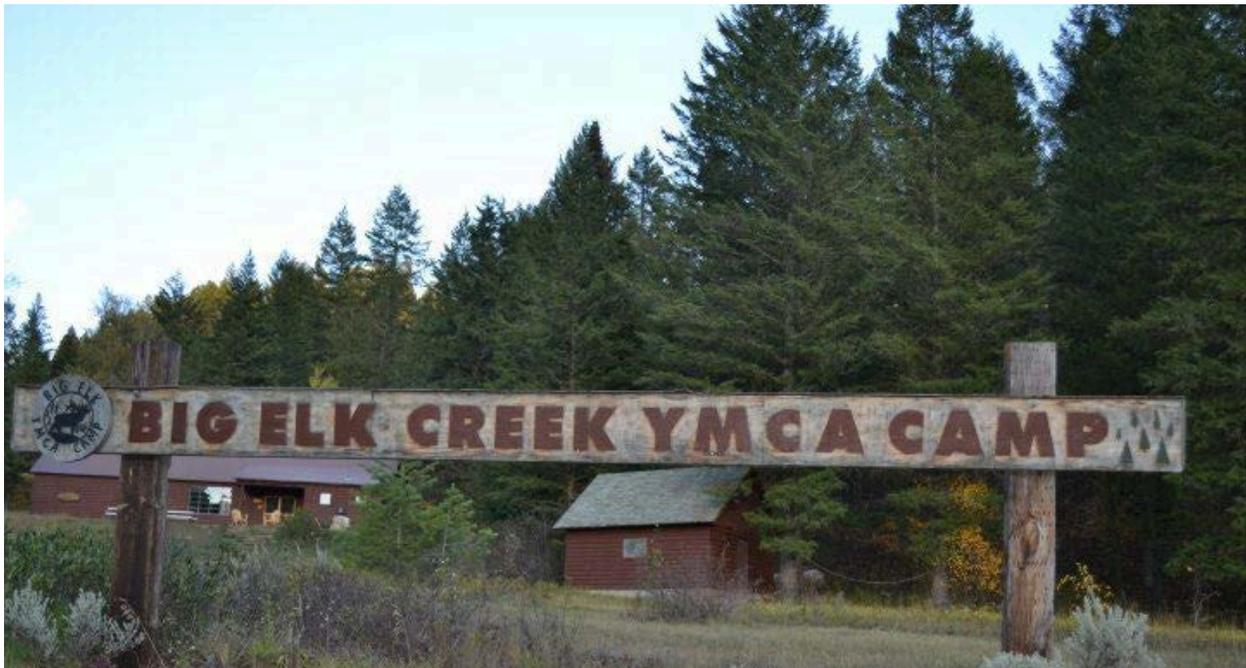




FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
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# Idaho Falls YMCA Big Elk Creek Resident Camp Parent and Camper Guide



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## **Welcome to Camp!**

Thank you for choosing the Big Elk Creek YMCA Camp this summer! By registering your camper for a week at Y camp you have begun a journey that will change their life in more ways than you might have imagined.

Y Camp is a place of magic and wonder, where under the tutelage of our trained staff, your camper will experience new activities and learn new skills with an emphasis on developing the YMCA core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. While experiencing fun and exciting adventures, campers will learn more about themselves and build friendships and memories to last a lifetime.

This packet was created to help prepare both you and your child for the resident camp experience including everything from what your camper needs to pack, to what to expect while they are up at camp.

We look forward to welcoming your child into our Y Camp Family!

## **Preparation for Camp**

- Schedule and complete a health examination for your child if he or she has not completed one in the past 12 months

### **Forms Checklist**

- **Complete all required forms listed below.** Forms must be received by the YMCA at least two weeks prior to the start date of your child's session at camp.
  - Camper Keys of Success
  - Camper Letter to their Cabin Counselor
  - Parents Letter to Cabin Counselor
  - YMCA Camp Assumption of Risk, Release of Liability, and Indemnity Agreement
  - Release and Liability Forms
  - Pick-up Authorization Form
  - YMCA Consent Form and Confidential Health History Pages
  - Special Needs Inclusion Form (optional)
- Prepare camper for time at camp; discuss behavior expectations.
- Mark all packed clothing and equipment with camper's name
- Bring medications (in **original container** and following guidelines outlined under the "Medications" section) separately – not packed with gear.

