



YMCA CAMP MARSTON PARENT GUIDE

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WELCOME EXPLORERS, CHALLENGERS, ADVENTURERS, PATHFINDERS, LIT's & OWL's

We are thrilled that you've chosen YMCA Camp Marston for your child this summer. In this Parent Guide many of your questions will be answered. For additional info visit www.ymcasd.org/camps or call the camp office at 760.765.0642.

ARRIVAL SUNDAY

Please arrive on opening Sunday between 1:00 and 2:30 p.m.

Remember to have your Health History form and all other required forms completed before check in and bring any medications with you to check in. Required forms can be found in the [Forms Dashboard](#) in your Camp InTouch Account online.

DEPARTURE FRIDAY Photo ID is required.

On Friday, our campfire starts at 3:00pm and we will transition to our awards ceremony at 3:30pm. Afterwards, please stick around for the BBQ at 4:00pm! If you are not attending the campfire, ceremony or BBQ, we ask that you pick up your camper anytime between 3:30pm-4:30 pm. Photo ID is required for pickup, and any authorized pickups must be listed on your camper's admission form.



PARENT FAQ

Get ready to experience camp in a whole new way with the **Campanion mobile app!**



DIRECTIONS TO CAMP

Our physical address is 4761 Pine Hills Rd., Julian, CA 92036. From Ramona (north and east of San Diego), continue on Route 78 East for 16 miles until you pass through the small town of Santa Ysabel. Stay on Route 78 for another six miles and, about one mile before reaching Julian, turn right onto Pine Hills Road (the turn is well marked). Follow the YMCA camp signs and continue for approximately 1.6 miles along Pine Hills Road until you see the entrance sign for YMCA Camp Marston.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

You must register for bus transportation online for each bus trip separately (ie "to camp" and "from camp"). For the bus ride to camp, please arrive at Mission Valley Family YMCA (5505 Friars Rd) at 1:00pm, as the bus departs at 1:30pm. On Fridays, the bus departs camp at 5:00pm, which will place the bus at Mission Valley Family YMCA between 6:00pm-6:30pm. Cost is \$50 each way. No refunds or credit will be issued for bus cancellations 14 days prior to the start of the camp session for transportation to and/or from camp. Click [here](#) to view your current Transportation add-on selections or to add transportation.

CAMPINTOUCH

Our parent portal, CampInTouch (powered by CampMinder), is your one-stop hub to complete camper applications and forms, view photos, and make online payments—all in one place. Visit ymcasd.campintouch.com.

CABIN MATE REQUESTS

Please know that cabin mate requests must be mutual (other parents must request your child too) with campers in the same program and within one year of age and grade of one another. To view or change your Cabin Mate Request, click on "Cabin Requests" within the [forms dashboard](#) in Camp InTouch! We will do our best to honor these requests provided they are made at least one week prior to the start of camp. Note: Most campers come alone. Making new friends is a big part of the camp experience! We will honor mutual requests, however our ability to accommodate multiple requests is dependent on overall registration. If you have any questions please contact Sharnaye Neale at sneale@ymcasd.org.

HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH HISTORY

The Health History form is required to be completed online prior to check in day, complete with parent's signature and medical information. State Health Codes also require immunizations are up to date. If a child has any severe health conditions, has recently stopped taking a behavioral medication or has recently been under a doctor's care, a physician's authorization is required for camp attendance. If none of these conditions apply, a doctor's physical is NOT required.

PRE-CAMP HEALTH SCREENING

Please send healthy kids to camp. Upon arrival, we require each family complete a detailed health check verifying your child is healthy and symptom free. If your child is sick and therefore unable to attend camp, we are always willing to transfer them to another session based on availability. Camp staff will facilitate a daily symptom check with each camper. If a child exhibits symptoms, they will be isolated and must be picked up ASAP.

MEDICATIONS

It is important that medications, including non-prescription medications (cough drops, vitamins, etc.), are not packed in your child's things. All medications are to be submitted to health care staff at check in (State Law). Prescription drugs must be in the original container with physician's instructions. If there is more than one kind of medication please place the original containers into a Ziploc bag labeled with camper's name. You will be asked to provide further information in our online health history form regarding the dosage and frequency for dispensing your child's medications, and we will verify the instructions during check-in.

INSURANCE

You, as parent or guardian, are responsible for any medical costs incurred while at camp. Be sure to provide accurate information regarding your insurance carrier on the Health History Form.

MISSING HOME

Going away to camp can sometimes be a challenging event for children and parents alike! We understand parent concerns and will work with you to ensure that your child has a positive experience. Our first practice is very simple – PREVENTION. We find that keeping campers busy is the best anti-homesickness strategy around. Sometimes, however, children still experience varying degrees of anxiety. We will support, encourage and help your child in working through this challenge. Most of the time we are successful. If your child is having a hard time adjusting, we will phone you to seek your support (you are the expert on your child). If needed we will discuss further courses of action.

