



YMCA
Camp Elphinstone

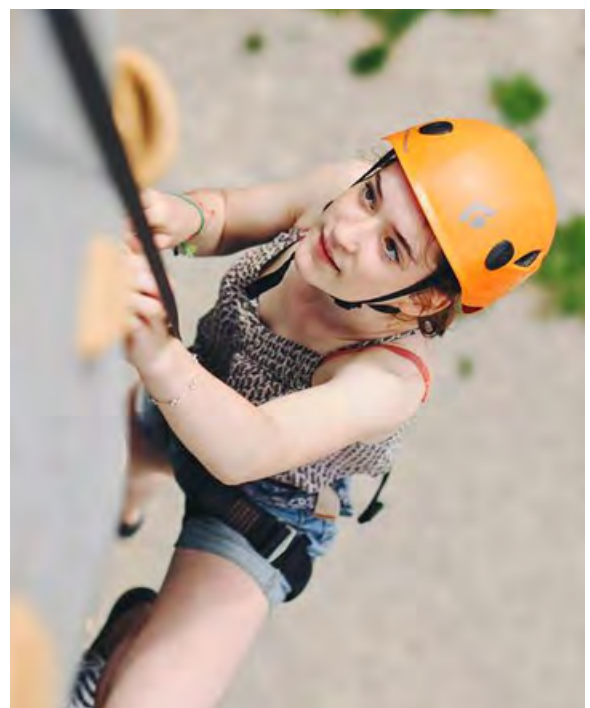
Off to Camp Guide: Leadership Development & Out-trip Programs



Keep Our Promises | Put People First | Lead by Example | Do the Right Thing

Our Mission:

YMCA BC is a charity committed to building thriving, healthy and vibrant communities.



Welcome to YMCA Camp Elphinstone!



Dear Out-trippers, Leadership Development participants and Families,

Thanks for choosing the YMCA for your camp experience—we're looking forward to a great summer! Whether it's your first time at camp or you're a returning camper, this guide is full of important information you will need to know to prepare for camp and out-trip.

Being at camp and on trip is very different than being at home. We sleep in tents, paddle or hike long hours, work as a team to set up and take down campsites, and are outside most of the day! This type of lifestyle means that we work together to ensure that everyone's camp experience is positive. We expect all campers and staff to treat each other with respect and help others enjoy their time away from home.

For Leadership Development Participants: We are so excited to be a step on your leadership Journey. You are becoming part of a very reputable community of leaders. This is your chance to develop skills that contribute back to your home community. You'll develop your self-confidence and leadership abilities as you tackle skills, responsibilities and problem-solving situations you may have never taken on before. You will challenge yourself to take the initiative at camp. Through these accomplishments and successes, you'll gain a feeling of trust in your own abilities, which can push you forward to more success in your everyday life. You will be a model of Elphinstone Leadership not only to your peers, but to thousands of younger campers that come to camp each summer.

We hope this guide will answer any questions you may have, but if you are seeking further information about your upcoming camp experience, please contact us. Early communication allows us to address any concerns before your child arrives at camp, ensuring an easy transition on the first day.

We will communicate with your family prior to the start of your camp session with updates on what to look forward to and expect. We can't wait to see you this summer!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "ANDREW SPONAGLE".

Andrew Sponagle

Director, YMCA Camp Elphinstone

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily McFarlane".

Emily McFarlane

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Expectations at Camp

Respect for Yourself:

At YMCA Camp Elphinstone, we live by basic principles of respect. Every person at camp has the responsibility to know their own limits and take care of themselves physically and emotionally. As camp is a very busy place, much different than being at home or school, we support campers in recognizing when they need to rest or to take some time for themselves. Counsellors make sure that all campers have time for personal hygiene, an opportunity for quiet time, and an opportunity to talk about how they are feeling each day.

Respect for Others:

We also expect that each person at camp has respect for all others at camp. Our YMCA believes that every participant has the right to a safe environment and equal treatment by all without discrimination. A camp experience is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the incredible things a group can accomplish together while welcoming the differences in individuals. We ask that everyone respects the physical and emotional boundaries of others. We work hard to support all campers and ensure that everyone's experience provides opportunity for fun and learning. While working in a group, challenges may arise and we work through them together in a safe and productive way. In situations where a camper is unsafe and harming themselves or others, they may be removed from the program. See our Camper Behaviour Policy among the Health & Safety info section later in this guide for more.

Respect for the Environment:

At camp we are careful that excess garbage is not left around for wildlife and critters. Respect for the camp environment also includes keeping all of our buildings, trails and equipment in good repair. Campers and staff are expected to take initiative in sustaining the beauty of our camp for future guests to our site and to provide a safe and healthy environment for everyone.



Leadership Development: Expectations and Success

YMCA Core Values play an integral role in how we design and deliver our Leadership Development programs. We want you to get the most out of your experience and we create each program with this in mind. Throughout the year we engage with leaders to gain valuable feedback on how to make the best program we can. The programs are designed to set you up for success with challenges and opportunities to grow and learn about your personal strengths and the importance of working together.

As a member of the group, you will have certain expectations of others, and they of you. Our expectation is that you're a full member of the group, participating in all aspects of the program offered and doing your best to achieve team success.

Whether at camp or on an out-trip, you're expected to take the initiative, role model, and share responsibilities. On trip, this might include cooking, doing dishes, rising early to assist with breaking camp, maintaining group moral and navigating. At camp, this might include actively participating in camp programs, teaching younger campers skills and games, and caring for the environment by picking up garbage and treating equipment with respect. This equality among your leadership group will ensure that all voices are heard and everyone has a positive experience.

Your counsellors are a resource for your questions, and will help coach you in learning the skills necessary for a positive experience. Counsellors are teachers, mentors and coaches and will be there to support or intervene in difficult situations. You can expect exemplary leadership and dedication from them, as well as a breadth of knowledge and experience.

The success enjoyed by the entire group will come from full participation, a positive attitude, and the willingness to try new things and learn from everyone.



Powell Forest Trek and Paddle Expedition: Trip Details

Length: Nine days, 81 km

Location: Sunshine Coast Trail & Powell Lakes Canoe Route

Description: Campers will hike the Sunshine Coast Trail for the first three days, immersing themselves in diverse ecosystems while learning outdoor leadership skills like route planning and wilderness safety. A six-day canoe expedition awaits on the Powell Lakes Canoe Route, where campers will master teamwork through skills like portaging, backcountry cooking and expedition expectations.