## Getting to Camp

### Check – In Procedures

Unless prearranged by the Camp Director the kids that live in Idaho Falls or the surrounding areas are recommended to take the bus. They will need to be dropped off at the YMCA Monday morning for transportation by bus to the Camp. Bus transportation from Idaho Falls is \$5 each (\$10 round trip).

Changes to transportation must be determined by check-in day. Changes after this day are only allowed in case of an emergency.



### Times and Locations

Check-in for the Idaho Falls and surrounding areas starts at 8:00am-8:45am at the Idaho Falls YMCA. The bus departs no later than 9am.

Check-in, for everyone not located in the areas surrounding Idaho Falls, is from 9am-10am. This check-in will take place up at camp. Driving directions and the address are located in the next section. Please contact the Camp Director if you cannot arrive at camp during this time. Lunch is at noon.

**\*\*All campers must be checked in by an adult. Check-in will take 15-30 minutes, please plan accordingly. The process includes confirming registration information, turning in any medications, and talking to some of the counselors.**

**\*\*All campers need to either have a sack breakfast or have eaten before check-in. Lunch will not be provided until noon.**

**\*\*There is no late check-in for the bus\*\***

### Check-out Procedures

**Prior to check-out, we will have our closing moment. All parents and families are welcome to join us at our campfire area.** All authorized persons **MUST** bring a photo ID to check-out. Only those persons listed will be permitted to release your child from Y Camp Staff. Parents/Guardians **MUST** be listed on the check-out authorization as well.

### Times and Locations

We ask that all campers getting check-out at camp be picked up by 10:00am on Saturday. Unless prearranged with the Camp director children will be brought back to the YMCA via the bus if not picked up at camp by 10:00am. If you need to pick up your camper early, written notification is required, presented to the staff during Check-In.

Check out at camp is from 9am-10am on Saturday.



Check-out for those transported by the bus is from 11:30am-12:30pm at the Idaho Falls YMCA.

**Idaho Falls Family YMCA**  
155 N Corner  
Idaho Falls, ID 83402

**Big Elk Creek YMCA Camp**  
198 Big Elk Creek Rd  
Irwin, Idaho 83427

## Driving Directions to Y Camp

Those who live in the areas surrounding Idaho Falls who wish to drive their child to camp are encouraged to do so. Parking is limited so carpooling is strongly encouraged. Please maintain a 5 mph speed limit while at camp. All kids that do not live in Idaho Falls or the surrounding areas will need to be dropped off by their parents at Camp.



### From Jackson Hole, Wyoming

- Take US-89 S/US-26 W out of Jackson
- When you come to the roundabout at the Hoback Junction, take the first exit towards Alpine. The Snake River should mostly stay on your left as you drive through the canyon.
- At the Alpine Junction turn right onto US Highway 26/US 26 W which crosses into Idaho. The Palisades Reservoir should stay on your left.

- Turn right onto Big Elk Creek Road

### From Idaho Falls, Idaho

- Take North Gate mile out of Idaho Falls. This turns into US-26E
- Continue to follow US-26 E for roughly 57 miles.
- The Palisades Reservoir should stay on your right.
- Turn Left onto Big Elk Creek Rd

The road goes first through the Forest Service Campground first. Just continue on the road until you get to a bridge crossing the creek.

## Changes to the Transportation Schedule

If the vehicles are running late this will be communicated to the YMCA Staff and then to parents who are waiting.

## Vehicle safety

All campers will follow all camp rules in addition to bus rules communicated by the bus driver prior to leaving the parking lot. These rules include but are not limited to: staying seated in their seat, keeping all body parts and possessions inside the bus at all times, keeping aisles and exits clear, and disposing of all trash appropriately.

## **Your Child's Stay at the Big Elk Creek YMCA Camp**

Whether this is your campers first time staying away from home or not, we want to do all we can to help make it an incredible experience. Parents/guardians can help by taking time in advance to communicate any special needs or concerns. To discuss any concerns, please contact the Camp Director at 208-523-0600 ext 103.

### **Staff**

Our camp program is supervised by the Camp Director. Cabin groups range from 10-15 and are supervised by 1 camp counselor and a leadership student. Our staff is selected for their desire to work with children and each undergoes a training program prior to the beginning of camp. Character reference and background checks are conducted for all positions and all camp staff has experience in youth development.

