



American Youth Foundation
Miniwanca

Camper & Family Handbook 2021



Highlights for 2021

Opening camp with COVID precautions

Please review our [COVID-19 Precautions & Procedures](#) and visit ayf.com for the most current information about procedures for a safe summer.

Updated Cabins

Cabin windows now feature screens for an added layer of comfort to the living experience in the bays. This will help keep bugs out while still keeping living spaces ventilated.

Living Simply

As a part of continued efforts to streamline Opening and Closing Days, we dare you to live more simply while at camp. Pack fewer clothes, bring fewer bags, and aim to bring or buy less plastic (such as plastic drawers). To support those efforts, we have updated our packing lists ([Darer/Seeker Packing List](#), [Wayfinder Packing List](#)). We encourage campers to bring no more than two large bags or a trunk and one carry on-sized bag with them to camp this summer.

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Summer Camp Dates to Know

May 3, 2021 → Remaining tuition due (see page 15). All camper forms due (see page 6).

June 27, 2021 → Summer 2021 Opening Day (see page 21)

July 17, 2021 → Summer 2021 Closing Day (see page 22)

Miniwanca Contact Information

If you have any questions, contact Miniwanca:

Miniwanca Main Office: 231-861-2262

MiniwancaCamps@ayf.com

Fax: 231-861-5244

Matt Loper, Senior Director of Programs

Lisa Boucher, Registrar

Girls Camp Office: 231-861-3343

Emily Knuth, Girls Camp Director

Boys Camp Office: 231-861-3342

Michael Harter, Boys Camp Director

Welcome to Miniwanca

Dear Camp Families,

We are thrilled your camper is joining us at Miniwanca for summer 2021! As a new season of fun approaches, our program goals remain as they have been for decades: We encourage campers to seek their best selves, to live a balanced life, and to build positive relationships. In addition to experiencing the activities that make Miniwanca great, your camper will also have a chance to reflect on their values, to think about and ask important questions, and to gain an increased sense of self confidence.

It won't be long before we will climb the sand dunes, sail on Stony Lake, and hike through the woods down to the beach. This handbook will answer as many as questions as possible so your camper will arrive prepared to have the best experience. Feel free to call or email us with any additional questions or concerns.

Thank you for choosing Miniwanca for your camper's summer experience. We look forward to another amazing year!

All the best,

Emily Knuth
Girls Camp Director
eknuth@ayf.com

Michael "Mikey" Harter
Boys Camp Director
mharter@ayf.com

Camper Information Forms

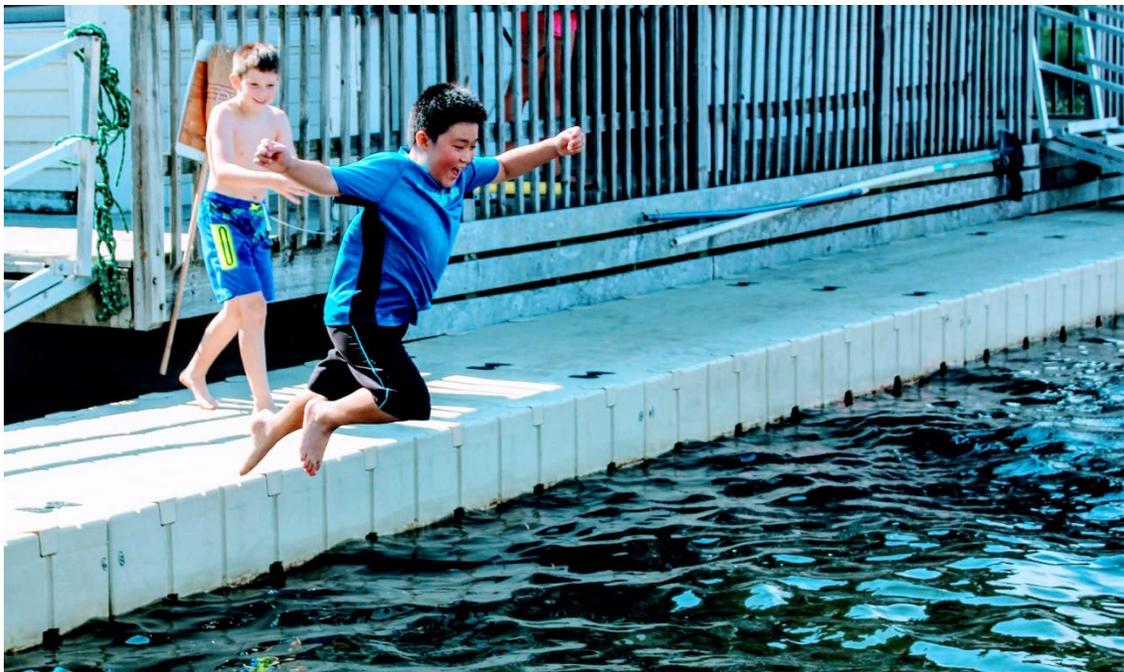
Reviewing Camper Information forms is a key part of our staff team's preparation for summer. These forms must be submitted online [through your AYF account](#) no later than **May 3, 2021**.

