



Island Camp Handbook



Camp Stephens is owned & operated by YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg

Table of Contents

Transportation	3
Sign in/out procedure	4
Preparing for camp	6
Program Overview	6
Activity Areas	7
Health and Wellness	8
Camp Behaviour	9
Camp Policies	9
Homesickness	10
Mail	11
Food Parcels	11
Camp Packing List	12
What not to bring to camp	13
How to pack your items	13
A typical day at camp	14
Types of food to expect	15
Lost and Found Items	16
Contact Information	17

Transportation Information

Camp Buses

All buses depart and return from the West Portage YMCA-YWCA, 3550 Portage Avenue.

We use highway coaches to transport the campers to and from Kenora. The bus ride from Winnipeg is approximately 2 ½ hours. You may pack a light snack for your camper for the trip to camp. We also recommend wearing a light sweater or a jacket as the bus and boat ride to camp can be chilly. We will have a supervisor on each bus.

****Campers will be departing/returning with their specific cabin or trail groups, therefore, siblings may not be on the same bus.****

Boarding time/West Portage Drop-off:

Buses will be departing between 7:00 AM & 9:00 AM. You will be contacted by email with the exact time your bus will be leaving 5-7 business days prior to the start of camp.

Return Time/West Portage Pick-up:

First camp bus return approximately at 2:30 PM, weather and traffic dependent. You will be contacted by email, with an approximate time your bus will be arriving, 24 hours prior to the arrival date.

Note: information is sent via email only, please ensure we have your current email address on file!

Personal Transportation

Families who are arranging for their own transportation to Kenora must meet at the Kenora Harbourfront located beside the MS Kenora

Kenora Arrival/Drop-off : 9:30 AM

Kenora Departure/Pick up: You will receive an email with a rough estimate of your child's arrival time.

*Camp Stephens provides boat transportation from the Harbourfront in Kenora to the island. The boat ride is approximately 15 minutes. We will provide a lifejacket for each camper. Please make sure luggage is well-labeled and waterproof.

Sign-in Procedure

10 business days prior to departure:

To ensure accuracy and regulate camp transportation, changes to the following information must be received by our camp office 10 business days before your camper's departure:

- Transportation options – Camp bus or personal transportation
- Authorized persons to sign (other than parent/guardian specified on their registration)

Bus sign-in procedure:

Day of departure from West Portage:

- Ensure your camper has all necessary items prior to boarding the bus. Unless it is an emergency, parents are discouraged from boarding the buses.
- Give any medications to the staff designated to collect them.
- Each highway coach is allocated a bus #. Please:
 - Deposit your camper's luggage to your designated bus.
 - Sign in your camper with the designated staff & promptly board the bus.

Buses depart exactly at your designated time from 3550 Portage Ave. and are not allowed to stop on the road to pick up passengers.

If your camper misses the bus, you will be responsible to transport them to camp.

Personal transportation (to Kenora) sign-in procedure:

- Give any medications to the staff designated to collect them.
- Deposit your camper's luggage with the staff designated to load the boat.
- Sign in your camper.

Sign-out Procedure

10 business days prior to day of arrival to West Portage

To ensure accuracy and regulate camp transportation, changes to the following information must be received by our camp office **10 business days** before your camper's return:

- Transportation options – Camp bus or personal transportation
- Authorized persons to sign (other than parent/guardian specified on their registration)

Any names that are not included on our list are not authorized to pick up the camper. If you are unsure of the names provided on the registration form, please contact the camp registrar.

Bus sign-out procedure:

Day of arrival to West Portage:

- Check the buses' estimated time of arrival (via your email).
- Keep note of registrar's announcement regarding which set of campers are on the bus.
- Campers who have been given permission by their parents/guardians to sign themselves out will disembark first and should collect their baggage. Once signed out, campers are free to depart.
- Campers whose parents must sign them out must stay with camp staff until parents sign them out.
- Claim your camper's medications from the camp staff assigned.
- Take your camper's belongings only once unloading of everyone's luggage is finished.

Personal transportation sign-out procedure:

- Claim your camper's medications from the camp staff assigned.
- Pick up all your camper's luggage at the Harbourfront.
- Sign-out your camper with our staff.

