

**YMCA Camp West Mar
Overnight Camp
2022
Parent / Camper Handbook**

Welcome to Camp West Mar

Thank you for your interest in our overnight camp here at Camp West Mar. I am extremely excited to be the new Executive Director of Camps for the YMCA of Frederick County and thrilled that we are once again able to offer an incredible overnight camp experience for your camper. I have been fortunate to have had the incredible opportunity to work with youth from all over the world and from every aspect of life in the camp environment, in outdoor adventure programming and in leadership development programming for the past 32 years.

Over those years I have witnessed the magical power of the work I do and have seen the lives of many youth forever positively impacted and changed from their experience in the many programs I have been a part of. I quickly realized that there was much more going on at camp than kids just running around having fun in the summer. What I was not prepared for was the positive community that camp provided, the safe place for youth to be themselves, make new friends, try different activities, become more independent, self-confident, and simply have fun just being a kid.

I saw how deeply camp impacted the lives of the youth in those camps, and how deeply it impacted me. So much that I changed course in my career and Youth Development became career. I have brought my many diverse youth development experiences to help create the camp experience that your child will remember for a lifetime.

Our goal is that our camp become your camper's second home, a place they can't wait for summer to come so they can return, a place for them to grow up in. We are excited Overnight Camp is Back and we are looking to grow our camp to provide that perfect Camp experience that have your camper talking about all year!

This Parent/camper Handbook is a guide to help you prepare for your camper's best summer ever! It will help you become better familiarized with the how and why of Camp West Mar. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at gmcdonnell@frederickymca.org, or (301) 663-5131 ext. 1229

Thank you,

George McDonnell

George McDonnell
Executive Director of Camps

Our Camp Philosophy

YMCA Core Values

Caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

In each camp, campers are recognized for behavior reflective of the Y's core values.

- Campers who demonstrate **caring** show their concern for others, their needs and their well-being. A camper who shares her snack with a new friend who may not have one is exemplifying caring.
- **Honesty** is telling the truth, demonstrating reliability and trustworthiness through actions.
- **Respect** is treating others as you would like to be treated, valuing the worth of every person. Not excluding fellow campers in a game or joke is an example of showing respect for others.
- **Responsibility** is doing what is right, being accountable for behavior choices and actions

Camp Leadership

[Sara Robertson-Ryan](#)
Vice President of
Youth Development

[George McDonnell](#)
Executive Director
of Camp

[Jenny Borton](#)
Assistant Director
of Camp

Camp West Mar Contact Information

Address: Camp West Mar
14509 Brown Rd.
Sabillasville, MD 21780

Website: www.frederickymca.org/camps/camp-west-mar

Camp Email: west-mar@frederickymca.org

Contact Phone Numbers

- Camp Office (Camp Season): 301-416-0980
- Camp Office Downtown Y: 301-663-5131 ext. 1229

Packing List

Please help or monitor your campers packing to ensure that everything they will need for their camp experience with us and to ensure items that are not needed or allowed at camp do not make their way into their bags.

Please label and put your camper's name on Everything! You would be surprised how much stuff we collect in Lost & Found that nobody seems to know who it belongs to.

We do not provide laundry services for our campers. We are able to take care of small amount of laundry if in an emergency.

CLOTHING

- 7-8 shirts
- 4 pair shorts
- 1 pair pants or jeans or sweats
- 8 pair underpants
- 8 pair socks
- 1 pair pajamas/sleepwear
- 2 swimsuits *One piece swimsuit recommended
- 1 light jacket/raincoat
- 2 sweatshirts/long sleeved shirts
- 2 pair athletic shoes
- 1 pair Shower shoes
- 1 Hat (baseball cap/sunhat)

BEDDING/LINEN

- "Summer" weight sleeping bag
- 2 sheets—1 fitted and 1 flat works great
- 1 Pillow(s)
- 1 Pillow case(s)
- 4 towels
- 2 washcloth

TOILETRIES

- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Shower soap, Shampoo, conditioner, etc.
- Shower caddy Hairbrush

STATIONERY

- Paper, envelopes, stamps (pre-addressed is AWESOME)
- Addresses of people to write letters to Pens/pencils
- 2 books or 3 magazines for reading

OTHER

- A very, very important water bottle!
- A flashlight (we recommend a headlamp)
- Extra batteries for your flashlight
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen Hat
- A camera (we recommend disposables)
- Camp West Mar is not responsible for lost or stolen items

DO NOT BRING

- Cell Phones
- Ipods/music players
- CD players
- Hand held video games
- Cell Phones
- Bicycles
- Any weapons of any kind
- Fireworks
- Drugs Tobacco Alcohol
- Cash
- Computers
- Cell Phones

Camper Storage

Each camper will have a small dresser with 4 draws to store all their cloths.

