campfosterymca.com. We do not accept camper emails at this address.

Birthdays

If your child is having a birthday while at camp, please let us know so we can make it extra special. Please contact the camp office to make arrangements if you would like to send something special. We have relationships with a few vendors in town that we can direct you to, in order to make this special day the best while at camp!

Phone Use: 712-336-3272

Our policy on phone calls has been made in the best interest of our campers. All phone communication by campers is under the guidance of professional staff. It has been our experience that phone calls to or from home make camper adjustment more difficult and actually create homesickness. Professional staff are happy to discuss camper concerns with a parent at any time.

Campers are not allowed to have cell phones while at camp. Cell phones will be taken and stored in the camp director's office. They will then be given back at check-out. Remember, we all want the best experience for your child. We will work with you to help your child in every way feasible.

CABIN GROUP PLACEMENT

Building New Friendships and Skills

Each camper lives in a cabin with nine other campers of similar age and two counselors. Cabin life is designed to foster progression, just like our programs. Older campers move from our Hillside and Double cabins into age appropriate Lakeside and Tent City cabins. Campers do many activities together as a cabin group which facilitates strong friendships, but they also enjoy the opportunity to interact with other campers throughout the day. The relationship between the staff and campers is a key to growth for your child. Staff make every effort to make cabin life a positive and growing experience.

Cabin Mate Requests

Meeting new people while on your own at camp is an invaluable experience, but we understand some children feel more comfortable with a friend.

- ➔ Children are placed into cabins with campers in which there are generally no more than 18 months difference in age.
- ➔ In order to facilitate unity, we strive to limit the number of campers from one city or school in each cabin. This way your child can have the opportunity to meet children from all over the country.
- ➔ We do allow campers to make **ONE** cabin mate request. Campers who mutually request each other will have a better chance of being placed in a cabin together. We **do not guarantee** cabin mate requests, but we will make every effort to honor them. Campers who request each other must stay within the age range indicated above. We recommend that siblings do not be placed in the same cabin.
- ➔ Cabin mate requests of groups over three will be split up in order to decrease the impact of cliques. If you know this may be a concern, it is helpful to talk to the other parents and to include a note on suggested pairings weeks prior to their camp session.
- ➔ We will make our best effort to contact you prior to your campers session to discuss any cabin placement issues we have run into.

We really do want your child to see their buddies at camp and share this great experience, but we find it is best if they do not all live together. **Refunds** will not be given if cabin mate requests are not honored.

CAMPER SPECIAL NEEDS & ACCOMMODATION

Campers with Special Needs

In order to best serve your child at camp, we need to know if your child has extreme specific medical conditions (seizures, diabetes, allergies etc.) By knowing this information in advance, we can make the staff aware of this condition and be prepared to help your child if any emergency should arise.

Campers with special needs can have a successful camping experience if:

- 1) They can relate well in an environment of 10 youth, and
- 2) Can function well at school without a full time aide.

Parents are asked to notify camp as early as possible if your child:

1. Is diagnosed with any medical condition that is aggravated by physical activity, heat, or humidity.
2. Suffers from any life threatening allergic reactions.
3. Has had any organ transplants.
4. Is diabetic.
5. Has special dietary needs—please notify camp at least three weeks in advance.

The more you share with us before camp, the better we can work together to make your child's transition to camp and time at camp as positive and rewarding as possible. Our camp director will talk with you regarding your child's specific needs to best determine the appropriate measures we need to take while your child is at camp.

Bedwetting

Our staff is trained to deal with bedwetting discreetly; working with your child one-on-one. Every effort will be made to prevent accidents and comfort the child. Our younger campers will be assigned to a cabin with a bathroom attached. We encourage parents to visit with the counselor about bedwetting at check in to increase this partnership for caring for your camper.

Homesickness

Homesickness is normal for a campers first time away from home. A recent study shows 83% of people experience some sort of homesickness while at camp. The staff make every effort to help campers overcome homesickness by helping them learn to accept the natural feeling of missing family and friends. We keep our campers busy and try to interest them in new and fun activities and friends. Taking a youngster away from camp too soon may make it difficult for your child to overcome homesickness. **Encouraging your camper to contact you on a cell phone actually increases homesickness and makes it more difficult for the child to adjust.** The Camp Director will contact you if we need assistance in dealing with the most difficult cases.

Cell Phones at Camp

At Camp Foster we have an unplugged policy which means any data or Wi-Fi connected device (cell phone, tablet, etc.) is not allowed at camp. Our goal is to have campers create REAL relationships and have ACTUAL conversations without the glow of a screen. Please do not send your camper with these devices. If your camper is found to have a cell phone/tablet it will be taken to the office and stored in the Camp Director's office. All devices will be returned at check-out. We encourage you to have a conversation pre-camp about why going unplugged for a week will be so awesome! If you have questions about this policy please reach out to our camp directors.