Preparing for camp

Here are a few things you might do to keep your child's anxiety low and anticipation high:

- Read this booklet with your child and talk about all the activities and programs
- Find out what camp activities they are interested in and do some research on the internet or at your local library
- Talk about what it's like living in a cabin with other kids and ways they might go about making new friends
- Talk about ways to solve problems at camp, i.e. talking with a counsellor
- Have a friend sleep over and sleep in their sleeping bags
- Write a letter before your camper leaves so it will be waiting at camp when they arrive
- Focus on the positive: Think of all the new skills they'll learn and build confidence in the skills they already have

Program Overview

To help you understand a little of what goes on at Camp Stephens, here is an overview of some of the program areas at camp. Each area varies in depth and content depending on the age of the campers.

The principal unit of activity at Camp Stephens is the cabin group. We have found that an activity focused around a small group of peers encourages the development of close friendships as cabin mates play and meet challenges together. At camp, we do our best to foster an atmosphere of cooperation rather than competition. If we do run an activity containing some element of competition, we focus on challenging campers to achieve their own goals, rather than encouraging them to measure their accomplishments against others.

Cabin groups choose some of the activities that they participate in and some activities are slotted in so that everyone can try all the different areas. Every day campers have the opportunity to go and try an activity again on their own or with a few of their friends. Counsellors will design a program that is safe, active and appropriate to the age level of the cabin group.

All 2 week campers will go on an overnight wilderness excursion. Depending on their age they will go on a 1, 2 or 3 night trip. On this trip they will sleep in tents under the stars, assist in the cooking of meals by open flame and travel by canoe from campsite to campsite. Two trained staff members will lead them on these excursions.

Campers will also be given the opportunity to participate in Skill Clubs, where for an hour a day they will receive formal teaching in a particular program area so that they can build their skills and work towards the goals of a bronze, silver or gold badge. Campers will participate in one skill club per week.

Activity Areas

Swimming – There are 2-3 recreational swim periods per day (weather permitting). Campers will not have any formal swim instruction.

Crafts – Crafts are done as a creative activity and often involve natural or recycled materials.

Climbing Tower – This is a simulated rock climbing program that teaches the basics of rock climbing and safety.

High Ropes Course – Designed exclusively for Camp Stephens with our unique program in mind. It consists of a series of movement challenges 35 feet up! This is a safe environment to challenge oneself both physically and mentally.

Canoeing – Campers are provided with quality canoe instruction to develop their personal skills.

Sailing – All campers will be introduced to basic sailing skills

Kayaking – We have kayaks for everyone and we will teach campers basic skills.

Outdoor Gym – Basketball, floor hockey, dodgeball and many other games gets played here.

Mass Camp Days – This is a program where the age group sections or the whole camp will be engaged in a common theme day program.

Overnight Camp Outs – Depending on age, campers will experience an overnight campout or an off island trip from 1 to 3 nights for those registered in our two week camps. Campers will paddle to popular campsites within close proximity to Camp Stephens, learning valuable outdoor living skills. One week campers will participate in a cookout on one of our satellite islands.

We also offer activities like: campfires, initiative tasks, games, as well as environmental and international activities.

Health and Wellness

Emergency & Health Information (ePACT)

By now you should have filled out the electronic Emergency and Health information on your ePACT account. If you did not receive the ePACT account sign-up email, please contact the registration team at campregistrar@ymanitoba.ca. It is recommended that parents consider any restrictions to activities, medical issues or dietary needs that the camp should be aware of, and send further information if needed.

Medications and Health Concerns

If your child is on any medication, please attach a note to the prescription, stating the medication usage instructions (e.g. – Ann must take one pill before each meal) and your signature. Please send all medication in the original container with the child's first and last name and hand it to a staff member on the bus. Medications are available for pick-up on the day of their return. If, after you have returned the form, your camper is placed on any new medication, please send the above information and signature to camp with your camper. If your camper has to receive medical attention above what we can provide at camp, our Wellness Coordinator will contact you with the information, e.g. ear and or throat infections, sprained ankles/wrists, etc. If it is necessary to obtain a prescription for your child while they are in attendance at camp, you will be contacted and informed of the situation. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for payment with the pharmacy directly.

IMPORTANT: Please inform the camp in writing of any changes (medical, social, emotional, family environment) that occurs between filling out these forms and attending camp.