Day Route/Campsite**

1. Hike from start of trail at Saltery Bay Ferry Terminal to Fairview Bay camp.
2. Hike from Fairview Bay to Mount Troubridge campsite.
3. Hike from Mount Troubridge to Lois Lake campsite.
4. Hike from Lois Lake campsite to Lois Lake access point.
5. Lois Lake Paddle—Lois-Horseshoe Portage—Horseshoe Lake Paddle—Horseshoe Creek camp.
6. Nanton-Ireland Portage—Ireland Lake Paddle—Ireland-Dodd Portage—Dodd Lake Paddle—Dodd Lake North camp.
7. Dodd-Windsor Portage—Windsor Lake Paddle—Windsor-Goat Portage—Goat Lake camp.
8. Goat Island Paddle—Goat Lake camp.
9. Goat Lake Paddle—Powell Lake Paddle—Finish at Powell Lake Marina.

***Sample schedule, exact route and stop locations subject to change.*

Basics:

The first few days are spent at camp preparing for the trip, learning the necessary skills. The focus is on teambuilding, evenly dividing responsibilities, paddling skills, route planning, and general trip preparation. While on trip campers will have the chance to learn about backcountry living and Leave No Trace.

Safety:

There will be regular nightly check-ins with camp via cell phone, satellite phone, or inREACH device while the campers are on trip. Read more information about the [Sunshine Coast Trail](#) and [Powell Forest Canoe Route](#).



Sunshine Coast Trail: Trip Details

Length: Four days, 29 km

Description: The Sunshine Coast Trail (SCT) is a 180-km hike along the Northern Sunshine Coast of British Columbia. It traverses coastal mountains through some of the last remaining old-growth forest in the region and offers incredible views of the Strait of Georgia, inland lakes, and the surrounding Coast Mountains. The one-week SCT trip is a great introduction to this extensive trail network. It will take campers along a four-day stretch of the SCT from Saltery Bay to Lois Lake. Below is a sample schedule of where the campers will be hiking and camping:

Day Route/Campsite**

1. Hike from start of trail at Saltery Bay Ferry Terminal to Fairview Bay camp.
2. Hike from Fairview Bay to Mount Troubridge campsite.
3. Hike from Mount Troubridge to Lois Lake campsite.
4. Hike from Lois Lake campsite to Lois Lake access point.

***Sample schedule, exact route and stop locations subject to change.*

Basics:

The first day is spent at camp preparing for the trip and learning the necessary skills needed for the trip. The focus is on teambuilding, evenly dividing responsibilities, hiking skills, route planning, and general trip preparation. The next four days are spent on trip, and the final day is spent back at YMCA Camp Elphinstone before campers head home on Friday. While on trip campers will have the chance to learn about backcountry living and Leave No Trace.

Safety:

There will be regular nightly check-ins with camp via cell phone, satellite phone, or inREACH device while the campers are on trip. Read more information about the [Sunshine Coast Trail](#).



Leadership Development: Program Descriptions

Leadership Development I (LD1):

This two-week program teaches campers the technical skills associated with delivering camp activities while focusing on team building. Campers participate in an out-trip experience and are offered the opportunity to build strong, lasting friendships in a positive and constructive setting. Youth gain a solid foundation in delivering all types of camp programming (e.g. canoeing, archery, rock climbing, etc.) while learning how to support others. LD1 participants will contribute to and learn how to facilitate special camp programs, such as theme days and evening programs. This program is designed to be a pre-requisite of the LD2 program.

Leadership Development II (LD2):

This three-week program allows campers the chance to apply skills learned in LD1 and continue to grow as leaders. This program emphasizes initiative, communication and the group-care skills necessary to be a strong leader in a camp setting or elsewhere. LD2s take part in regular camp activities like boating, archery, ropes course and more with a focus on fine-tuning their teaching and group-facilitation skills. LD2s may take part in a short out-trip experience. Participants work directly with groups of young campers in short cabin placements to practice firsthand their group-care skills.

At YMCA Camp Elphinstone, we are committed to building up leaders who not only positively contribute to the camp community, but who also stand out as leaders in their home and school environments. As such, LD2s gain valuable skills that are assets in all settings, including the importance of teamwork and solid communication, how to give and receive feedback, and the importance of knowing your strengths and when to ask for help. We focus on transferrable skills for participants to be successful leaders in a variety of contexts. Completion of the LD2 program does not guarantee a job at Camp Elphinstone, but if interested in working at Camp Elphinstone, we encourage all our leaders to apply.

As part of their training, all LD2 participants will take part in Standard First Aid, [Bronze Medallion](#) and [Bronze Cross](#) certification courses. This certification is a requirement of camp staff and will help prepare them for future employment. LD2 participants should be prepared to fully participate in this course, and be aware that it does have some challenging physical requirements and certification is not guaranteed.



Packing and Preparing for Camp

For your comfort and well-being, please come prepared for the weather, as much of your time will be spent in the elements. Even during summer in the wilderness, there are some cold days as well as nights. Layered clothing is a proven method of insulation. A thin layer worn next to the skin (the “wicking” layer) should not retain moisture. A thicker insulating layer traps air for warmth. The outermost layer should protect from wind and rain. Breathable, waterproof rain gear is best. Proper rain gear is essential. Wet, cold campers put themselves and the group at risk.

First Day of Camp Packing List

There are a few items your camper will need with them through the first day of camp. These items will ensure your camper is staying sun-safe and is prepared for activities like our Swim Challenge upon arrival at camp. These items should be packed in a separate, smaller bag that campers will keep with them as they begin their orientation.

Please ensure your camper is prepared with the following items:

- Water bottle
- Towel
- Hat
- Water Shoes
- Rain jacket with hood (waterproof)
- Swimsuit
- Sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)

Packing Tips

Campers and families are encouraged to review the suggested packing list on the following pages, as well as some other tips to keep in mind:

- Old suitcases, duffels, backpacks or laundry bags are ideal for packing your belongings. We do not recommend using expensive luggage. **Please DO NOT pack items in garbage bags**, as they tear easily and may be mistaken for garbage.
- Consider writing the camper’s name on all belongings in the event that it becomes misplaced.
- As your camper’s session may last anywhere from one to three weeks, the quantity of some items will depend upon their session length. Please pack accordingly.
- Synthetic or wool fabrics are preferred for clothing items worn against the skin, such as socks, underwear and T-shirts.
- Out-trip campers may leave clothes and shoes that are clean and dry at Camp Elphinstone to wear after returning from their out-trip and before departing camp.