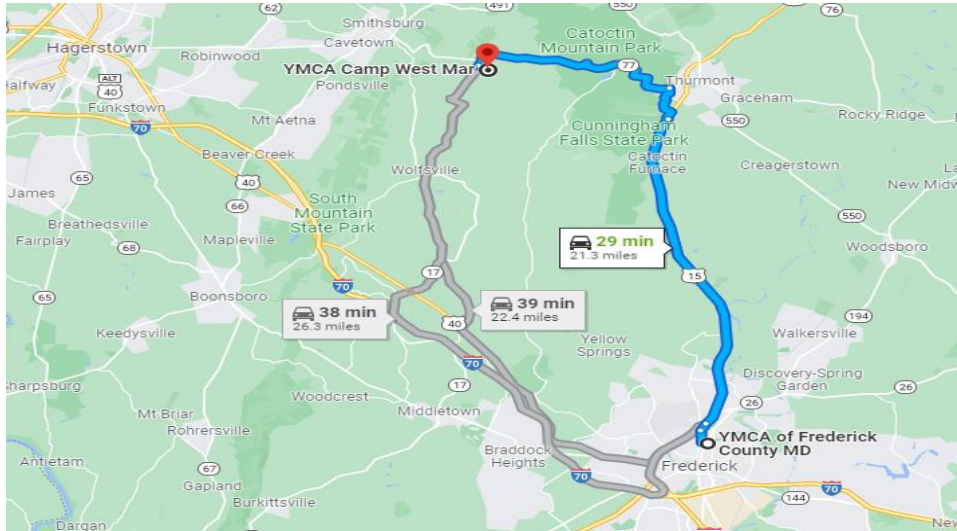
Wet Towels will be hung outside of the cabins on cloths lines.

Each camper will have some space under their bunks to store bags, ect.

Opening Day

Directions:

Camp West Mar is located in the foothills of the Catoctin Mountains approximately 21 miles from our Downtown Y Branch.



The speed limit on camp road is 20 mph. Please drive safely entering camp.