Camper Forms to Complete

For your convenience, we provide all forms in a **fillable online format**. You must complete the following for each camper:

- Camper & Family Information Form
- Health History
- Health Memorandum*
- Copy of Immunization Records
- Copy of Insurance Card
- Copy of negative COVID-19 PCR test (due by **June 25, 2021** – see [COVID-19 Procedures and Protocols](#))

*Due to COVID-19, all campers regardless of age must submit a Health Memorandum this year.



Miniwanca Program Goals

We believe that in order for our campers to have fun and learn, they need to be and feel safe. Campers and staff work together to create this environment. The Miniwanca camp program is built around the following goals:

Best Self

Our motto is **“My own self, at my very best, all the time.”** We strive to help our campers discover and develop their personal best. Our program helps campers increase their self-confidence and value themselves as unique and capable individuals. We provide opportunities for campers to practice respect for self, others, and the world. We also ask that they take responsibility to act for the good of others and our world.

Balanced Living

The typical Miniwanca day is built around a balance of physical, mental, social, and spiritual activities. Campers and staff are encouraged to practice living a balanced life in order to achieve their best.

Creating Healthy Friendships and a Positive Group Culture

From the moment campers arrive, we begin helping them build positive friendships. Cabin groups create a Recipe for Success, focusing on elements they need to live together and have fun. Regular discussions with campers explore the characteristics of healthy friendships and a successful group. Fun activities encourage campers to practice skills important to building these friendships and achieving a goal together.

These skills include: trust, cooperation, respect, responsibility, fun, compromise, communication, kindness, and problem-solving.

By working toward these goals, we believe our campers will:

1. Return home with newly gained confidence in themselves.
2. Be able to talk about who they are and what they are capable of achieving.
3. Discover and develop their personal best.
4. Act in ways consistent with their values.
5. Help to create a community where trust, cooperation, and respect are the cornerstones.

Core Values

Inclusion

We seek to build inclusive communities where we awaken, educate, and empower our staff and participants to work for equity and social justice.

Safety

We commit to creating safe environments where all people can boldly take emotional and physical risks as a way to discover more about themselves and their capacities.

Respect

We seek to engage people from diverse cultures, identities, and perspectives and to impart respect for others by developing cultural competency.

Responsibility

We strive to instill responsibility to act for the good of others and to develop a greater understanding how our actions affect the world around us.

Stewardship

We recognize the interconnectedness of the world's communities and will strive to be responsible in our use of environmental and human resources.

Our Commitment to Equity and Inclusion

The American Youth Foundation invites all people to be their own best selves, and we seek to create communities where no one should be excluded intentionally or otherwise because of who they are. We enthusiastically welcome staff and participants with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities. AYF seeks to continually assess our practices through a broad lens of cultural competency and is committed to taking action and changing for the better of all.

