



MAKING KIDS BETTER, FOREVER



Summer Camp 2021
Parent Planner

CAMP FITCH YMCA

Dear Families,

Thank you for registering your child for Camp Fitch YMCA's 2021 Summer Camp Experience! We are proud of our 108 year history of making kids better, forever! We are all eager to meet your camper on their first day of summer camp. Whether this is your child's first summer or 9th, we intend to make this an impactful week full of new adventures, meaningful friendships, and a deep sense of belonging to Fitch and its traditions.

Since August of last year our team has spent countless hours dedicated to the goal of improving the summer camp experience. We've hired the best staff from all over the world who have already proven their dedication by participating in hours of online orientation before they even arrive for our pre-camp week of skill building together on Lake Erie. Now, all we need is for your camper's check-in Sunday to arrive!

We've assembled this publication to help you feel more at ease about preparing for summer. Take a look at it to find answers to frequently asked questions, ideas about how to pack for camp, and much more. Please know that our team is dedicated to helping your child make a smooth adjustment from home to camp. Our lines of communication are open to you before, during, and after camp and we value the opportunity to collaborate with you about your camper. Thanks for sharing this experience with us!

Camp Fitch Forever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Wolnik". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "W".

Joe Wolnik
Summer Program Director

Your Camp Fitch YMCA experience is coming soon!

We have compiled this Parent Information Booklet to help you and your camper prepare for an unforgettable summer experience. Inside you will find:

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- Pg 3. Packing List
- Pg 4. Summer Services
- Pg 5. Horseback Riding Information
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- Pg 8. FAQ

Contact Us

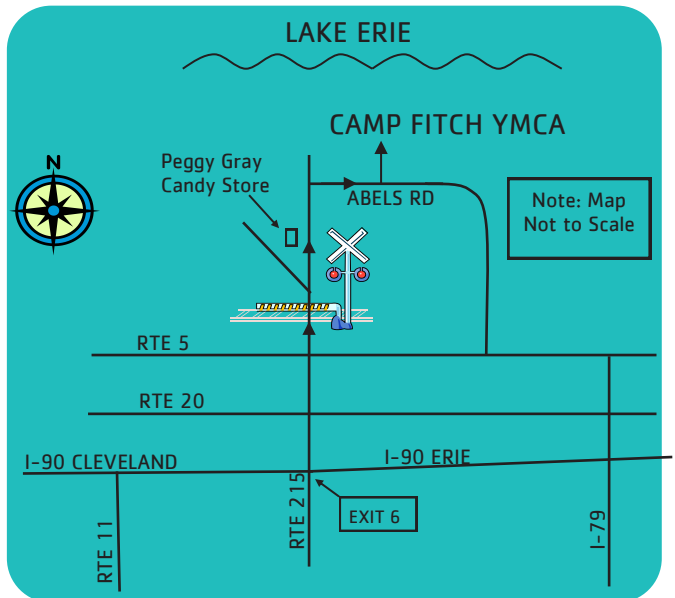
Camp Fitch Office
814.922.3219
info@campfitchymca.org

Summer Program Director
Joe Wolnik
814.844.6351
joewolnik@campfitchymca.org

Directions to Camp Fitch YMCA

Camp Fitch YMCA is located approximately 90 minutes from Youngstown, Cleveland, and Buffalo and 2 hours from Pittsburgh.

Follow I-90 to exit 6 (Rt. 215) in PA
Go North on Rt. 215 then follow the signs to Camp Fitch YMCA
Camp Address:
12600 Abels Rd,
North Springfield, PA
16430



Camper Check-In: Sunday

Check-in happens between **2 pm and 4 pm on Sunday afternoon.**

To avoid long lines and allow the younger children extra time for settling in, check-in will be organized by age groups. **If you are checking in siblings, you may check-in all siblings at the time established for the youngest sibling.**

6 - 10 year olds begin check-in at 2:00 pm

11 - 12 year olds begin check-in at 2:30 pm

13 - 16 year olds (including LITs and CITs) begin check-in at 3:00 pm

Check in day is very exciting and very busy! Here is what you can expect upon your arrival:

- Meet with our welcome committee at the dining hall complex and receive your camper's bunk number and complete a brief health screening.
- If your camper has medications to turn in for the week, meet with our nursing staff.
- Head to your camper's cabent to meet their counselor and help get their bunk setup.
- Bid your camper adieu until Saturday morning!