Contagious Illnesses

Please ensure that your child is in good health before sending them to camp. If your child arrives to camp with conditions that are highly contagious or cannot be effectively cared for at camp, you will be asked to pick them up in Kenora. Please do an extra check for cases such as head lice, pink eye, impetigo, COVID-19 and other contagious conditions prior to sending your child to camp. If your camper becomes ill prior to their arrival at camp, please call the camp office to discuss your options. On the first day of camp all campers are checked for head lice and given a basic medical assessment. If a camper develops a serious contagious illness while at camp they will be sent home at the parent's expense but will be welcome to re-join their program for the remaining time once symptoms have passed or a medical professional deems it safe to return.

Camper Behaviour

To ensure everyone at Camp Stephens has a safe and positive camping experience, all campers must adhere to the Camper Behaviour Policy. If behavioural issues arise, Camp Stephens' counsellors quickly identify and resolve concerns within groups. Counsellors have a support network of supervisors and resource staff to aid them in situations and or concerns.

Camp Stephens will not hesitate to inform parents/guardians of their camper's behaviour if it endangers their own safety or the safety of those around them. It is our policy to communicate concerns immediately to parents/guardians to find a solution. However, if a solution is not found, the camper will be sent home at the parents' expense and there will be no refund of camp fees. Fighting, bullying, smoking, drinking, stealing, abusive language, hitting, vandalism and general misbehavior will not be tolerated and are grounds for being sent home.

Camp Policies

BEHAVIOUR – YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg’s Camp Stephens strives to be a fun, safe and active environment where everyone has a chance to be their best. All campers, staff and volunteers pledge to treat each other with dignity and respect. Behaviour that prevents others from enjoying a positive camp experience will not be permitted. Campers may be asked to leave based upon inappropriate behavior such as abusive language, aggression or use of prohibited items such as (but not limited to) tobacco, alcohol, non-prescription drugs or offensive printed materials.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO – Photographs and/or video taken at camp may be used for public promotional initiatives by the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg. All photos are the property of the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg. To exclude your child from these initiatives, written request must be sent to the attention of the Camp Director prior to attending camp.

AUTHORIZATION – All parents/guardians must complete and sign an Emergency & Health Form.

This form authorizes:

- your child to participate in the full range of camp activities
- the Camp Director and their appointee, in the event of accident or illness affecting your camper, to authorize on your behalf all procedures, including admission to hospital and necessary treatment therein, as they may deem essential for the care and well-being of your child. (Such action is to be taken only when immediate contact with the parent/guardian cannot be made.)

This form also outlines your responsibility to:

- accept financial responsibility in excess of the benefits allowed by Provincial Health and/or Medical Insurance. For campers coming from out of Canada, travel insurance is strongly recommended.
- notify the camp in writing of any changes that occur in your child’s health between completing the Emergency and Health form and attending camp
- notify the camp in writing if your child is exposed to an infectious disease during the three weeks prior to camp

ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND RELEASE – YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg staff and instructors make every reasonable effort to minimize exposure to known risks. However, by registering your child in a YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg Camp Stephens’ program, your child will be involved in physical activities – and with any physical activity, there is a risk of injury. All parents/guardians must sign the Emergency & Health form that releases the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg, and its respective officers, directors, employees, volunteers and agents, and their successors and assigns, from all liability for damages sustained in consequence of loss, injury or damage to yourself or your child, and from all other actions, causes of action, claims, demands or damages of any kind with respect to death, injury, loss or damages to any person or property including yourself or your child arising out of or connected with preparation for, or participation in YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg programs or activities.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS - Cancellations must be submitted in writing no later than 30 days prior to the start of camper’s session in order to receive a full refund (less a non-refundable 20% camp deposit). No refunds will be provided for cancellations submitted after deadline. Camp fees are non-transferable.

RETURNED PAYMENTS - A service charge will apply for each returned payment. Service may be suspended until the account is paid in full. Camp Stephens reserves the right to cancel registrations with an outstanding payment. Unpaid accounts will be sent to a collection agency.

Homesickness

Sometimes campers who are away from home for the first time may encounter some homesickness for the first few days of camp.

Prevention of this problem can be helped by:

- Your enthusiasm for the camp and what fun it will be;
- Encouraging your camper to actively engage in all camp activities;

Please be assured that our staff receives training on how to help children feel comfortable at camp and how to respond to their individual needs. These are people who enjoy being with kids and will take the time to listen.

Our senior staff, who oversee the counsellors, have many years of camping experience and excellent counselling skills. This caring attitude is reflected in all of our staff.