Packing List

Clothing

- Socks (Enough for session length)
- Underwear (Enough for session length)
- T-shirts (3 to 4 per week)
- 1 Long-sleeve T-shirt
- 1 pair Long johns or thermals
- 1 pair Quick-dry shorts
- 2 insulating Sweaters or Small Jackets (preferably synthetic or wool)
- 1 pair lightweight Pants
- 1 waterproof Rain Jacket with hood (windbreakers and ponchos are NOT acceptable)
- 1 pair waterproof Rain Pants
- 2 pairs sturdy, closed-toed Running Shoes or light Hiking Boots. (One pair will be your "wet" shoes on out-trips. Keens may be worn as "dry" shoes on site, but full-coverage shoes or boots are required as "wet" shoes. See more on next page.)
- Water shoes
- Swimsuit
- 2 sets Pajamas
- Hat (for sun and rain)
- Sunglasses
- Bandana

Required Equipment

- Sleeping Bag with compression sack (warm, as compact as possible, preferably synthetic or down-filled, mummy-style bag)
- Headlamp or Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- 2 Towels (one quick-dry, chamois-style for out-trip, one beach towel for camp)
- Hiking Pack (50-65L recommended)
- Therm-a-Rest or Sleeping Pad
- 2 one-litre Water Bottles

Toiletries and Other Items

- Eyeglasses or Contact Lenses
- Biodegradable Soap & Shampoo
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Brush or Comb
- Prescription Medication (see more on next page)
- Insect Repellent (non-aerosol)
- Hand Sanitizer (travel-size bottle ideal)
- Sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Menstrual Supplies
- Extra Garbage Bags or Ziploc Bags

Optional Items

- Personal PFD (camp will supply otherwise)
- Small travel Camping Pillow
- 10L or 20L Dry Bags
- Hydration Bladder Pack
- Musical instrument (LDs only)
- Writing Paper, Stamps & Envelopes
- Journal & Pen
- Book
- Camera (waterproof case recommended)

Medications:

- All medications are to be sent to camp in their original packages within a Ziploc bag, clearly labelled with the camper's full name and date of birth.
- Prescription medication should be sent in blister packs prepared by your pharmacy if at all possible.
- All staff and camper medications are locked in a secure space within the Wellness Centre.
- We ask that you give the medications directly to our Wellness Staff at the check-in table on the first day.
- If your child wears a medic alert bracelet, we strongly encourage that they wear this bracelet while at camp and that this information is clearly noted on the camper's YMCA Community Portal profile at myymca.ca.

Out-trip Footwear:

- Campers are required to bring two pairs of closed-toed shoes for their out-trip. One pair will be worn during the day and will get wet. The second pair will be kept dry for the evenings.
- A sturdy pair of shoes is to be worn during the day as campers may encounter rugged terrain while portaging or swimming.
- To ensure your camper's safety, we recommend an older pair of sturdy running shoes over thin water shoes. Keen-brand sandals or a similar type are fine, as long as they have adequate toe coverage and a secure back-strap.
- These types of shoes can only be worn as "dry" shoes while on trip. Full coverage running shoes will be required as a designated "wet" shoe.
- Crocs are not considered adequate out-trip shoes.





What Not to Bring:

At YMCA Camp Elphinstone, we believe that a camp experience should be a return to the basics, where campers can develop a sense of harmony with nature, themselves and others.

If any of the items listed below are brought to camp, they will be collected by camp staff and returned to the parent/guardian at the end of the camp session.

Please ensure the items listed below are not brought to camp:

- Mobile phones
- Electronic toys or gaming devices (e.g. Nintendo Switch)
- Personal media players (e.g iPod, iPad)
- Food, candy or gum
- Matches
- Knives
- Fireworks
- Toy guns or water pistols
- Expensive watches or smart watches
- Jewelry
- Any other valuables or items with significant meaning

Lost and Found

Amongst the excitement of summer at YMCA Camp Elphinstone, we understand that some items may be misplaced during your camper's visit. As such, it is very important to leave treasured items at home, and to label your child's belongings, increasing the chance they will return home with all items.

If you would like to inquire about a lost item, please email us at camp.elphinstone@bc.ymca.ca with "Lost & Found" as the subject line, and include the camper's full name, session and description of the lost item(s).

Your patience is appreciated as we look for your lost items as our staff team is busy during the camp season and may not be able to locate missing belongings right away. Unclaimed lost items will be held for one week after the last day of the camp season, after which they will be donated. The YMCA is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items.

Heat Room *(please read the following information carefully):*

Due to the widespread issue of bed bugs in the Lower Mainland, all bags and personal belongings arriving at YMCA Camp Elphinstone must pass through a heat treatment process, which eliminates the concern of bed bugs spreading to our facilities or to your home. Our specially constructed heat treatment room warms bags to 60 degrees Celsius (about the temperature of a clothes dryer) which ensures that any bed bugs and/or eggs that may be contained in participants' belongings are killed prior to moving into cabins.

Although the heat treatment is safe for most items, a few items should not pass through the heat treatment room as it may cause damage. The following items should not be heated:

- Plastics (such as toiletries and cosmetics)
- Cameras
- Any electronics, aerosols, candles/wax or food (which should be left at home)
- Medicines
- Photographs
- Rubber boots

All items that should not be heated must be packed in a Ziploc bag and placed at the top of the camper's luggage so it may be removed prior to treatment.

Please ensure Ziploc bags are well labelled with your child's name and session. We appreciate your assistance in making heat treatment an efficient process.



Arrival Day Activities (Camp 101)

At the beginning of each session, cabin groups participate in arrival day activities, or Camp 101, to familiarize themselves with the Elphinstone community.

Once everyone has arrived at Elphinstone and been placed in their cabin groups, the entire camp will be welcomed by the Camp Director for a community meeting. Cabin groups will then participate in a swim test, a visit to the Wellness Centre for a check in, a tour of camp, and they will have a chance to play games and get to know their cabin mates.