### **Homesickness**

Going away to camp for a week or more can be a challenging experience for many children and parents. Short-term separation from parents and learning independence are both important parts of growing up even though it may not always be easy. Many children have some difficulty coping with the changes that come with spending a week away from home. This anxiety is perfectly normal and happens on occasion.

You can help by counseling your child prior to camp in order to make the transition easier. Let them know that you have confidence in their ability to be away from family and how exciting it will be to meet new friends. If they are unsure of themselves, let them know how proud you will be of them if they try their best to succeed. While your child is at camp, we will notify you if any concerns arise.

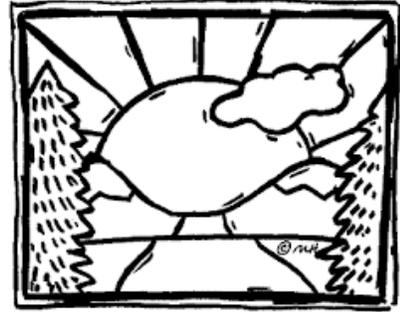
Once at camp, we do not allow campers to call home directly. Often, when a homesick child speaks to someone from home, their homesickness is only made worse. Instead, we encourage letter-writing both to and from the family. You may even wish to mail a letter a few days prior to the session to make sure it arrives while your child is at camp. We train our staff to be caring and empathetic, while at the same time keeping the campers busy having fun. This is to direct their energy and thoughts to the moment they are in, and away from their homesickness.

### **Bedwetting**

Our staff will work diligently to keep this a private matter for your camper. Please be certain to inform your camper's counselors at check in if this is something we need to assist with and to share any suggestions you may have. Counselors can help ensure your child does not drink for a time before bed and work one on one to ensure accidents are handled with complete discretion.

## A Typical Day at Camp

8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	Morning Reflection
10:00 a.m.	Cabin Chores
10:30 a.m.	Activity Period
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Toes Up (Rest Hour)
2:00 p.m.	Activity Period
3:00 p.m.	Free Choice
6:00 p.m.	Dinner
7:00 p.m.	All Camp Game
7:30 p.m.	Evening Program
9:30 p.m.	Evening Embers/Lights Out



If your camper participates in the Rags and Leathers program, ceremonies will be determined by the camper and staff member. Those campers interested in these programs will need to get with their cabin counselors to discuss what days the ceremonies will be.

Camper's Choice – This is an activity time period where the campers can choose where they would like to be. Choices will be handed out Monday during lunch and they will assign themselves to an area they would like to try out. Some of the choices that could potentially be offered are:

Games

Water Front

Sports

Camp News Paper

Arts and Crafts

Maintenance Projects around camp

Service Projects around camp

## What to Pack

Please use the camper inventory to record what your camper brings to camp. We also suggest putting the list in the camper's luggage so that they can check to make sure they have everything when packing to go home.



Average daytime highs are 75-85 degrees while evening lows can be as low as 35 degrees. Please be certain your camper has warm clothing. Long sleeves and pants are required for evenings at camp as they help protect against the cold as well as insect bites.



The camp does not provide mattresses or bedding so please make sure to provide your camper with padding, a sleeping bag, pillow and any extra blankets as you see fit.

Remember that your camper will be spending most of the day outdoors and they will get dirty. Please send OLD clothes, towels, and shoes and be sure to label ALL clothing and equipment.

Please do not pack cell phones, electronics, pocket knives, alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco.

## Communication

### Mail

Campers love to receive mail and are encouraged to write home. Sending an envelope/postcard that is self-addressed and stamped is an excellent idea. For the first couple of years we ask that any parents who would like to write their children provide letters by hand to the counselors who check in their campers.



Please put letters in a plastic bag labeled with the campers name. If they are to be handed out on a certain day make note of it on the back of the envelope in the bottom right hand corner.

**Please do not send any packages with food or candy.**

### Phone

Campers do not have access to phones and cell phones are **not** allowed at camp. Campers are not able to make calls home. If there is an issue needing your attention, please contact the YMCA in Idaho Falls they will provide you with an emergency number to get a hold of Camp Leadership.

Any cell phones will be collected and locked in the Camp Director's Office and returned to your camper on the final day of the session.