**PLEASE BE SURE TO PROVIDE US WITH
COMPLETE EMERGENCY CONTACT
INFORMATION.
ESPECIALLY IF YOU ARE TRAVELING
OR GOING ON VACATION!**



Our practice is to call you if a camper is out of program for more than two hours.

Allergies: We are familiar with managing allergies, whether environmental or food-borne. Please contact our Program Director, Sharnaye Neale at least two weeks in advance with questions/concerns: sneale@ymcasd.org

Illness: If your child is sick, please do not send them to camp. Please contact the call center and we will try to reschedule their camp session in cases of documented illness. For illness during camp, unfortunately we must enforce a zero-symptom policy. For all other health matters, we will call you if your child is out of program for more than two hours (sometimes they are just tired and need to rest!). We will also call you to report any accidents more severe than a simple scratch or splinter.

MAIL CALL & MORE

PHONE CALLS HOME

There is not an opportunity for campers to call home during the week. However, if a child is feeling anxious and asks to call home, we will make it happen! We want all campers and parents to feel comfortable with their experience. If a phone call helps, then we will find a time in between activities to work that out. Our staff may also contact you to discuss information about goals, behavior, homesickness or even a special achievement.

VISITING DAYS

We do not allow visiting days during the week, and only allow parents/family to visit on opening and closing days of each session. Coming to camp is a great step in fostering independence, and mid-week family visits can prove to be disruptive to that goal!

MAIL

Campers love receiving letters from home while at camp.

SAMPLE ADDRESS

Camper's Name, Session # _____
YMCA CAMP MARSTON Cabin # _____
PO Box 2440
Julian, CA 92036

PHOTOS

We upload photos of our campers everyday via CampInTouch which can be accessed in the "photos" tab. If needed, you can provide guest accounts to other family members in the 'Guest Accounts' tab. Upload a photo of your camper through the Companion app to receive alerts whenever new photos of them are added.

EMAILS

You can also send one-way emails to your camper via the "email" tab in CampInTouch. Emails are printed and delivered by lunch the next day, Mon – Fri. Please limit emails to one per day.

ELECTRONICS AT CAMP

Camp provides children a chance to live without electronic devices and daily social media. For security, safety, and a number of other reasons, we do not permit cell phones, iPods, computers, netbooks, digital readers, electronic games or similar devices. If these items are brought to camp, they will be stored in a secure place and returned to parents at the conclusion of the session.

We are not responsible for damage or loss of any electronics brought to camp.



LOST AND FOUND

We manage lost and found items through the camp session. On check out Friday, be sure to check our display of any unclaimed items. If you discover something is missing upon your return home, call the camp office as soon as possible. After two weeks, we will donate any unclaimed items to a local charity.

LODGING

The majority of our campers stay in our Camp Marston Lodges. Cabins house 20 campers and each lodge has four toilets and four showers, all with their own private stall. Adventurers will be staying in the canvas tents. The Pathfinders Village is an exciting opportunity for teens to experience the best of what Camp Marston has to offer. All girl campers will be staying in lodges, while boy campers will be staying in two of our new yurts!

CAMP STORE

This summer we will be adding an opportunity for campers to visit the Camp Store midweek to purchase Camp mementos using a pre-funded store account ("Account"). Parents may fund the Account via CampInTouch prior to Sunday Check-In. The Camp Store carries items such as hoodies, hats, shirts, plush toys, water bottles, stickers and more! Prices range from \$2-\$45 depending on the item. **Please note that all sales are final and cannot be returned or refunded.** No more than \$75 may be preloaded on to the Account for your camper per week.

Campers will be encouraged to spend their entire Account balance during the midweek visit. **Any amounts remaining in the Account after the visit will not be refunded.** The Account funds can't be used during Sunday Check-In or Friday Check-Out. The Account funds will only be available for use during the mid-week Camp Store visit.

If your camper is attending multiple weeks of Camp at any of the YMCA Overnight Camps (Camp Marston, Camp Raintree or Camp Surf), the Camp Store balance will be rolled over for those additional camp sessions. If your camper attends multiple weeks of Camp at any of the YMCA Overnight Camps, you will have the opportunity to reload the Account balance up to a maximum of \$75 before each Sunday Check-In.

Funds loaded onto the Account are non-refundable and non-cancelable. ANY FUNDS REMAINING IN AN ACCOUNT BY AUGUST 31, 2026, WILL BE DONATED TOWARD YMCA OVERNIGHT CAMPS SCHOLARSHIPS AND YMCA WILL PROVIDE A DONATION LETTER UPON REQUEST.

The YMCA Overnight Camp Store will still be open for card-only sales during Sunday Check-In and Friday Check-Out. Please note, the Camp Store is a cash-free facility and will not be able to accept any cash purchases at any time.

EQUIPMENT LIST

Please mark camper's name on each item. The YMCA is not responsible for lost or damaged personal articles. Please leave valuables at home. **Pack old stuff!** There's lots of dust and red clay soil at camp. New clothes and shoes will need a good wash when camp ends.