Parking

There are 4 designated parking areas in camp

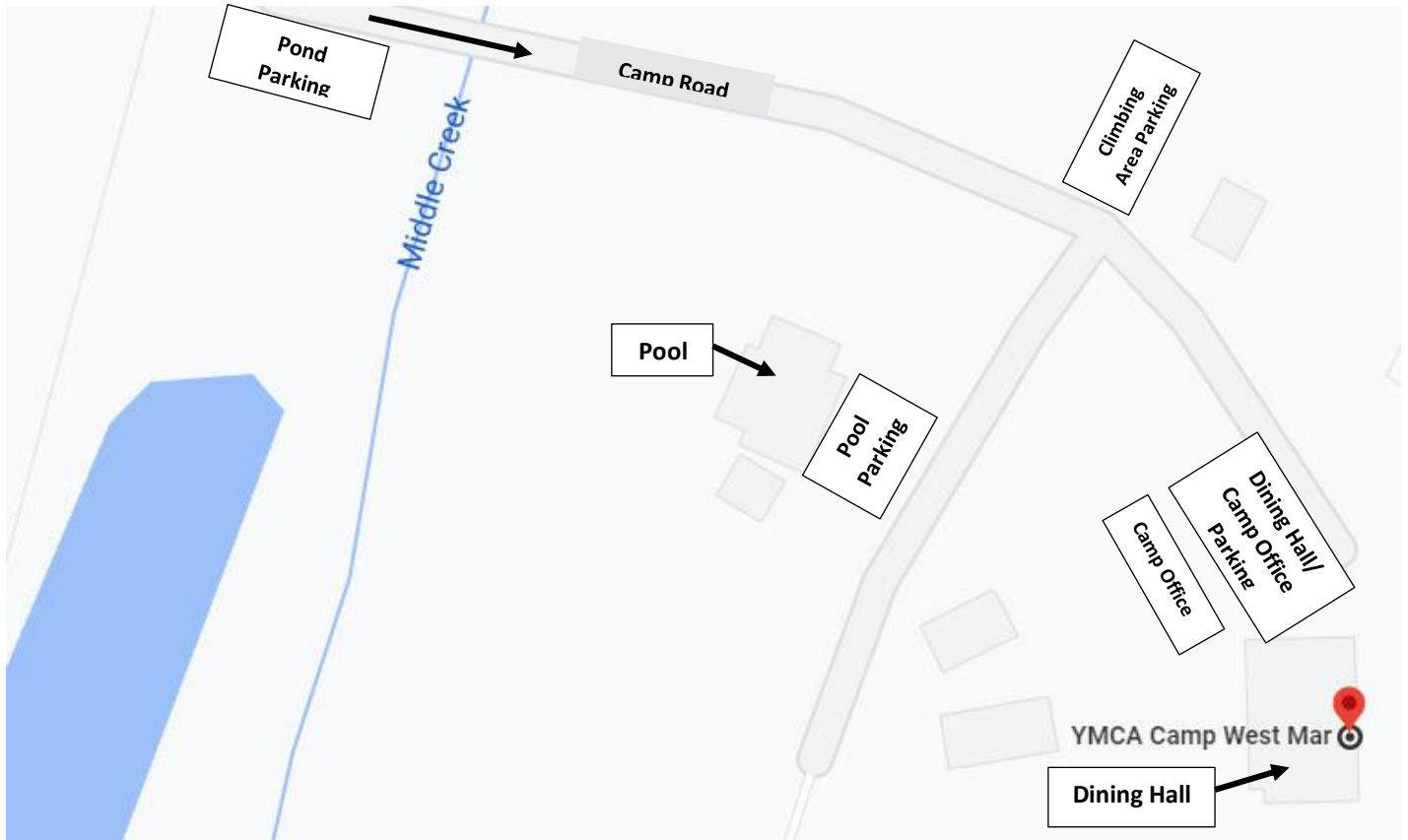
1. Dining Hall/ Camp Office (caboose)
2. Pool Area
3. Boulder Wall/Climbing Structure
4. Pond Area

There will be someone directing traffic and informing you where to park. Please drive to the Dining Hall/ Camp Office parking area. If that lot is full you will be instructed to park in one of the other parking areas.

Driving on camp property is limited to only certain areas. You will not be able to drive to the cabins, they are located close to the camp office and can easily be reached by foot. We will have staff available to help with any luggage or bags your camper brings.

Medication

- All medication, both prescription and over the counter, will be collected at time of registration. Except for Epi-Pens and in In-Halers. **Which must remain with your camper at all time.**



Check-In Procedures

1. Check in will be on the Sunday of the week of camp. Please follow the check in schedule below
 - Campers ages 9-11: Check in from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm
 - Campers ages 12-14: Check in from 2:00 pm-3:00 pm
 - **** If you have campers in both age groups please check in from 1:45 pm-2:30pm****
2. Sign in with Camp Staff in front of Camp Office
 - In case of inclement weather check in will be under the Dining Hall pavilion (behind the Dining Hall)
 - Camp Staff will verify camp balances are paid in full, review all paperwork with you, and collect campers' medications.
3. Moving into your camper's cabin
 - Your camper's counselor(s) will meet you and their new camper at the registration area and introduce themselves to you. They then will assist caring bags to bring you to your camper's cabin.
 - Once there your camper will choose a bunk and you can help unpack and put away your camper's clothing and stuff.
4. Saying good-bye
 - We know it will be hard for both you and your camper to say goodbye. We have found that it works best that parents/ guardians to leave shortly after their camper has unpacked and has settled into their

cabin. You can trust that our staff will take great care of your camper and provide them with a lifetime of memories.

- *On your way out please stop by the check in table to make sure you are all set.*

Medication

- All medication, both prescription and over the counter, will be collected at time of registration. Except for Epi-Pens and in In-Halers. **Which must remain with your camper at all time.**

Opening Day Activities

- Once all the campers have arrived the camp experience will begin.