Check-Out: Saturday

Camper pick-up is between 9:00 and 11:00 am on Saturday.

On Saturday morning you can head right to your camper's cabent to get them packed up to go home.

- Don't forget to stop by the store at Teaberry Lodge (open until noon) to do some shopping and the Health Center (also at Teaberry) if you have any medication to pick up.
- This is also a great time to take a walk by the lost and found located in front of the store to make sure your child hasn't left any treasures behind!
- Campers are also able to sign up for next summer. See page 6 for more details about First Mates Club Registration!

Stowaway Weekend

If your camper is registered for consecutive weeks, they are automatically enrolled in our complimentary Stowaway Weekend!

This is a fully supervised program where campers get to enjoy some activities in a smaller group setting while waiting for our next round of campers to arrive.

To help keep packing light, we offer a laundry service to our stowaways.

2 See page 4 for cost and details.

Packing List

Having proper clothing and equipment at camp is incredibly valuable to ensuring that your child has a remarkable stay. We know that packing is no simple task, so we have assembled a comprehensive list of what to bring to help you prepare!

It is also a great idea to only send clothes you won't mind getting dirty and to label each article sent to camp.



Linens

- Sleeping Bag or Blankets
- Twin size sheets (1 fitted, 1 flat)
- 1 Pillow, 2 Pillow Cases
- 2 Beach Towels
- 2 Bath Towels & Wash Cloths

Clothing

- T-shirts and Sweatshirts
- Shorts and Pants (long pants required for horseback riding)
- Socks and Underwear
- Pajamas
- Raincoat or Poncho
- 2 Swim Suits
- * 2021 Update - Face Masks

Shoes

- 2 Pairs of Comfortable Shoes - It is very important to have a backup pair in the event that a pair gets wet. Crocs and flip flops are not recommended for all day wear.
- 1 Pair Tennis shoes or Boots (required for horseback riding)
- Water shoes or old tennis shoes (necessary for navigating Lake Erie!)

Toiletries

- Soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, etc
- Comb or Hairbrush
- Insect Repellent (with DEET) & Sun Screen (at least SPF 15)
- Medication - Separated in a labeled medication dispenser along with original prescription bottle (see page 6 for more detail.) This is collected during check-in, so it is helpful to keep separate from your camper's luggage.

Equipment

- Laundry Bag for dirty clothes
- Water Bottle
- Flashlight and Batteries
- Backpack
- Hat, Visor, and/or Sunglasses
- Watch
- Writing Supplies - pre-addressed and self stamped envelopes will help the post office greatly!
- Reading material
- Sporting Equipment (baseball glove, lacrosse stick, etc)
- Hooks - over the door hooks work great with our bunks to hang towels out to dry or keep bags out of the way!
- Snacks - please keep them nut free! Any snacks brought to camp are kept at your child's table in the dining hall for the week.
- Camera - disposable or digital
- Returning campers** - don't forget your paddle!

Luggage/Containers

You're probably wondering what to pack all of this in.

We have found that large plastic storage totes (10-20 gallon or under the bed style) and/or plastic drawer sets are great as they are slightly waterproof and stack easily. Duffel bags are also an option that will fit at the bottom or under bunks well.

Please keep in mind this is a suggested list-not all equipment items are required for attendance.

Extra Spending Information

Most activities are included in your camp tuition, but a few come at an extra cost.

Fill out the Spending Allowances form in your CampInTouch account to let us know how much your child is allowed to spend during their Fitch experience. Campers use their name as a means of charging items throughout the week and we add it up as they go. Your payment method on file will be charged at the end of the week to settle up their final bill.