Typical Day at Camp Elphinstone**

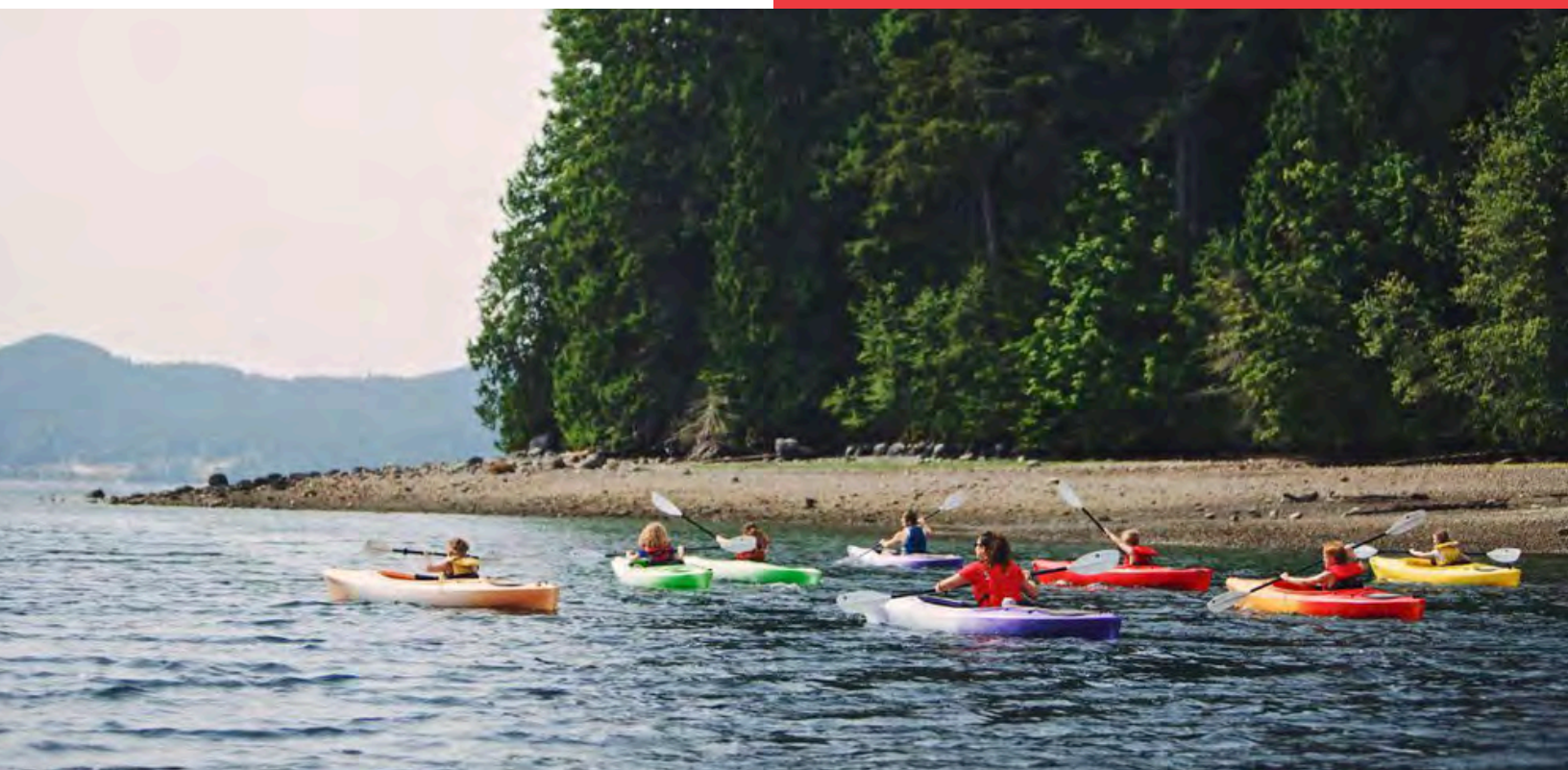
8:00 a.m. Optional Activity
9:00 a.m. Breakfast
10:15 a.m. Cabin Clean-Up
10:30 a.m. Program Activity Rotation 1
12:00 p.m. Program Activity Rotation 2
1:30 p.m. Lunch
3:30 p.m. Program Activity Rotation 3
4:45 p.m. Program Activity Rotation 4
6:30 p.m. Dinner
7:30 p.m. Evening Program
8:15 p.m. Flagpole
9:00 p.m. Evening Snack
9:30 p.m. Flush & Brush/Wellness Logs
9:30 p.m. In Cabins

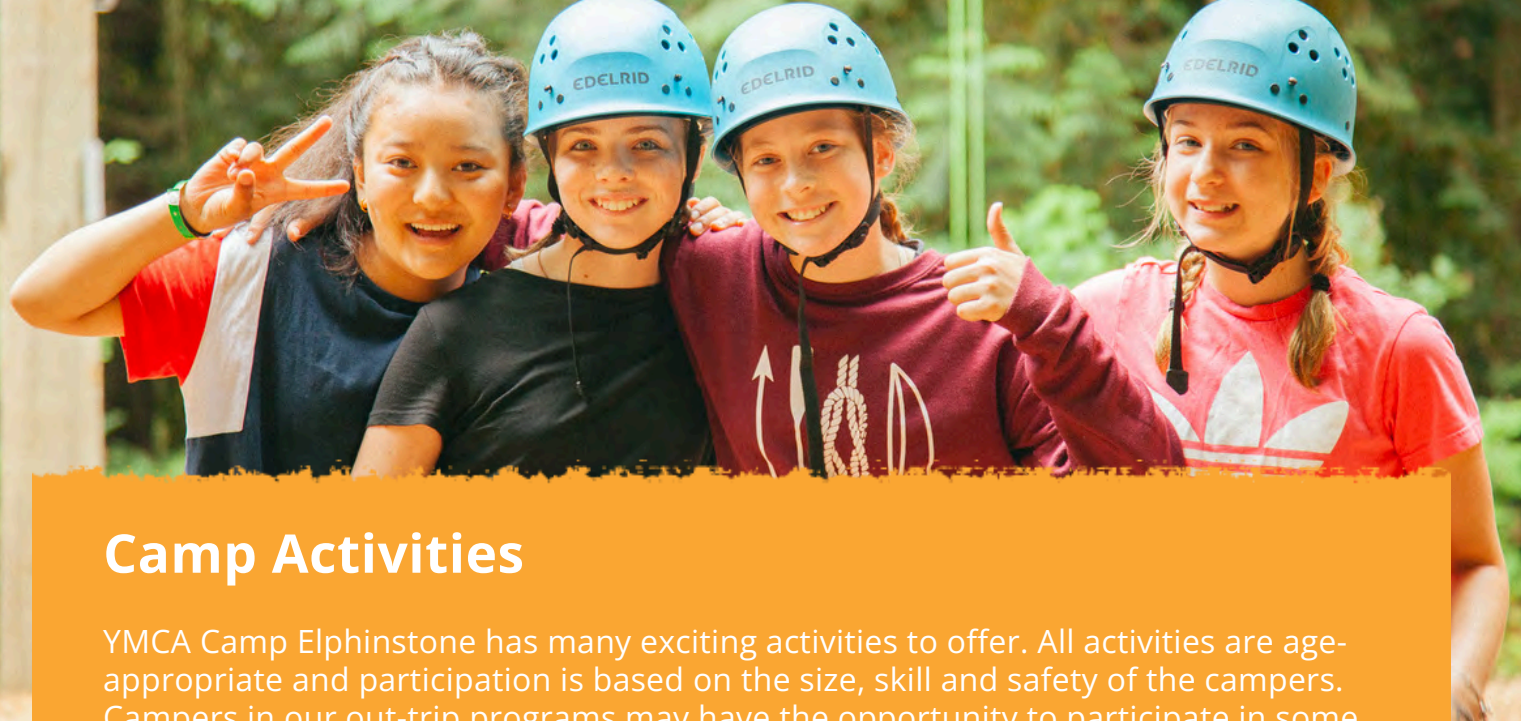
***Times and days may vary*

Program activities may include out-trip preparation, hike practice, Leadership Education, cabin placement and other camp activities.