We value each person's right to fully experience our programs free from prejudice and harassment based on race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or other aspects of their identity. We believe the diversity within our program communities enriches the learning for all, provided all feel safe to be their own best self.

Partners at Home

A successful summer experience begins at home as you prepare for camp, and it will continue throughout the summer with the partnership between you and the Miniwanca staff. One of the first steps you can take is submitting all completed forms by **May 3, 2021. (See page 6 for a list.)** This not only helps us better prepare for your camper's arrival, but it also provides you with the opportunity to share with us any tips on helping your child have a successful camp experience.

Creating a Fun, Safe Summer

Creating a Miniwanca community where everyone feels valued and secure requires commitment from all campers and staff. Once camp begins, Camp Directors Michael Harter and Emily Knuth will meet with each age group to discuss what a fun, safe summer looks, sounds, and feels like. We encourage campers to let staff know if there is a problem. Every camper has the opportunity to meet individually with their Cabin Leader and has a weekly age group check-in with a Camp Coordinator, where they will complete a Fun, Safe Summer Evaluation of their experiences.

Please encourage your camper to talk to any staff member if others are not adhering to the following Community Responsibilities or if they feel physically or emotionally unsafe. We depend on them to help us create this unique community.

Parents and guardians, please review the Community Responsibilities with your camper prior to arrival and help them understand that breaking this agreement may be grounds for immediate dismissal.

Community Responsibilities

At Miniwanca, I will show...

Respect for Others

At Miniwanca, we respect other people's ideas and values, even if they differ from our own. Miniwanca embraces a diverse community, and this should be displayed in all ways, including language, humor, and behavior. All actions and language should have a positive impact on the Miniwanca community. Any disrespectful behaviors that could potentially harm (physically or emotionally) a camper or staff member are unacceptable and may result in dismissal.

Respect for Self

We take care of ourselves by eating balanced meals, getting plenty of sleep, and practicing good hygiene: brushing teeth, wearing clean clothes, showering, etc. Lights out is between 10 and 11 p.m.

We participate fully in camp activities, are punctual, try new things, and have a positive attitude. We seek to reach the challenge of **My own self, at my very best, all the time.**

Respect for the Environment and Camp Facilities

Miniwanca should feel like home, so we enjoy it and help take care of it. We share in the regular cleaning of personal and community areas, including the eating lodge, restrooms, cabins, activity fields, and common buildings. We leave any space we use better than we found it.

We are sensitive to Miniwanca's fragile environment by staying on trails, caring for plant and animal life, recycling, composting, and putting litter in trash bins. The buildings and activity equipment are supplied by Miniwanca are for all campers to enjoy. We care for both responsibly.

Respect for the Health and Safety of Self and Others

We look out for others' physical and emotional safety. We seek help when needed. We are in our cabin or tent by lights out and remain there until the rising bell rings.

We abide by the safety standards provided by the staff, especially in water-related and adventure/challenge experiences.

We recognize that possession and use of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs and the possession of fireworks, firearms, and other weapons are prohibited on-site and will result in immediate dismissal.

We acknowledge that threats to harm ourselves or others will be taken seriously and will result in dismissal.



Preventing Homesickness

What happens if my camper is homesick?

It is natural for most campers to experience a degree of homesickness, particularly if it is their first time away from home. It is not uncommon for family to receive a homesick letter, only to call and learn that homesick feelings have passed and the camper is now having fun.

Miniwanca staff plan the first 48 hours of camp in great detail to accommodate the adjustment process and help campers feel more comfortable. Cabin Leaders lead ice breakers to help campers meet new friends. They also begin team-building activities and create a Cabin Recipe for Success.