To help you plan your camper's spending, here is a list of extras your camper may purchase throughout the week:

- **Craft Materials** – The craft lodge is open all week for campers to create one of a kind treasures. The cost of materials can cost as little as \$1.00 for something simple like a gimp keychain, up to \$15 for a tie-dye project.
- **Rope Activities** – Ropes are activities/classes that focus on mastering a particular skill. All campers will choose 2 ropes on their first night at camp. Most ropes are free, but a few require special materials. Here are a handful of examples of ropes and their cost:
 - Canoeing/Archery/Sailing/School of Rock/Drama/Creative Writing/Outdoor Cooking/Survival: \$0
 - Knitting/Macrame/Calligraphy/Painting: \$5 - \$10
- **Store Purchases** – Campers have the chance to visit the camp store once during each session they attend. Here is an overview of souvenir prices:
 - Postcards/Pens/Pencils/Stickers: around \$1 - \$2
 - Journals/Sunglasses/Small Accessories: around \$5
 - Backpacks/Drinkware/Flashlights: \$10 - \$15
 - T-Shirts: \$10 - \$20
 - Sweatshirts: Youth sizes \$30, Adult sizes \$40 - \$60
- **Laundry** – This service is only offered to campers staying multiple weeks in a row. Stowaways have the option of sending their laundry out for a good wash before the next session begins. Laundry service is \$1/pound, usually averaging \$8 - \$10 total. Sign-up for this service happens mid-week during their first session.

Summer Photos

Your CampInTouch account is a secure site where we post daily photos so you can see what the campers at Fitch have been up to! Viewing these photos is completely free; no need to purchase "Camp Stamps" for photo viewing.

Please keep in mind that not seeing your child in these photos is not an indication that your camper is not having a great time!

This year we will not be printing group cabinet photos, but they will be available on Companion for everyone! If you already paid the \$6 for a group photo, your camper's account will be credited.

Camp Stamp credits can be purchased to send your campers a one-way email. One-way emails are distributed to campers once a day, Monday - Friday.

For an even easier photo viewing experience be sure to download the Companion app!

Daily Schedule

Morning

7:30 Polar Bear & Flag Raising
8:30 Breakfast
9:00 Fleet Chapel
10:00 Exploratory Activity
11:00 Rope (skill building) Activity
12:30 Lunch

Afternoon

1:15 Rest time & Cleanup
2:30 Ship Voyage
4:00 Rope Activity
5:30 Dinner
6:15 Exploratory Activity
7:35 Fleet Activity



Horseback Riding Information

Horsemanship Lessons

Campers ages 8 to 10 years old can take lessons for \$45. The lessons include 1 un-mounted and 3 mounted lessons.

Campers who would like to take horsemanship lessons during their session must sign up and pay for the lessons at least 1 week before their session starts (space is limited). Lesson signups can be done via email at registrar@campfitchymca.org.

Trail Rides

Campers ages 10 & up can sign up for trail rides. Trail rides are about 45 minutes long and cost \$30 per ride.

- Long pants and closed toed shoes are required for riding.
- On a ride, the camper is responsible for directing and steering the horse. There are 2 staff members on each ride.
- Since rides are scheduled ahead of time, if your child doesn't show up, is too late, or dressed improperly, he/she will still be charged for the ride.



- Campers who would like to take a trail ride during their session must sign up and pay for their ride at least 1 week before their session starts (space is limited). Signups can be done via email at registrar@campfitchymca.org.

Other Information

Prescription Medication

To assist the nursing staff we ask that all camper medication come to camp already organized for the week. Please have the medication organized in a daily medication dispenser/pill organizer. **Please also bring the original pharmacy containers for verification purposes.**

Medication is collected during check-in, so it is helpful to keep this separate from your camper's luggage.

Sharing Your Camp Pride!