Flagpole is a time for an entire section to have a fun gathering at the flagpole on the main field. This includes daily awards, important camp news and updates, fun skits about the evening program or weekly theme day, and of course the end-of-the-day song!

Evening programs are group activities that campers enjoy together, like camp-wide games, campfires or skit nights.





Camp Activities

YMCA Camp Elphinstone has many exciting activities to offer. All activities are age-appropriate and participation is based on the size, skill and safety of the campers. Campers in our out-trip programs may have the opportunity to participate in some activities outside of their out-trip.

Waterfront

Sailing, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, voyageur canoeing and stand-up paddleboarding.

Outdoor Living Skills

Canoe trips, backpacking/hiking trips, outdoor cooking, shelter building, fire building and orienteering.

Land Sports and Challenges

Archery, low & high ropes courses, rock climbing, basketball, gaga ball, volleyball and tetherball.

Creative and Environmental

Arts & crafts, photography, campfires, discovery hikes, nature walks to "Big Tree", global education and marine beach studies.

Leadership Development out-trips:

LD1 participants take part in both an overnight camp-out at one of our onsite trip areas, as well as a canoe or sea kayak trip. This trip is designed to encourage teamwork and communication among the group.

LD2 participants will have the opportunity to take part in day hike or canoe trips, as well as overnight camp-outs on our onsite trip areas.



Health & Safety at Camp and on Out-Trips

An enjoyable experience begins with a healthy participant. Your child's good health—physical, social and emotional—is very important to us. Our programs emphasize careful planning to ensure high safety standards are in place. We are a member of the British Columbia Camps Association and many of our YMCA practices exceed the BCCA standards.

Staff are trained to reduce the risk of and respond to emergencies. All staff hold current CPR and First Aid certifications and all waterfront staff are certified lifeguards (NLS). Depending upon their role at camp, many staff possess additional qualifications.

All campers and staff must wear personal floatation devices (PFDs) during waterfront activities at all times, including while in boats, on paddleboards and while swimming. Swim testing and bracelets will not be implemented as in past years. All PFDs are provided at camp.

Our out-tripping staff have Wilderness First Aid, NLS, and FOODSAFE qualifications. While on a trip, out-tripping staff check in with the Camp Director/Manager each night via cell phone, satellite phone, or inREACH device.

The health and safety of your child is our first priority. We comply with various health and safety regulations and industry standards to ensure a safe environment.

Complete Health & Safety information can be reviewed by visiting our [Overnight Camps page](#).

24 Hour Supervision:

YMCA Camp Elphinstone provides "24/7" supervision of all campers. Each cabin is led by a pair of counsellors who ensure a high level of supervision throughout the session. Counsellors sleep in the cabin with campers and are available day and night for emergency situations.

Wellness Centre:

Our Wellness Centre serves the health needs of everyone at camp. The Wellness Staff oversee the daily routine of camper health checks, delivering medications and handling incidents or accidents on site. Our Wellness Staff team is familiar with all kinds of common ailments and are always working with participants to make sure they are at their best. The Wellness Staff will keep you informed about your child's condition in the event of a change in health, a trip to the doctor or an emergency. If you have any concerns or questions regarding your child's health while they are at camp, our Wellness Staff will call you back directly to discuss your concerns. In order for us to provide the best care for your child, please make sure to be as specific as possible when sharing your camper's medical information. This information can be updated at any time after registration through your YMCA Community Portal profile at myymca.ca.

Illness at Camp:

Camp is a challenging environment to handle contagious illnesses. For this reason, we work hard to ensure that we are closely monitoring the health of our campers and staff, and to do everything we can to minimize the potential for the spread of illness. It is our camp practice to treat injury, illness and infectious diseases as per recommendation of the local health unit. For common illnesses or viruses, children will be taken to a local clinic for assessment, prescription for medication will be given and campers will be asked to return home until they are no longer contagious.

Unfortunately, we do not have the space or the additional staff supervision to support individual campers for lengthy medical stays in our Wellness Centre. We feel that ill campers will be much better supported at home to make a speedy recovery and return to camp. In addition, having campers with any type of contagious illness recover at home helps us to reduce the potential for spreading illness in our community. Families will be responsible for any costs associated with prescriptions and will not be reimbursed for the time at home.

Campers Leaving Camp:

Campers meeting the below criteria will be required to self-isolate and be picked up from camp for a minimum of 48 hours and up to five days:

- Any camper with two or more symptoms related to covid-19 not otherwise explained by pre-existing conditions or circumstances.
- Any camper with a fever.

If your camper becomes ill at camp, it is expected that a family member or emergency contact be available to pick the camper up within 12 hours of initial contact with camp. We do not provide Covid-19 tests at camp, nor do we accept negative tests as proof to return to camp.

Campers Returning to Camp:

Campers who have been sent home for communicable disease symptoms may return to camp after 48 hours from the time they depart camp, if their symptoms have improved, they no longer have a fever and they feel well enough to return to regular camp programming.

Head Lice:

Upon arrival, your child will be checked for head lice—we **STRONGLY** recommend that caregivers check their campers for lice prior to start of camp. If lice or nits are found by our staff, your child will not be permitted to come to camp until they are nit-free. Ideally, it takes 7-8 days to effectively kill/remove lice and nits, so we suggest checking your child's head at least one week prior to arrival and then again the day before you send them to camp. Please keep in mind that it can be difficult for a child to integrate into their cabin if they miss the first day or two of camp.

If you don't know how to check for head lice, please talk to your family doctor or a public health nurse. Although lice do not carry disease and are not considered "dangerous," they are a nuisance! Please help us keep our camp a lice-free zone.

If lice or nits are found by our staff upon arrival and your child is not permitted to come to camp, **there will be no refund provided.**



Dietary Restrictions:

At Camp Elphinstone, we take all camper dietary restrictions seriously and provide appropriate alternatives at each meal served where required. We take every step in offering and informing campers of the alternatives made available to them at each meal.