Should you get a letter which causes you to worry, you should do two things:

- Write a cheery letter in reply asking about the good things that are happening, passing on the news from home and encouraging his/her continued participation in camp activities;
- Take care, though, not to indicate how much you might be missing him/her or all the good times he/she is missing at home
- Contact our Winnipeg office if you have any concerns. Our office will contact the camp to pass on your concerns and get back to you as soon as possible;

Mail

Most parents find that cheery letters to their camper, with the earnest hope of reply, provides the best source of contact. Campers are encouraged to write home frequently.

The mailing address for Camp Stephens 2024, once confirmed, can be found online at:
ywinnipeg.ca/camp-stephens/contact-us

Please send sufficient envelopes and stationery with your camper. As stamps have a way of sticking together, we suggest parents provide self-addressed stamped envelopes. In the past we have found that mail takes about 5 business days to arrive in Kenora from Winnipeg.

Please do not use a private courier company as they cannot reach us on the island nor will they leave packages in our mailbox.

If you get an unhappy letter from your child, don't panic. In all likelihood whatever made them unhappy when they wrote the letter is long since forgotten, or has been addressed by your camp's counsellor and/or camp staff. If you do have a concern, please call the Winnipeg office and they will get in contact with us. We want camp to be a positive experience for both campers and parents.

There is no fax or email available for campers. Camp Stephens is not responsible for lost or undelivered mail, nor mail that arrives after the camper has gone home.

Food Parcels

We provide your child with a carefully planned, well-balanced diet at camp (see Type of Food to Expect).

Food parcels or "care packages" are discouraged; if sent, the camper is presented with two options:

- Share the package with his/her cabin mates, with restrictions put on when the food can be eaten, e.g. not before meals or bedtime;
- The package is put away and given back to the camper when they leave camp;

If you choose to send a care package please do not send anything containing nuts, and do not send any valuables. It is not uncommon for packages to arrive after a camper has left camp, in which case the package will be placed in lost and found for pick up at the end of summer.

Camp Stephens is not responsible for lost packages.

Camp Packing List

PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS WITH YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND LAST NAME

(This list is for a 12-day camp – one week & four week campers please adjust your packing)

- Sleeping bag (rolled in its own bag or inside a labeled, preferably clear, garbage bag)
- 2 pairs of rough-wear long pants (jeans or the like)
- 1 nylon windbreaker pants for canoeing
- 3 pairs of shorts
- 6 T-shirts or light sports shirts
- 2 long sleeved shirts or sweaters (fleece if possible)
- VERY IMPORTANT – 1 raincoat or rain suit – programs continue in the rain
- Warm jacket
- IMPORTANT – 1 pair of shoes to get wet and stay wet (an old pair of runners or sandals, flip flops not recommended)
- 1 pair of dry shoes (regular runners)
- VERY IMPORTANT – 1 hat, wide brimmed preferred
- 12 pairs of underwear and socks (one pair for every day at camp)
- 1 bathing suit
- 1 towel
- 1 pair of pyjamas
- Water bottle
- Sunscreen
- Writing paper and pen
- Toothpaste, toothbrush, comb and/or brush, facecloth, soap and shampoo
- Laundry bag for storing dirty clothes
- For 2 & 4 week campers ages 10-16: Stuff sack/Dry Bag – it is a nylon bag used to pack clothing for your overnight canoe trip.

Optional Items

- Pillow
- 1 pair of rubber boots
- Camera
- Flashlight
- Enamel or plastic cup
- For 2 and 4 week campers ages 10-16: Sleeping pad
- Dry Bag (instead of Stuff Sac, more expensive but more durable & waterproof when used correctly)

What not to bring to camp

Please help us ensure that these items do NOT come to camp:

- Electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, handheld gaming devices, etc.
- Cellphones
- Knives, weapons, tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, alcohol and drugs
- Watches – they get broken; let the counsellors keep track of time
- Personal floatation devices (PFD's) – camp provides them free of charge
- Fishing rods – we find that they get damaged or misplaced

Please avoid new or valuable clothing as camp activities can be very rough on clothing

How to pack your items

Your camper's clothing and sleeping bag should be waterproofed for the trip out to camp (in case of rain). The easiest way to accomplish this is to place all clothing and personal items in one garbage bag and then pack this into a duffle bag or suitcase. Please do not pack clothing into a garbage bag only. The sleeping bag should be rolled, securely tied, and placed in its own garbage bag (clear ones are the best as you can identify your sleeping bag more easily).