HOLDOVER & EXTRA DAY CAMPERS

Holdovers

Camp Foster does offer care for campers staying over from one session to the next at a cost of \$50 per weekend. These campers are fully supervised throughout the weekend. Holdover campers will have their laundry sent out at the end of their first week to a laundry service to have it cleaned. Throughout the weekend counselors assigned to holdover campers will do programming at Camp Foster with the campers and serve meals. Holdover campers will not leave camp and will use the weekend to rest up for the next week of camp.

Extra Day Campers

Due to housing assignments and programming, it is difficult to have campers arrive early or stay late after a session. If this cannot be avoided, please contact the camp office in advance to make arrangements. Fees will apply.

WHILE YOUR CHILD IS AT CAMP

SWIMMING ASSESSMENT

For the safety of our campers, all are required to be evaluated and classified according to swimming ability. These evaluations are done shortly after check-in 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, use any camp watercraft, and take water-ski lessons, if registered. Campers who are not proficient can retest throughout the week, but will not have full aquatic access. Other options will be provided. Camp Foster serves many young campers during some sessions and we make appropriate program adjustments to avoid scheduling water activities for young children who do not yet have the endurance to successfully complete the swimming standards.

WATERSPORTS SPECIALTY CAMP

Waterski Lessons Information

The waterski program is for those who wish to waterski, wakeboard, or kneeboard. Lessons are provided for beginners through advanced levels. A swim test must be passed to participate. Each participant will spend at least 4-45 minute sessions on the lake. Equipment is provided. Spots in this program are limited, so register early.

CAMP DAILY SCHEDULE

The daily schedule allows for flexibility and theme development. This is what makes Foster really magical! Overall, the schedule gives the necessary balance of structure and freedom to the staff and campers.

- 7:15 Rise and Shine
- 7:20 Early Morning Clubs (optional) or personal grooming time
- 8:00 Morning Huddle & Breakfast
- 8:45 Chapel Chat: a fun, non-denominational devotion time that focuses on character development.
- 9:05 Clean Cabin Time
- 9:45 Morning Instructionals
 - 7-9 year old campers will travel as a cabin group to three preplanned program areas.
 - 10-12 year old campers will choose a few morning classes that fit their personal interests as well as travel as a cabin group to a few preplanned program areas.
 - Teen campers get to choose the morning classes that fit their personal interests.
 - Specialty campers will participate in their assigned program during this time as well.
- 12:15 Lunch, Songs, Announcements
- 1:30 Foster On Break (FOB) = Quiet Cabin Hour
- 2:30 Free Time: Campers may choose from a variety of program options.
- 4:30 Cabin Time Activities
- 5:15 Flag Lowering
- 5:30 Supper, Songs, Announcements
- 6:30 Cabin Time Activities
- 7:30 Evening Program
- 9:00 Campfire Songs

Lights out 30 minutes after campfire followed by cabin devotions

**Teens have special programs three nights a week after campfire.*

Severe Weather

Changes in weather are a normal occurrence during the summer and Camp Foster YMCA has specific policies that are practiced and followed when the threat of and/or severe weather does occur. Please watch our Facebook and Twitter accounts for updates on weather and any program changes.

CAMP TRADING POST

Spending money at camp is put into a trading post/store account. **We encourage parents to send store money in advance** by phone, mail, or online; however, store money can also be turned in at check-in. A balance system is kept daily and campers are aided by staff in budgeting their money.

The Trading Post is open daily. Campers may purchase t-shirts, hats, snacks, drinks, and other fun items. Every child spends differently, but \$30—\$45 is a good range. The Trading Post will be open at check in and check out so parents can assist their child with purchases, if needed.

ACCOUNT BALANCES AT THE END OF A SESSION

At the end of the camp session, if there is a balance of \$5 or less, this will not be returned and will be a donation for Project 130. Balances of \$5.01 or more will be returned to you at check-out on Saturday. You will have the option of donating that balance to Project 130 at check-out as well. If your child is riding the bus home, all leftover store money will be sent home to ensure they have money for lunch. We will transfer holdover camper's accounts from week to week.

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 and week. If you discover that your camper has left an article behind, please inform us and we will do our best to locate any missing items. If found, items will be returned C.O.D. 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. Campers are encouraged not to bring valuable items or clothing to camp.