Prior to your child's camp session, it is important to talk to them about the following:

- It is the camper's responsibility to ensure they are following their required diet.
- If they have any questions or concerns regarding the food provided at camp they should speak to a YMCA staff member right away.

If you need to review or edit your camper's dietary needs, you can do so through your YMCA Community Portal profile at myymca.ca, or by contacting our registration team at camp.elphinstone@bc.ymca.ca.

Bedwetting:

If bedwetting is a concern, please note that our staff are trained to deal with this discreetly, working with children one-on-one. Campers are encouraged to ask their counsellors for help, day or night, and every effort is made to prevent accidents. Campers who may wet the bed are asked to bring extra bedding or sleeping bag liners to camp. We will quickly launder any soiled bedding. Please make sure this has been noted as part of your camper's medical information.





Homesickness:

The predominant symptom of homesickness is preoccupying thoughts of home. Other symptoms may include being withdrawn, headaches, stomachaches or other body complaints, and crying.

Preparing for a camp experience at home will help prevent homesickness. Here are suggestions of things you can do with your child at home before they come to camp:

- Learn about YMCA Camp Elphinstone with your camper so that they can anticipate what it will be like.
- Talk about the activities we offer and ask your camper what they are looking forward to participating in at camp.
- Go through the sample schedule found in this Off to Camp Guide.
- Arrange a sleepover at a friend's house so your child can experience being away from home.
- Use a calendar to show the amount of time your camper will be away. Predictability and perspective on the length of their stay at camp is important.
- Pack a stuffy or picture of your family to bring with them to camp.
- Before your camper leaves for camp, avoid making comments that may reflect your own anxiety about them being away. Phrases such as "I hope you'll be OK," or "What will I do without you?" may leave a child worried that something bad might happen during their time at camp. Make sure to give your camper a positive send-off, using a phrase such as "I know you're looking forward to a lot of the activities at camp. I can't wait to hear your stories!"
- Avoid making a "deal" with your camper to bring them home if they don't like the experience of being away. This may undermine the child's sense that their parents/guardians have confidence in their ability to be on their own. It may also set an expectation that they won't like the new experience and the child may not give camp a chance to change their mind.
- If your camper is worried about missing home, talk about it with them. Let your camper know that homesickness is normal and tell them about strategies they can use to help ease their worry.
- Some ways to alleviate homesickness are:
 - Packing supplies to write letters home while at camp.
 - Sharing their feelings with their friends and counsellors.
 - Hugging their favourite stuffed animal.
 - Thinking of all the exciting stories they will have to share with family at the end of their session.



How we combat homesickness at camp:

We are committed to creating a positive, caring community at YMCA Camp Elphinstone and, through this, focus on the prevention of homesickness.

1. We work on creating a positive community on the first day of camp by giving campers the opportunity to meet each other and get to know the site. We discuss group expectations and play group games, and we post each group's schedule for all campers to refer to so they know what to expect each day.
2. A Section Director meets with each group within their first 24 hours at camp to discuss what campers can expect from their counsellors and who they can talk to if they need help.
3. We have great counsellors and camp staff who care about your camper's experience and well-being. All staff are specifically trained on identifying homesickness and have strategies to help campers cope with being away from home. Most of the time, campers just need someone to sit with and talk to about how they are feeling.
4. If a child is persistently homesick and not willing to participate in camp activities, the support given will be tailored to each circumstance. A Section Director or Camp Director/Manager will call home and let the parents/guardians know what is happening. The purpose of this initial call is to brainstorm coping strategies, and for parents/guardians to give us more insight into what the camper may need. From this point, if homesickness is continuing to pull the camper out of programs, the parents/guardians and camp staff will decide if the camper would benefit from a call home, an afternoon visit from a family member, or in serious cases, leaving camp. Calls home will always take place during the day, as evening calls tend to make homesickness feelings much stronger.

We are looking forward to supporting and caring for campers, and working with families to ensure their camper's experience is a positive and exciting one! Please contact us if you would like more detailed information about homesickness and preparing for camp.



Accessibility at Camp:

The YMCA welcomes children of all abilities to our programs. Camp Elphinstone staff are trained and able to assist campers with physical and developmental disabilities. In the event that your child requires one-on-one support, one of our Inclusion Counsellors will be assigned to ensure your child's needs are met. Our Inclusion Counsellors will help modify and adapt programming to ensure your child is included and integrated into the Camp Elphinstone experience. If your child requires one-on-one support while at camp, please contact us prior to arrival to discuss how we can best support your child.

Inclusion at Camp:

Recognizing that prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping are prevalent through society, we are dedicated to the creation of a safe, secure space for those seeking services with us. It is the policy of YMCA Camp Elphinstone to maintain and promote a facility that provides the highest quality of services to our campers regardless of their actual or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation. We encourage parents/guardians of any transgender, trans*, and gender non-conforming campers to contact the Camp Director to discuss the commitments to inclusion made by YMCA Camp Elphinstone and how we can best welcome and support your camper.



Camp Behaviour Policy:

