



YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY  
**COMMUNITY  
WELL-BEING  
& BELONGING**

## YMCA CAMP MARSTON PARENT GUIDE

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

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

### ARRIVAL SUNDAY

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



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

### DEPARTURE FRIDAY Photo ID is required.

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



## PARENT FAQ

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



### DIRECTIONS TO CAMP

For your mapping program, Camp Marston is at 4761 Pine Hills Road, Julian. We recommend traveling through Ramona on Highways 78 and 67. If you'd like the scenic, windy mountain drive, travel out the 8 Freeway to Highway 79 through Alpine and Descanso.

### BUS TRANSPORTATION

You must register for bus transportation online for each bus trip separately (ie "to camp" and "from camp"). For the bus ride to camp, please arrive at Mission Valley Family YMCA (5505 Friars Rd) at 1:00pm, as the bus departs at 1:30pm. On Fridays, the bus departs camp at 5:00pm, which will place the bus at Mission Valley Family YMCA between 6:00pm-6:30pm. Cost is \$50 each way. Click [here](#) to view your current Transportation add-on selections or to add transportation.

### CAMPINTOUCH

New to Summer 2025 is our parent system [CampInTouch!](#) (powered by CampMinder). Here you can fill out your camper application, camper forms, view photos and make online payments all in the same place. Visit [ymcasd.campintouch.com](http://ymcasd.campintouch.com).

### CABIN MATE REQUESTS

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

### BEHAVIOR AT CAMP

At camp, we foster an environment filled with friendship, respect and character development. Campers that cannot live within the rules of camp, or are adversely affecting the experience of other children will be dismissed without a refund. Parents are then responsible to come to camp and pick up their child.

# HEALTH & SAFETY

## HEALTH HISTORY

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

## PRE-CAMP HEALTH SCREENING

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

## MEDICATIONS

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

## INSURANCE

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

## MISSING HOME

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

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



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

**Allergies:** We are familiar with managing allergies, whether environmental or food-borne. Please note all allergies clearly on the Health History Form and discuss with camp health staff upon arrival. For more information contact, Nathan Swanson at [nswanson@ymcasd.org](mailto:nswanson@ymcasd.org).

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

# MAIL CALL & MORE

## PHONE CALLS HOME

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

## VISITING DAYS

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

## MAIL

Campers love receiving letters from home while at camp.

### SAMPLE ADDRESS

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

## PHOTOS

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

## EMAILS

You can also send one-way emails to your camper via the "email" tab in CamplnTouch. Emails are printed and delivered by dinner Monday–Thursday. Please limit emails to one per day.

## ELECTRONICS AT CAMP

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

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



## CAMP STORE

Good news! The Camp Store will be open on Check-in and Check-out days. Cash and credit card are accepted. The camp store will not be open during the week for campers to go in. We do provide snack every afternoon from our kitchen.

## LOST AND FOUND

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

## LODGING

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

# EQUIPMENT LIST

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

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

### REQUIRED ITEMS:

- Sleeping Bag
- Pillow
- 2 pairs of Long Pants
- 5 pairs of Shorts
- 1-2 Sweatshirts or Jackets
- 5 T-shirts
- 1-2 Swim Suits
- 6 pairs of Underwear
- 6 pairs of Socks
- Pajamas

- 2 pairs of Sturdy Sneakers
- 1 Hat or Cap with brim
- 2 Towels
- Toiletries – soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo
- Comb/Brush
- Lip Balm/Chapstick
- Sunscreen Lotion
- Water Bottle or Canteen
- Flashlight

### OPTIONAL ITEMS:

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

## ASK YOUR CAMPER!

Research shows that intentional questions can produce significant learning and performance benefits.

### PRE CAMP ?'s

- What's one new thing you want to try while you are away at camp?
- What's one thing you are most nervous about? How will you handle that situation once you're at camp?

### POST CAMP ?'s

- What's something new you tried at camp?
- What's the most surprising thing you learned (about yourself) while you were away at camp?
- What's the one thing that makes you want to go back to camp?
- Tell me about your new camp buddy? Favorite camp counselor?



**NOT  
PERMITTED**

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

# OWL'S EQUIPMENT LIST

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

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

## KEY INFORMATION FOR OWLS

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

## Outdoor Wilderness Leadership

### REQUIRED ITEMS:

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

\*Camp can help provide supplies

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

## Sample Trekking Itinerary

### SUNDAY

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

### MONDAY

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

### TUESDAY

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

### WEDNESDAY

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

### THURSDAY

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

For more information or questions please email [camp@ymcasd.org](mailto:camp@ymcasd.org).