Search & Seizure

For the safety of all campers, if there is cause to suspect a camper has illegal, stolen or prohibited items at camp, we reserve the right to search and seize any items of cause. If this happens, we will make every effort possible to contact parents.

TRIPPING PROGRAM

The Camp Foster YMCA tripping program is a fun option for each group. The emphasis is to build friendship through relaxing adventure and cooperative activities.

Campers, age 7-10, camp on-site on our wooded property. Campers, age 11 and older, have the option of an off-site park trip to campsites in Iowa or Minnesota, within 15 miles of Camp.

Each overnight departs during cabin time and returns in the morning before breakfast. There are always at least two staff present with cell phones, runner vehicles, and solid emergency action and weather plans in place.

CAMPER EMOTIONAL NEEDS

Building Positive Relationships

A key philosophy of Camp Foster YMCA is the importance placed upon cabin group interaction. The relationships between campers and their counselors is one way we teach values and leadership skills. These friendships bring a sense of accomplishment to the campers increasing their sense of self-worth. The ease of building friendships is key to the magical world of Foster!

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 at camp that is consistent with our values. Inappropriate behavior will be discussed with the child when it occurs. Negative behavior affects more than just the camper involved in the misconduct, it affects all of those around them. Parents will be notified, at the camper director's discretion, when your child is involved in disruptive behavior, whether initiating or receiving, before or after camp, and your input will be vital in our decisions.

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 stay. Items will be returned at the end of the week. 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 at the discretion of the camp directors.

Bullying

Bullying is one of the greatest challenges facing children. Camp Foster YMCA is committed to the physical and emotional safety of every camper. Through our staff leadership and program design, we will make every effort to prevent and manage incidences of bullying in fair, reasonable, and consistent ways. In addition to the camp policies and procedures, you can also take steps now to prepare your child for camp:

1. Help your child understand bullying. Talk about bullying and how to stand up to bullies safely. Emphasize that bullying is unacceptable.
2. Help them be more than a bystander. Talk to them about what to do if they see someone else being bullied.
3. Check in with your child about their camp experience at pick-up. Listen to them. Learn about their friends, ask about camp, and listen to concerns.
4. Model and teach your child how to treat others with kindness and respect.

CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT

Check in time is Sunday between 2pm-3:30pm

- Upon arrival to Camp Foster, please leave luggage in your vehicle and proceed to the check-in line at the Sheneberger Character Center. If you have any forms or medication to turn-in please bring those. If arriving early we strongly encourage you to explore the Okoboji area and enjoy the lake as we will not start check-in until 2 p.m.

Check out time is Saturday between 9:30am-11 am

- Written permission is needed for campers to leave with anyone other than family members. Photo ID's are required for everyone at check out.
- Half-week campers are checked out on Wednesday between 9:30am – 11am.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus Service – Charter Busses, NEW!

This special transportation option is offered on a limited basis, on a first come, first served registration. A MINIMUM of fifteen (15) campers per session is necessary to run the bus. If the minimum number of riders is not reached, we reserve the right to utilize a Camp Foster school bus. A portion of your original bus fees will be credited to your account if this happens. If you choose to cancel the bus in this circumstance, a credit will be issued to your account. We reserve the right to cancel the bussing completely due to low enrollment numbers. If this happens, you will be issued a credit of bus fees paid.

Any bus cancellations made by the camper family after May 31 will result in a complete loss of bus fees paid and unpaid charges will still apply and be due on the account. Any cancellations need to be made in writing by emailing info@campfosterymca.com.

All bus drivers have passed a DOT physical, passed a drug screen, passed a criminal background check, have a Class B CDL with passenger endorsement, and meet all DOT requirements. Additional staff is assigned to each bus to supervise in transit.

Sunday Pick Up

Omaha–Downtown YMCA @ 10am

Sioux City –McDonalds parking lot on I-29/Singing Hills Blvd @ 12:15pm

Kansas City – Visitation School @ 8:00 a.m. *Before session 5 only

Saturday Drop Off

Omaha–Downtown YMCA @ 1:45pm

Sioux City –McDonalds parking lot on I-29/Singing Hills Blvd @ 11:45am

Kansas City – Visitation School @ 4:30 p.m. * After session 5 only

Directions to Camp

Local Directions to Camp Foster YMCA

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

From Spirit Lake: 1/5 of a mile east of Spirit Lake on Iowa Highway 9 and 71 turn south onto county road M-56. Camp is four miles south on that road.

From Milford: At St. Joseph Catholic Church stoplight on 13th St., turn east onto county road A-34. Follow approximately four miles then turn north onto county road M-56. Camp is 4 miles north on that road.