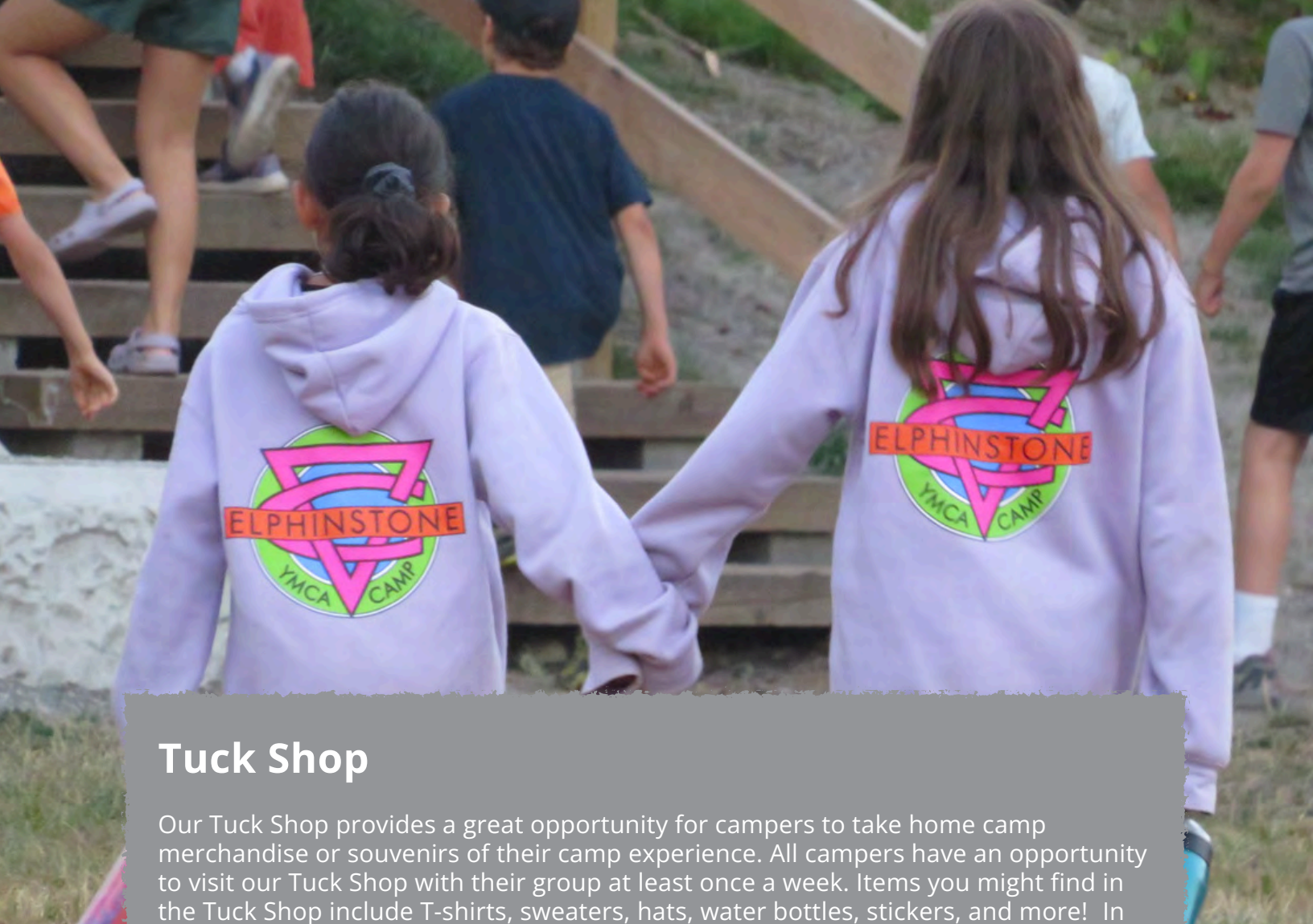
At YMCA Camp Elphinstone our staff are trained and experienced in providing high quality care for our campers, ensuring the needs of each individual are met. We expect that all staff, volunteers, campers and parents/guardians are focused on making Camp Elphinstone to be a safe environment for everyone, both emotionally and physically.

Camper Dismissal:

If a situation arises where a camper threatens the safety of another camper, or if a camper shows a complete disregard for camp rules, that individual may be dismissed at the discretion of the Camp Director/Manager. The camper's family is responsible for any costs associated with that individual's dismissal and no refund will be given if the dismissal is due to behavioural reasons or concerns. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to pick the child up or arrange for pick-up upon dismissal.

Possession of Illicit Substances:

Smoking, vaping or vaping devices, the consumption or possession of alcohol, cannabis, and/or non-prescription drugs are not permitted on YMCA property. Any camper who disregards this policy will be automatically removed, regardless of circumstance or degree of participation.



Tuck Shop

Our Tuck Shop provides a great opportunity for campers to take home camp merchandise or souvenirs of their camp experience. All campers have an opportunity to visit our Tuck Shop with their group at least once a week. Items you might find in the Tuck Shop include T-shirts, sweaters, hats, water bottles, stickers, and more! In addition to swag and souvenirs, campers will also find healthy snack and drink options such as popcorn, pretzels and smoothies.

Tuck items can be paid for with cash or gift cards, which are purchased online and become credit on your camper's account that is redeemable at camp. Tuck Shop Gift Cards can be added in \$10 increments to your camper's account via the YMCA Community Portal at myymca.ca. If you would like assistance purchasing Tuck credits, please call our registration team at 604-886-2025. If you have questions, please email our team at camp.elphinstone@bc.ymca.ca.

Please take note of the following:

- Tuck Shop items range in price from \$2 to \$60.
- Stock and pricing are subject to change.
- Tuck credits must be added at least two business days before your camper arrives.
- Any campers who have a remaining credit balance of more than \$10 will receive a reimbursement at the end of the summer-camp season.
- Credit balances below \$10 will be donated toward providing financial assistance to families who otherwise could not afford to participate in camp programming.

Contact with Camp

By Mail:

Everyone enjoys receiving mail, so we encourage you to write to your camper! Mail is picked up every day and delivered by cabin group. Send letters prior to or during the first few days of camp to ensure delivery to one-week campers. Letters arriving after your child has gone home will be returned to sender, so please ensure you list a return address!

Letters should be addressed as follows:

Camper's Name and Session

YMCA Camp Elphinstone

1760 YMCA Road

Gibsons, BC V0N 1V6

By Email:

Families are also welcome to send a letter to their camper via email to ensure it arrives on time. If you would like to send an email to your camper, please address it to camp.elphinstone@bc.ymca.ca with "Camper Mail" as the subject line, and include your child's full name and session. Our staff will print it out and ensure its delivery. Please note that there is not an email response option, and camp will not be confirming that emails/ messages have been delivered.

Phone:

There are no phones available for regular camper use at camp. Rest assured that "no news is good news" and your child is busy having fun at camp. If there are any problems, YMCA staff will contact you. If a camper requests to call home, they will be permitted to make a call from the office during the day.

While your child is on out-trip, they will NOT be reachable under any circumstances other than an emergency. We will have contact with the out-trippers at the nightly check-in.