A homesick camper's support system comes from their Cabin Leader. If feelings of homesickness persist, the Camp Director may be in contact with you to discuss the situation and seek suggestions. Direct camper phone calls home often increase homesickness, but if the Camp Director and you feel a call home is necessary, family should keep the conversation positive and proactive. The Camp Director will stay in contact with you and assess next steps if necessary.

How can I help to reduce or prevent homesickness?

We have found these strategies to be helpful for many campers:

Have the Conversation: Talk to your child about camp before arrival, stressing that challenges will help them grow and gain confidence. Let them know it is normal to miss the familiarity of home.

Practice at Home: Have younger campers practice managing their daily routine: getting ready for bed, starting the shower, getting dressed, and organizing their belongings. Campers who feel more confident in these areas tend to have a smoother transition.

Pack Together: Involve campers in the process of packing and preparing for camp. Renowned clinical psychologist Wendy Mogel writes: "A fourth grade teacher told me that she can predict which campers will be homesick on the annual four-day nature retreat. 'The ones who can locate their flashlight, sweatshirt, and warm socks in their duffel bag are not homesick. The ones who can't find their stuff are.' She explained that this first group of campers have either packed their gear themselves or with a parent's help. The second group, the homesick, has been packed for." Working together ensures that campers will not forget to pack important items and also helps them feel more confident and prepared.

Help Them Connect: Encourage your camper to talk with their Cabin Leaders if they start to miss home. Our staff have a variety of strategies to help your camper feel more comfortable and get involved.

Develop Strategies: Homesickness often arises at evening and bedtime. Talk with your camper in advance about things they can do to make bedtime easier. Some campers find having a quote, favorite memory, or counting sheep very helpful.

Stay Connected: Write a few letters to your camper before camp begins and give them to staff on Opening Day. Since it takes a few days for mail to arrive, this ensures your camper will have messages from home during the first few days.

Use Positive and Encouraging Language: In your letters, focus on activities your camper is looking forward to and encourage them to achieve their goals. Ask them to write back and share the fun things they are doing at camp. Avoid topics that might make them miss home more.

Watch out! The most common mistake families make is the Pick-Up Deal: "If you feel homesick, I'll come and get you." This statement conveys doubt and pity that undermines a camper's confidence and independence. Pick-Up Deals become mental crutches and self-fulfilling prophecies for campers. Encourage your camper to enjoy this new experience. We will help your camper adjust quickly and thrive during their time at Miniwanca. You can read more about strategies to help campers succeed at www.acacamps.org.



Behavior and Dismissal Policies

Expecting the Unexpected

The AYF makes every reasonable effort to ensure a fun, safe camp experience where campers are encouraged to achieve their personal best. However, we cannot foresee or control every circumstance. Group dynamics, failure to follow instruction, camper misbehavior, inclement weather, and other environmental hazards can create unexpected challenges. Our staff is trained for unexpected situations, and as a result, unplanned programmatic elements often serve as the greatest catalyst for teaching life skills.

Unforeseen circumstances can provide campers a valuable opportunity for critical thinking and problem-solving. Should an incident occur, our priority is camper safety and quality of the overall group experience. Our course of action may include but is not limited to: addressing the incident with individuals involved or the entire community, facilitating community collaboration to determine the next best steps, and/or intentionally adjusting the camp schedule.

For a positive group and individual experience, it is important campers come to Miniwanca with a base level of physical and mental readiness.

What if there are behavior issues?

We create a community of compassion and respect when we lay out clear expectations for campers and staff, provide opportunities to discuss these expectations, and work to hold each other to them.

If a camper's actions, statements, or attitude negatively affect the community or create issues that compromise safety and fun, Miniwanca staff will intervene. For most issues, we will work with you to create a plan that will help your camper succeed. Camp staff will remain in contact with you and assess next steps. If the issues continue, the camper will be dismissed; certain behaviors will result in immediate dismissal.

How does Miniwanca decide if a camper should go home?