Throughout the week there are several special events that are part of our Camp Fitch culture. Feel free to throw some extra costume elements into your trunk so you don't miss out on the fun. **Wacky Wednesday:** from hats to socks, hair styles or tutus, anything goes... as long as it's wacky! **Fleet Cup:** Each week campers participate in a variety of competitions and events to earn points towards winning the vaunted Fleet Cup. Wear your team colors! Mackinaw Fleet (6-7) is white & blue; Sloop Fleet (8-10) is blue & black; Schooner Fleet (11-12) is red & yellow; Clipper Fleet (13-14) is blue & white; Galleon Fleet (15-16 including LIT & CIT) is red & white.

First Mates' Club Registration

Many campers know before they leave camp that they are going to attend Camp Fitch next summer and since weeks fill earlier every year, we want to give returning campers first pick at 2022 dates with 2021 rates! You can skip the lines and register via your CampInTouch account starting June 14 or check out the First Mates' Registration stations throughout camp at check-out. Your camper will also receive a limited edition t-shirt!

Lost and Found

Lost and Found items are collected and displayed during check-out at Teaberry Lodge. We donate all lost & found items to a local charity two weeks after a session ends.

Keep an eye on your inbox for a special offer from our partner, Oliver's Labels, offering all of our campers a free set of labels to help more items return home!

Staying In Touch With Your Camper

- Mail: Be sure to mail it early so that it is received during their stay.
Your Camper's Name
CAMP FITCH YMCA
12600 Abels Rd
North Springfield, PA 16430
- Great idea: Write your letters in advance & give them to the check-in staff on Sunday. We'll distribute them on your designated days!
- Summer Photo Gallery Access & Bunk Notes: See page 4 for information about this service.
- Remember to keep all contacts positive as what you say in a letter can help or hinder your child's adjustment to camp.

Health & Safety

Camp Fitch is located on 450 acres on the woody shores of Lake Erie. Attending camp increases your child's exposure to the elements in the great outdoors. While our staff is trained to help your camper navigate these potential snags, it is helpful for you to review these safety education items before heading to camp.

Sun Safety



Encourage your child to apply sunscreen every morning regardless of the weather, as UV rays reach the earth even during cloudy or hazy days. The product needs time to absorb into the skin (30 minutes before going outside). Pack a broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF of at least 15. Rest Period, just after lunch, is a great time to re-apply sunscreen!

Hydration Happiness



As your camper participates in activities and hikes around camp, he/she loses water through sweat. Remind him/her to drink water before they start to feel thirsty; this will help prevent their water level from dropping too low. There are plenty of places to refill a water bottle around camp, so make sure to pack one for them to carry.

Tick Bites

Just like mosquitoes, ticks are a common annoyance in NW Pennsylvania and can carry disease. Your camper can apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing and skin, or use permethrin clothing. It is good practice for campers to do a self check at night or in the shower. Some areas such as knees, ears, and armpits should be given extra attention. If a tick is found, your child should not attempt to remove it, but should tell his/her counselor and get help from our nurse. For more information about tick bites and prevention, visit www.cdc.gov/lyme.

Aquatic Safety

Camp Fitch's waterfront is comprised of Lake Erie, our inland Lake MVIMA, and a swimming pool. Our lifeguards are certified by the YMCA or Red Cross trainers and participate in weekly assessments and trainings throughout the summer.

All campers are screened for swimming ability on Sunday and identified so that lifeguards can give proper attention to the kids who need it most. Camp Fitch is dedicated to ensuring that all campers possess the ability to swim. Non-swimmers are automatically enrolled in swim lessons as one of their rope activities for the week.

Special Diets

If your camper has any special dietary needs, please contact our food service department about 3 weeks before arrival to discuss the menu and any accommodations we can make to keep your camper fed and happy!