Sunday Schedule

<i>3:30-4:00</i>	<i>Get to Know you Games</i>
<i>4:00-4:30</i>	<i>Camp Tour</i>
<i>4:30-5:30</i>	<i>Swim Test/Cabin Activities</i>
<i>5:30-6:00</i>	<i>Free Time</i>
<i>6:00-6:30</i>	<i>Dinner</i>
<i>6:30-7:15</i>	<i>Free Time</i>
<i>7:15-9:00</i>	<i>Campfire</i>
<i>9:00-9:30</i>	<i>Get Ready for Bed</i>
<i>9:30</i>	<i>Lights Out</i>

Camp Staff

- It is our philosophy that the key to running a successful camp and providing the best camp experience for your camper lies with our staff. So we put most of our efforts into selecting, training, mentoring our staff.
- We search out and select camp staff that are warm, kind and caring people that have a want to spend their summers teaching and mentoring young people
- Our camp staff goes through a vigorous hiring process to ensure we are selecting the best role models to care for your camper. Which includes a phone interview, an in person interview, reference checks.
- All our summer camp staff must be fingerprinted and pass a background check.

Life at Camp

Sample Dailey Schedule

7:30	<i>Revelry (wake-up)</i>
7:50	<i>Waiters/Hoppers Call</i>
7:55	<i>Assemble for Breakfast</i>
8:00-8:30	<i>Breakfast</i>
8:30-8:50	<i>Cabin Clean-up</i>
8:50	<i>Morning Activity Assemble</i>
9:00-10:00	<i>Activity Period 1</i>
10:00-11:00	<i>Activity Period 2</i>
11:00-12:00	<i>Activity Period 3</i>
12:00-12:25	<i>12 O'clock Free Time</i>
12:20	<i>Waiters/Hoppers Call</i>
12:25	<i>Assembly for Lunch</i>
12:30-1:00	<i>Lunch</i>
1:00-1:50	<i>Rest Hour</i>
1:50	<i>Afternoon Activity Assembly</i>
2:00-3:00	<i>Activity Period 4</i>
3:00-4:00	<i>Activity Period 5</i>
4:00-5:00	<i>Activity Period 6</i>
5:00-5:55	<i>5 O'clock Free Time</i>
5:50	<i>Waiters/Hoppers Call</i>
5:55	<i>Assembly for Dinner</i>
6:00-6:30	<i>Dinner</i>
6:30-7:00	<i>Free Time</i>
7:00-8:00	<i>Evening Activity</i>
8:00-8:30	<i>Evening Snack</i>
8:30-9:00	<i>Ready for Bedtime</i>
9:15-10:30	<i>Lights Out</i>

Activities

- We offer a wide range of activities for your camper to experience. Our goal is to expose them to activities that they may not have the opportunity to do outside of camp as well as the many traditional camp activities that only happen at camp.
- The camp day consist of 6 one hour activity periods. The schedule will change each day with some activities being offered every day, like swimming. While others will be offered 2 to 4 times a week.
- For 2022 campers will go to each activity period with their cabin mates. . For some of the activity periods the entire cabin will be participating in the same activity. For the rest of the activity periods the cabin will be split into two smaller groups, based on the age in that cabin. During these activity periods each of the two smaller cabin groups will be at different activities.
- Activities offered
 - ✓ Archery
 - ✓ Ropes Course/ Giant Swing
 - ✓ Canoeing

- ✓ Swimming
- ✓ Athletics (basketball, soccer, volleyball, pickle ball, whiffle ball)
- ✓ Arts & Crafts
- ✓ Camp Games (ultimate Frisbee, capture the flag, disc golf, tether ball, GaGa Ball)
- ✓ Nature/Science
- ✓ Sling Shot Range
- ✓ Hiking
- ✓ Board Games

Camp Facilities

1. Cabins

- We have 5 cabins for sleeping cabins where your camper will call home for the week. Each cabin sleep up to 20 campers with at least 2 counselors in each cabin.
- The beds are bunk beds. You may request your camper to have a bottom bunk if needed. You will need to bring your own sheets, pillow, pillow case, blankets and or sleeping bag.
- All cabins have electricity and small common area with tables and or couches to relax and play games with their cabin mates.
- Counselors will sleep in a separate room, but in the same cabin.