## When Camp Staff Will Contact Parents

We will contact parents and/or the emergency contact in cases of emergency as deemed necessary by the health supervisor and Camp Director. For routine illnesses such as vomiting, and nausea we do not call parents from 10pm to 7am. The camper's medical needs will be cared for by the Health Supervisor and camp staff. Parents will be contacted the next day.

In the event that the Health Supervisor/Camp Director deems it necessary for campers to be seen by a licensed physician, parents are responsible to pick up the camper and return only after they are seen, and have procured a Doctor's note releasing them to return to camp

### Visitors

Although we recommend that guardians pick their camper up from at the end of their session, we do not have an open visitation policy up at camp. Camp is an immersion experience and we want campers busy in activities, cultivating independence, establishing routines and allowing themselves to embrace their community. Having visitors diminishes the opportunity for campers to learn independence and seeing loved ones can worsen feelings of homesick that your camper or

other campers might be feeling. We also kindly request you do not tell your child you will visit or pick them up early from camp if they are feeling homesick. This does not allow your child to fully engage in the camp experience.

### **Emergency Parent/Guardian Contact Information**

It is very important that you provide us with complete emergency contact information on the Health History Form. If you are traveling during the time your camper is up at camp, please list an itinerary and phone numbers where you can be reached. For campers coming from outside of the United States, the Big Elk Creek YMCA Camp requires that families provide an emergency contact with a U.S. phone number.

### **Emergency Contact Information**

In case of an emergency, please contact our office at 208-523-0600 during business hours. If an emergency does happen outside of office hours, parents of campers will receive the Camp emergency contact phone number closer to their campers session.

## **Health and Safety at the Big Elk Creek YMCA Camp**

Safety is our number one priority at camp. We ensure that all children are supervised and accounted for at all times and that any camp visitors are immediately greeted and accompanied by one of our staff members. Rest assured that your camper is in good hands.

In case of illness, campers will be housed in the Camp Director's cabin for a reasonable period of time. If deemed necessary, parents will be contacted to pick up their campers. If your child is ill, please do not send him or her to camp – we will try to reschedule for another week. In case of injury, the staff providing health care will take the necessary measures to ensure proper emergency care which may include: treatment for minor injuries, calling the parents for instructions, or calling local emergency care providers.

Big Elk Creek YMCA Camp is a place for campers from a variety of cultures, languages and backgrounds. With that in mind some safety concerns must be taken into account, as we cannot guarantee translators for any specific language, we recommend that all campers have at least basic communication skills in English to make sure they can express any health, comfort, or safety concerns to our Camp Staff.

### **Medications**



Medications are any substance a person takes to maintain and/or improve their health. This includes vitamins and natural remedies. Please do not pack any medications (including over-the-counter drugs) in your child's luggage. All medications must be submitted to Camp Staff during check-in.

All prescription medications sent must be listed on the medication page, completed during registration. Medications will be stored in the Camp Director's cabin and will be administered by the camp health staff under doctors or parent's written orders. Unused medications will be returned at the end of the camper's session. The only exception of turned in drugs will be Inhalers and Epi-pens that can stay with your camper and need to be stated in the paperwork. Medications for which we do not receive written authorization to administer will not be provided by the health staff, including Tylenol or ibuprofen.

All prescription medications must be in their original container with label intact and directions attached. Prescription must match the label with a licensed physician's instructions. Please provide enough medication to last the entire time your camper is away. Please place the packaged medications in a clearly labeled zip-lock bag along with dosage and directions for administering. Please put the camper's name on the outside of the bag – permanent marker works well for labeling.

## **Stay Up to Date**

Keep up to date on photos, information, and other Y Camp events by liking us on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/bigelkcreek/>

## **Summer Camp Bucket List**

Start checking things off your bucket list at Y Camp this summer!

- Make a friend for life
- Participate in a program you have never done before
- Meet 2 counselors from different states
- Learn the history of Y Camp
- Roast a s'more
- Learn a greater appreciation for the Idaho wilderness
- Earn a rag in the ragers program
- Write a handwritten letter home
- Sleep under the stars
- Learn about others around a campfire
- Provide input into the future of the Big Elk Creek YMCA Camp
- Reserve your spot for next year!



**We look forward to meeting you and your camper this summer!**

**If you have any questions regarding your campers  
experience please let us know what we can do to help.**

**See you soon!**