Behaviors that result in immediate dismissal include but are not limited to: threat to harm self or others, possession or use of drugs or alcohol, or possession of a weapon.

It is never easy to decide a camper should be dismissed, and we know it is a difficult thing for families to hear. AYF staff must balance what is best for the group and community with the needs of an individual camper.

If a camper's actions, statements, or attitude negatively affect their cabin or the wider AYF community, or if a camper is physically, mentally, socially, or emotionally unable to participate in camp activities, they may be dismissed.

When a camper is dismissed, the family must make arrangements for their child to return home as soon as possible. You are responsible for any costs associated with removing a camper from camp and for transportation home.

Tuition, Fees, and Refunds

When is tuition payment due?

Full payment is due by **May 3, 2021**. **Campers showing a balance due after May 3 will not be allowed to attend camp.** To assist families, the AYF offers discounts and need-based financial aid. Please contact Registrar Lisa Boucher for more information at 603-539-6607 x2011.

What if my child can no longer attend camp?

If you must cancel before May 3, any tuition paid (except the \$200 registration fee) will be refunded. After May 3, there is no tuition refund.

If a camper must withdraw prior to the start of camp due to illness or injury, all payments (except the \$200 registration fee) will be returned upon receipt of a written report from a physician. There is a minimum \$35 processing fee for each refund.

What if my camper must withdraw or is dismissed during camp?

For withdrawals during the camp session due to illness or injury, a refund will be prorated. There is a minimum \$35 processing fee for each refund.

No refund will be granted in the case of a dismissal or voluntary withdrawal from camp. In all cases, the family will be responsible for transportation costs incurred.



Emergency and Medical Information

What if there is a local or national emergency?

Parents and guardians should go to ayf.com for immediate information regarding campers and programs. You will be contacted via email as soon as possible with details and information regarding your camper. We will use our limited phone lines to communicate with authorities. Please be patient and we will contact you as soon as possible.

What if there is an emergency at home?

If an emergency arises at home and you need to contact your camper, call camp at 231-861-2262. Office staff will answer phones and direct your call as needed from 8:30 a.m. ET to 8 p.m. ET. We will check camp voicemail at 10 p.m. ET and at 8:30 a.m. ET the next day.

What if my camper is sick or hurt at camp?

The Miniwanca Health Team is staffed by nurses and health officers who oversee daily medical needs. The local hospital and health clinic are within 13 miles of camp. You will be contacted if there is an injury or illness requiring outside medical assistance. Your camper's Health History form (see page 6) must contain family health plan information, including a copy of their insurance card. If a camper requires a doctor's visit or medications, the family is responsible for all medical costs.

How can I prevent a lice outbreak at camp?

When lice get in, they spread easily in the camp environment. In keeping with health regulations, we will screen campers for head lice during Opening Day registration. Please check that your camper is completely free of lice and nits before arrival. If campers are found to have head lice, they may not be able to participate in camp activities until our Health Team clears them to reenter the community. If lice are discovered during the session, our Health Team will treat the campers, and you will be charged a \$150 fee to cover the treatment.

Medication Management at Camp

Please bring medications **in original prescription containers with the camper's name on them**. We cannot accept prescription medication in generic pill dispensers. You may also bring over-the-counter medications your camper takes on a daily basis in their original containers. Our Health Team stocks basic first aid supplies and common medications like Benadryl, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and Claritin, so please do not bring these to camp. If you are unsure about a medication, please email the Camp Director.

As required by the state of Michigan and American Camp Association, all medications must be locked up in the health center and must be dispensed from their original prescription containers. **DO NOT send medications (including over the counter and vitamins) in your camper's belongings** with the plan that they self-administer their medication. This poses potential risk to other campers, as well as your own.

Miniwanca requires campers who use rescue inhalers or EpiPens to bring two –one to keep in the health center and one for the camper to have in their possession. You may use your camper’s current inhalers or EpiPens to meet this requirement.