Please label each piece of luggage with your camper's name. If you are packing the sleeping bag in a garbage bag, please send an extra garbage bag for the trip home.

It is not necessary to go out and buy every item on the list, use your own judgment and make substitutions as you see fit and budget allows.

Please remember that your camper will be active, and that camp can be rough on clothes. For this reason, we recommend that campers do not bring expensive clothing to camp. As well, smartphones, tablets and other expensive electronics and other easily damaged items are best left at home. Campers will not be allowed to use these items at camp and we are not responsible for lost or missing valuables.

Some Packing Tips

- Label everything – we suggest sewing on labels for clothing and indelible marker for other items.
- Pack only what is needed – remember that luggage has to travel by car or bus, by boat, and then be carried by the camper to the cabin, so pack only what is needed for your child to feel comfortable while at camp.
- Don't forget to label all luggage/garbage bags for easy identification.
- Rain gear must be waterproof – Good rain gear is important. Windbreakers are not generally waterproof and are ineffective as rain gear. Test yours in the shower!

A typical day at camp

We strive to build a better world – one child at a time. To do this, we believe that there must be a holistic approach to learning: in spirit, mind, and body.

Camp is a magical experience where campers are granted tremendous independence in a safe and supervised environment.

7:20 AM Wake-up and Polar Bear

What better way to start your day than with a jump into the lake?

8:15 AM Hasher Bell and Flag-raising

One person from each cabin group comes to the dining hall to set their table for meals

8:30 AM Breakfast

9:30 AM Program Time

(See program overview)

11:30 AM Free time/Fun Time

12:15 PM Hasher Bell

12:30 PM Lunch

After lunch, everyone is given half an hour to rest, read, write letters home, etc. back at their cabin with their counsellor.

2:00 PM Program time

4:00 PM Clubs

This is a chance for children to sign-up for hard and soft skill clubs so they can continue to build their skills in an activity that interests them. Clubs include anything from climbing to swimming to arts and crafts to drama and everything in between. Campers will stay in the same skill club for one week.

5:15 PM Hasher Bell

5:30 PM Supper

7:00 PM Program Time

9:00 PM Snacks

Types of Food to Expect

At Camp Stephens we follow the Canada Food Guide and we have a nutritionist examine our menu. We serve our meals "family style" and encourage everyone to try a little of everything.

Dietary requirements such as allergies, vegetarianism, lactose intolerance, cultural, etc. will be accommodated if the restrictions are written on the camper's registration form or if camp is notified well before the child attends their session to assist the kitchen staff in accommodating any needs.

Some of the meals we serve may include:

Breakfast

Cold cereal
Bacon and Eggs
Toast
Pancakes

Hash browns
French toast
Fruit
Milk and Juice

Lunch

Make your own sandwiches
Soup and grilled cheese sandwiches
Hot dogs and veggie sticks

Veggies and dip
Macaroni and cheese
Chicken fingers and fries

Supper

Spaghetti and sauce
Stir fry with rice
Salad

Hamburgers and fries
BBQ chicken
Ham and scalloped potatoes

Lost and Found Items

When the campers arrive at camp, they are requested to deposit all valuables to their counsellor who will place them in the camp safe. These items will be returned to them at the end of their session.

- It is very common for campers to return home with missing items of clothing. The best way to help prevent this is to label each item with the camper's first and last name.
- At the end of each session, all available lost and found items will be displayed for all campers to see. Any unclaimed items will be sent to Winnipeg on the bus where it will be made available for parents to view upon picking up their returning camper. It is highly recommended that all parents look through it even if they do not suspect their camper is missing any items.
- Any still unclaimed lost and found items will be made available for parents to look through on a date in September. Date will be announced via email and website.
- Items not claimed by September 30th will be donated. Unclaimed medications will be safely disposed of at a pharmacy.
- Camp Stephens is not responsible for lost or damaged items

Contact Information

Winnipeg Office (3550 Portage Ave., Winnipeg) – Please contact our camp registrar for inquiries about registration, payment information and other general camp questions.

Office hours: Monday thru Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Direct line: 204-831-3157
Fax: 204-889-9002
Email: campstephens@ymanitoba.ca
Website: ywinnipeg.ca/camp-stephens

Should you have questions and concerns about your child during camp session, please contact the Winnipeg Office and your message will be delivered as soon as possible.

Due to programs running during the day, camp phone is not available for public.

Important Parent Information - The majority of correspondence is through email, please ensure we have your correct email address on file.