2. Dining Hall/ Dinning Hall Pavilion

- Campers will eat their meal in either our dining hall or in our outdoor pavilion

3. Shower House/ Bathrooms

- Our cabins do not have bathrooms in them. We do have our shower house/ bathrooms.

4. Pool

- We have an in ground pool. The depth of our pool goes from 2 feet to 4 feet.
- There is a bathhouse for showering and changing.

5. Ropes Course

- We have low ropes course that will challenge your camper to step out of their comfort zones and learn to trust others and work as a team.
- Our challenge course consist of our Low ropes Ninja Course and our Giant Swing
- In additional to our low ropes course we have our spider web, whale watch, gridlock, traffic jam challenges
- The highlight of the course is our giant swing
 - ✓ The swing works in two ways: it is a personal challenge, meaning it is up to you to motivate yourself to pull the chord which allows you to swing. With this course, we aim to push you to the limits of your comfort zone, without stretching you beyond your limits. It is also a group challenge, because you rely on the haul team to hoist you up in the air.

6. Basketball Court/ Pickle ball Courts

- Our multi use basketball court will also be utilized to play pickle ball on

7. Athletic Field
 - Our multi use field will have play home for our soccer/ flag football/ wiffleball & kickball/ ultimate freebie, and more
8. Volley ball Court
 - Regulation size sand volley ball
9. GaGa Ball Courts
 - We have two regulation size GaGa courts
10. Archery range
 - Or brand new covered archery range allow up to 6 shooters to shoot at a time.
11. Sling Shot Range
12. Amphitheater
13. Hiking Trails
14. Outdoor Classroom (coming late summer 2022)

Meals/Dining Hall

- We will be serving 3 meals a day plus snacks.
- Our goal is to provide a nutritious meal that that will keep you camper well feed and happy.
- If you have certain meal requirements, please let us know we will do our best to accommodate your camper's dietary needs.

Staying in contact with your camper

- Going away to camp as a child is a big event for everyone and a big part of their youth development. For many this will be there first time away from home, We are committed to make our camp a welcoming environment that everyone feel that they belong and are well cared for. Home sickness is natural and our staff are trained to help your camper address their homesickness.
- Being away at camp will help your camper develop by learning the skill to become confident and independent.
- For these reasons we do not allow campers to call home during their stay. We know this will be tough for you as well.
- How can you stay in contact with your camper?
 1. The old fashion way letters. We recommend that you write a letter and mail it on the Friday prior to the start of the camp week. This way by Monday at mail call they will receive a letter from home. This letter should be uplifting and encouraging by letting your camper know how proud of them you are that they are off on a great adventure and that you hope they have a great week at camp. Please stay away from anything they may be missing that week.
 2. We will encourage campers to write home as well, yeah the letters may not arrive until they are home, but it helps they fell connected. We will be selling post card in our camp store, but if you can send them with some paper and envelopes, it helps to pre address them.
 3. If you can send a few letters, getting mail is a big deal and they don't even know that yet. We recommend staying away from care packages due to the camp only being one week.
 4. Make sure you label your letter to the address above with you campers name as C/O under camp West mar.

5. Email you can send emails to our Camp West Mar email address. With the Subject Camp mail with your campers full name. We will print them off and deliver them to them at mail call. Just remember staff will be able to see them, but they will not read them.
- You will not be able to call your camper. You can email us at the address if you are worried about anything. Our camp staff will reply back to you. Just remember it can get quite busy here at camp so the instant contact we have all become accustomed to does not always apply to camp. We are too busy having fun with our campers!
 - Birthdays. If it is your camper's birthday during camp we will make a big deal about it for them, we also will allow you to talk with them on their birthday.

Cell Phone policy

- As mentioned above we do not allow cell phones in camp. This is done for very specific reasons. Camp is a magical place that allows us to leave the outside world behind, at least for a short time while we are here. This has become so important for our youth as they do not get this opportunity often. Being focused on our time at camp allows us to get a much deeper and meaningful experience while we are here. My experience is that once they have this opportunity and realize they are having too much time here they soon forget they don't have their phones with them.
- Pictures and music. Our phones are much more than our phones. We do not want to prevent any camper from taking pictures of their experience here as they are going to capture everything. If they are able to bring a digital camera they may. Plus we will be going around taking as many pictures as we can and sharing them with you. As for the music the same thing. If they can bring an mp3 player they can.