Email: diningservices@campfitchymca.org

Phone: (814)480-0648

Inclusion

Camp Fitch is a safe place where people from all backgrounds work and play together, regardless of ability, age, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender identity, income, national origin, race or sexual orientation. In the Camp Fitch family, everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, thrive, and most of all, to have fun! Camp should be enjoyable and encouraging, where campers share space with a group of other campers both in the cabin and at their programs. We are welcoming to individuals and families from all walks of life where friendships are made that will last a lifetime. We recommend taking a moment with your camper to discuss this opportunity to spend time with someone they might not interact with outside of camp.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there items my child should NOT bring?

Camp Fitch believes and enforces a no cell phone policy. It is our desire to give each child the best possible experience and to help them develop the independence necessary to spend a week away from home. Camp provides the perfect environment to unplug, live in the moment, and enjoy the adventure!

We also do not want campers to bring PIDs (personal isolation devices) which includes audio players, tablets, laptops, etc. If packed, these items will be kept in the office until check-out. Cash should also remain at home during your camper's stay.

Can I visit my child?

We recommend no parent visitation during a camping period. An organized weekend camping program is provided for campers staying multiple camping sessions, and parents may visit on these weekends. All visits must be coordinated with the camp director by calling 814.922.3219.

Please restrict telephone calls to the camp office for emergencies only.

Do you have tips for homesickness?

www.campparents.org is the American Camp Association (ACA) resource for camp parents. The "Camp Planner" includes many great articles including ones about homesickness. One of the most important things for parents to say to potentially homesick kids is that it's normal, not strange, to feel homesick. Generally campers who feel homesick are "over it" within a day or two and go on to have a great camp experience. Camp Fitch staff is well trained to help campers adjust to life away from home.

Will Camp Fitch contact me during the week about my camper?

We always say that no news from camp is good news, but don't panic if you do hear from us! Our staff may contact you for a basic question or one of our camp nurses may contact you if your camper:

- Has a temperature over 100°
- Has a fever lasting 24 hours
- Has repeated vomiting
- Has her 1st menstrual cycle
- Has an overnight stay at the health center
- Has any visible bruise or abrasion
- Has any treatment beyond band-aids (crutches, ACE bandages, etc.)

What are the basic rules of Camp Fitch?

Smoking, use of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, or fireworks, carrying or concealing a weapon or any object that may be used as a weapon, harassment or intimidation by words, gestures or body language, bullying or threatening another person verbally or physically is prohibited on all YMCA property. Campers who cannot adjust to the respectful and cooperative environment of camp will be sent home without a refund.

Frequently Asked Questions, continued

What about campers staying multiple weeks?

Campers staying multiple weeks take part in special weekend activities! See pages 2 and 4 for more details.

What about critters?

Our cabents are open air with canvas sides. Since Camp Fitch is in the woods, you can expect to be visited by the "locals." We prohibit food in cabents to significantly cut down on critter traffic.

Stay Connected After Camp

Camp Fitch YMCA hosts a seasonal Weekend Adventure series for summer campers to come to Fitch and reconnect with summer friends.

These events are a great opportunity to see what camp looks like in the fall, winter, and spring, and if the weather cooperates, try some of our seasonal sports like snow tubing and cross-country skiing!

Check our website and Facebook page for more details. The weekend is fully supervised and staffed with members of our summer crew.

Camp Fitch, All Year Round

Did you know that Camp Fitch is in operation all 12 months of the year? Consider us for:

- Girl Scout/Boy Scout Campouts
- Family Reunions
- School Field Trips
- Youth Group Retreats
- Weekend Getaways
- Hobby Group Retreats

If you are interested in any of these programs or have a group who would enjoy time at Fitch, contact our office to begin planning your next retreat!

Accreditation

We are accredited by the American Camping Association. To earn accreditation, a camp must meet high standards in facilities, program design, management, food service, camp operations, program quality, and the health and safety of campers and staff.



To learn more about the American Camping Association, please visit: www.acacamps.org and www.campparents.org.

The mission of the YMCA is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

CAMP FITCH YMCA

12600 Abels Road, North Springfield, PA 16430

P: 814.922.3219

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