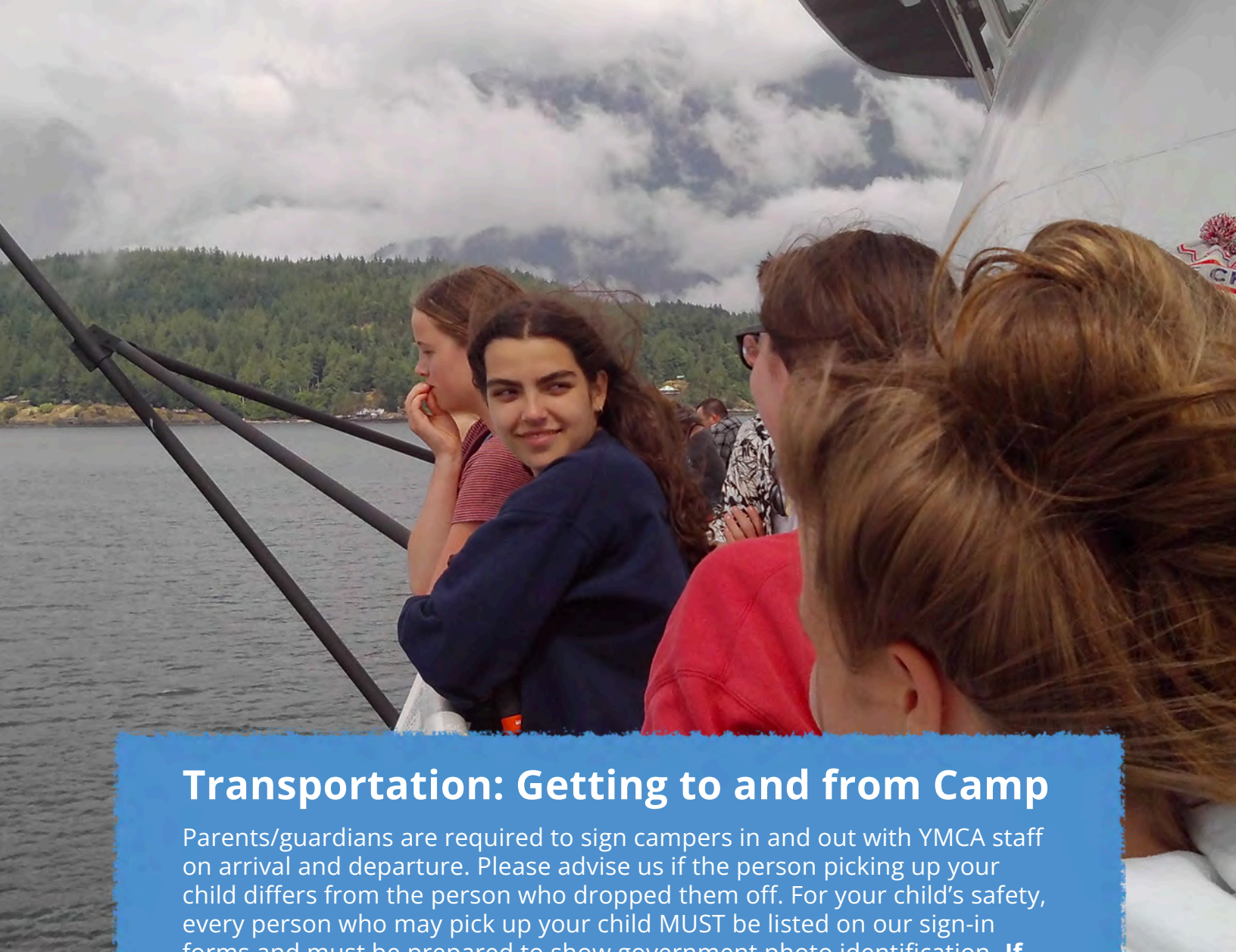
Please do not send cell phones with your camper as they frequently have a negative impact on the camp experience AND will be put away for safekeeping in the office until the camper is returning home.

Transferring Camp Sessions Policy

You will need to contact our office at least one week prior to your camper's arrival at camp in order to transfer to another camp session. Please call our camp office at 604-939-9622.

Cancelling Camp Sessions Policy

To cancel your camp registration, notification must be received in writing no later than two weeks prior to the start of the camp session in order to receive a full refund (less the non-refundable, non-transferable deposit.)



Transportation: Getting to and from Camp

Parents/guardians are required to sign campers in and out with YMCA staff on arrival and departure. Please advise us if the person picking up your child differs from the person who dropped them off. For your child's safety, every person who may pick up your child **MUST** be listed on our sign-in forms and must be prepared to show government photo identification. **If you need to add a name to your authorized pick up person(s), please email camp.elphinstone@bc.ymca.ca.**

The scheduled arrival and departure times on the following pages are very important, as they enable our staff to structure crucial first and last days of the session to benefit each camper group.

For your child's safety, if you wish to change your transportation selection, we require written notification of the change five business days prior to the start date of their camp session. Please email camp.elphinstone@bc.ymca.ca to complete this change.

If you are unable to make the scheduled time on pick-up day, please contact the camp office at 604.886.2025.

Please note that ferry times are subject to BC Ferries' sailing schedule and may change. We will notify you in the event of any changes.

Reminder: Pick-up and Drop-off preference

During registration, families were provided with two options for camp arrivals to and departures: "Own Transportation" and "Horseshoe Bay."

If you selected **Own Transportation**, please know that camp will be expecting you to drop off and pick up your camper at YMCA Camp Elphinstone directly within the designated drop off/pick-up window.

If you selected **Horseshoe Bay**, your registration fee included a round-trip ferry fare to and from camp, with arrivals and departures occurring at the Horseshoe Bay Ferry Terminal.

If you need to make a change to this selection, please contact us at 604.886.2025.

Arrival and Departure times:

Drop-off/Pick-up at YMCA Camp Elphinstone (Own Transportation):

- Drop-off: Between 12:30 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. on Sunday.
(No lunch is provided on first day for campers dropped off directly at camp)
- Pick-up: Between 9:45 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. on Friday.

Drop-off/Pick-up at Ferry Terminal (Horseshoe Bay):

- As BC Ferries' schedule is subject to change, drop-off and pick-up times may vary. Your meeting times at Horseshoe Bay Ferry Terminal will be confirmed by email one week prior to the start of your camp session.

When you arrive at the ferry terminal, please look for YMCA staff who will direct you the appropriate area—we will direct campers and families to the grassy knoll by the water directly behind the ferry terminal for both drop-off and pick-up. Sign-in will take a little bit of time and parents/guardians are required to stay with their child until they have been through the sign-in process.

Please do not purchase a ferry ticket as this is included in your registration fee.



Directions to YMCA Camp Elphinstone

YMCA Camp Elphinstone is located on the beautiful Sunshine Coast, only a 40-minute ferry ride from Horseshoe Bay in West Vancouver.

To get to Horseshoe Bay Ferry Terminal, take Highway 1 westbound from Vancouver and follow signs for Horseshoe Bay. If your child is taking the ferry with camp staff, they will be signed in and out in the walk-on passenger area (there will be staff and signage to help direct you to the right location).

YMCA Camp Elphinstone is a two-kilometre walk or a three-minute drive from the Langdale Ferry Terminal. McNabb campers will be driven from the ferry terminal to camp in one of our camp vehicles; older campers will be led by staff along the walk to Camp Elphinstone.

If arriving in a vehicle, turn right at the lights after departing the ferry terminal and follow Port Mellon Highway to YMCA Road, which is the first road on the right. Follow YMCA Road until you see the YMCA Camp Elphinstone sign. Check in at the Welcome Centre parking lot, just a little further down from the welcome sign.