Behavioral and Mental Health Medications

Campers must be stable on their medication at least six weeks prior to camp. There can be no changes to the medication type or dosage within 60 days of arrival. The only exception is if a camper requires ADD/ADHD medications in an academic setting but does not take the medication during the summer months.

Immunization/Vaccination Policy

The American Youth Foundation requires Miniwanca campers to be immunized in accordance with the state of Michigan camp licensing requirements. We encourage families to pursue COVID-19 vaccination for campers in accordance with eligibility requirements of your home state.

Medical Review Process

The American Youth Foundation aims to be inclusive in the enrollment of participants. All reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate campers with varying conditions, strengths, and abilities. Prior to participation in any AYF program, our staff will review each camper application to ensure that participants can meet the physical and emotional demands of the program.

On occasion, it may be necessary for us to gather additional information about your child’s health or medical history and consult with our AYF Medical Review Team to determine an applicant’s need for accommodations. Our goal is to include as many participants as possible; however, we are limited in what we can provide in terms of medical care and we reserve the right to preclude participation based on a condition that we are not able to manage safely.

COVID-19 Procedures and Protocol

Our summer 2021 camp sessions take the current state of the pandemic into consideration. AYF COVID-19 Procedures and Protocol follows the highest standards of safety set by the CDC, state of Michigan, American Camp Association, and local restrictions. We expect these protocols to evolve and will update this document accordingly.

Please review the [COVID-19 Procedures and Protocol](#) carefully and refer to ayf.com for the most current information.

Staying in Touch with your Camper

Technology at Camp

Miniwanca gives campers the opportunity to disconnect from phones, social media, and video games and focus on being in community and in nature. We do not allow campers to keep smartphones or any other connected devices (tablet, laptops, etc.) with them at camp. We do allow digital cameras, but we recommend disposable cameras due to the sand.

We encourage you to stay connected with your camper, and we recommend sending a letter or using our one-way email system to stay in touch.

One-Way Email

Miniwanca offers a one-way email service to send messages to your camper. Once camp begins, we will send you the link to send camper emails. You may share this link with family and friends, but please don't share it too widely so we do not overwhelm the system. We print and deliver emails to campers' cabin mailboxes once each day.

Care Packages

Parents are welcome to send inedible **items** such as books, cards, games and stickers in care packages. Because we have campers with severe food allergies, **food, candy, and gum are not allowed**. Campers will open care packages in the office under staff supervision. We take great care to prevent accidental exposure to food allergens, so we will dispose of any food items. This rule is strictly observed for camper health and safety. Please share the policy with anyone who might send a package.

Mail

Please address mail to:

Camper Name

Miniwanca, (Boys Camp or Girls Camp)

8845 W. Garfield Road

Shelby, MI 49455

Visitation Policy

We do not plan a formal visiting day at camp and discourage individual family visits. We have found that visits from families can be disruptive to the experience of the camper and other campers. If campers are homesick, an outside visit can often exacerbate the issue or even spark these feelings in campers who weren't not homesick.

Release Policy

Campers will not be permitted to leave camp with anyone other than a parent or legal guardian unless we receive written permission from those parents or guardians. AYF policy and state law require written permission listing the names of people with whom the camper may leave. These people should be noted in the Camper Information forms (see page 6).

To discuss visits or release, please call the camp offices:

Girls Camp Office: 231-861-3343

Boys Camp Office: 231-861-3342

Photos of My Camper

We offer free, password-protected access to photos uploaded from camp each day. You will be able to download and print photos. You can access camper photos at ayf.smugmug.com. Details for login will be provided via email once camp begins.

Camp Blog

You can access our blog at <http://ayf.com/news-events/blog/>. Here you will find updates of what is happening within the Boys Camp and Girls Camp communities both on site.



Opening Day

Opening Day is Sunday, June 27, 2021.

Due to CDC and Michigan state COVID guidelines, Opening Day will look different in 2021 than it has in the past. While we do not anticipate changing these details, Opening Day processes may be altered as guidelines are updated.