Explorers, Challengers, Adventures, Pathfinders, LIT's & OWL's

REQUIRED ITEMS:

- ☐ Sleeping Bag
- ☐ Pillow
- ☐ 2 pairs of Long Pants
- ☐ 5 pairs of Shorts
- ☐ 1-2 Sweatshirts or Jackets
- ☐ 5 T-shirts
- ☐ 1-2 Swim Suits
- ☐ 6 pairs of Underwear
- ☐ 6 pairs of Socks
- ☐ Pajamas
- ☐ 2 pairs of Sturdy Sneakers
- ☐ 1 Hat or Cap with brim
- ☐ 2 Towels
- ☐ Toiletries – soap, toothbrush,

- toothpaste, shampoo
- ☐ Comb/Brush
- ☐ Lip Balm/Chapstick
- ☐ Sunscreen Lotion
- ☐ Water Bottle or Canteen
- ☐ Flashlight

OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- ☐ Book, reading materials
- ☐ Stationary, stamped envelopes
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Day Pack



NOT PERMITTED

- Video games
- iPods/iPads/iWatch
- Laptops/Tablets
- Cell Phones
- Digital Readers
- Food
- Candy
- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Tobacco
- Weapons
- Fireworks
- Aerosol sprays
- Makeup
- Pets
- Offensive materials

OWL'S EQUIPMENT LIST

Our Outdoor Wilderness and Leadership (OWLs) program is a four day off-camp backpacking adventure that immerses campers ages 14–16 in the natural beauty of Catalina Island. While traversing the island they will get to experience a beautiful and unique landscape while building their leadership skills.

Campers will be hiking the Trans-Catalina Trail which can be steep and arduous. We recommend campers do some day hikes before the trip to prepare themselves for our backcountry journey.

KEY INFORMATION FOR OWLS

- This is a great introduction for teens to enter the realm of backpacking. We take their experience on trail very seriously.
- Up to 5 staff members and campers will travel to Catalina Island together and complete a four day backpacking journey from one end of Catalina to the next.
- Teens will develop independence, leadership, cooking, navigation and survival skills.
- Campers will challenge themselves to complete the journey while carrying their stuff on their backs. The trail can be challenging and steep. We recommend doing hikes pre-trip to prepare.
- Staff are well trained in group management and have experience leading people in the outdoors.
- Learning to set up their campsites and help prepare/cook their meals is an integral part of the OWL experience.
- Every evening campers and staff will gather and discuss leadership growth, personal goals and debrief the day/prep for the next day.

Outdoor Wilderness Leadership

REQUIRED ITEMS:

- ☐ 50L Backpack*
- ☐ Sleeping Bag with Stuff Sack*
- ☐ Sleeping Pad*
- Non-cotton clothes for hiking
 - ☐ 2-4 Synthetic Shirts
 - ☐ 1-2 Athletic/Lightweight pants
 - ☐ 1-2 Athletic Shorts
 - ☐ 4-5 Light Athletic Socks
 - ☐ 1-2 Wool Socks for sleeping (optional)
 - ☐ 5-6 Pairs of Underwear
 - ☐ 1 pair of Warmer Pants
 - ☐ 1 Jacket (fleece or puffy recommended)
 - ☐ Trail Shoes/Hiking Boots
 - ☐ 2 Reusable Water Bottles
 - ☐ Sustainable Toiletries
 - ☐ Sunscreen
 - ☐ Sunglasses
 - ☐ Hat for sun protection
 - ☐ Camp Towel
 - ☐ Journal (optional)
 - ☐ Cards or Book
 - ☐ Trekking Poles (optional but encouraged)*
 - ☐ Tent*

*Camp can help provide supplies

Everything must be able to fit into Backpack with room for tent supplies.

Sample Trekking Itinerary

SUNDAY

- Check in- 1:30 – 3:30
- Set up Marston Campsite
- Ice Breakers and Name Games
- ABCs of Backpacking
- LNT
- Dinner
- Opening Circle
- Assign Leadership Groups
- Trail Briefing

MONDAY

- Depart for Ferry in San Pedro (Breakfast on the road)
- Take Ferry to Catalina Island
- Lunch
- Hike to Little Harbor (7 miles)
- Dinner (Staff cook)
- Chats around the Campfire
- Bed

TUESDAY

- Pack up Camp and Breakfast
- Depart for Black Jack Campground (8.5 miles)
- Stop along trail for Lunch
- Continue on to Black Jack Campground
- Set up Camp
- Dinner
- Chats around the Campfire
- Bed

WEDNESDAY

- Pack up Camp and Breakfast
- Depart for Hermit Gulch (10 miles)
- Stop along trail for Lunch
- Continue on to Hermit Gulch
- Set up Camp
- Dinner
- Chats around the Campfire
- Bed

THURSDAY

- Pack up camp and Breakfast
- Hike to Avalon (1 mile)
- See the shops
- Take Ferry to San Pedro
- Back to camp
- Rest and Showers
- Skit Prep
- Dinner
- Cabin Bonanza
- Candlelight Ceremony

For more information or questions please email camp@ymcasd.org.