Each family will be emailed an arrival time. To ensure a smooth and safe process, **please arrive at your scheduled time** (do not arrive more than 15 minutes before or after your scheduled time). If you have more than one child, you should arrive at the latest scheduled arrival time of all your children.

All campers must arrive in private vehicles and travel directly from home to camp. Only people who have quarantined with the camper are allowed to travel with their camper; please minimize the number of people who will travel to camp. Michigan state guidelines do not allow families to walk around camp. **Everyone in the vehicle must be masked and remain so as long as they are at camp.**

To minimize staff and family exposure, please contact the Registrar or Camp Director before camp starts if you have any questions about your child's camp experience.

Registration Process

- All registration will take place near the camp entrance. Anyone traveling with the camper must remain in their vehicle throughout the process.
- Upon arrival, drive up and meet our staff at the entrance to camp. The following health screenings will take place:
 - Staff will take camper temperatures. Anyone with a fever will need to return home until they are fever-free for 24 hours. We encourage families to take temperatures at home before leaving for camp.
 - Staff will administer a COVID test to campers.
 - Campers will answer COVID-screening questions.
- Luggage will be dropped at a central location to be delivered to your child's cabin.
- If you have as-needed or daily medications, give them to the Health Staff at registration. For daily medications, please see the Camper Medications section of the handbook for requirements.
- When you check in, you will receive a copy of the emergency contact information we have on file for you review and update if needed.

Opening Day Tips

- Limited bathroom facilities will be available for family members. Plan accordingly.
- The first full meal for campers will be at 5 p.m. We suggest your child eats a meal in your vehicle shortly before arriving. Snacks will be available for campers all afternoon.



Closing Day

Closing Day is Saturday, July 17, 2021.

Similar to Opening Day, the Closing Day schedule has been significantly modified due to COVID guidelines.

When traveling to camp, please drive directly to camp and only make absolute necessary stops. If you must stop, please wear a mask and follow physical distancing guidelines.

In lieu of our normal Closing Day celebrations and reflections, we will share a photo slideshow and video reflections for all to view at home. We encourage families to watch these together.

Travel Information

Directions to Camp

Take US-31 to Exit 140 (New Era/Stony Lake Road)

Head west on Stony Lake Road approximately 7.5 miles until you dead-end into Scenic Drive. You will see the sign for Miniwanca.

For Boys Camp: Turn left onto Scenic Drive. The entrance will be on your immediate right.

For Girls Camp and Main Office: Turn right onto Scenic Drive and follow the road about a half-mile along Stony Lake until you come to another intersection. Stony Lake Store will be on the right corner, and a baseball field will be on the left corner. Turn left at the intersection and follow the road around the curve until you see the Miniwanca Main Office on the left. The Girls Camp entrance is a little further down the road on the left.

Shipping Luggage

If you are planning to ship luggage, we suggest doing so **two weeks prior** to the start of camp to make sure it is received before your camper arrives. Please make sure the camper's name is clearly written on the mailing label. Address it to:

Camper Name
Miniwanca, (Boys Camp or Girls Camp)
8845 W. Garfield Road
Shelby, MI 49455

Can my camper ship luggage home?

Yes. Please mark the boxes you ship your luggage in to be saved, and make sure your camper knows to set their luggage out to be shipped on Closing Day. AYF staff will strive to send luggage back to families within two weeks of Closing Day. Shipping and packaging charges will be applied to your credit card on file, in addition to a \$25 handling fee.

Please do not send prepaid shipping labels to camp with your camper. Once the luggage is sent, you will receive an email with the UPS tracking number. The family assumes all responsibility for any damage that occurs during the shipping process. The AYF is not liable for damage or loss.

Miniwanca Food Program

We intentionally design our Food Program to help campers be their best self by offering healthy, balanced meal options. Our Food Program is guided by four principles:

1. **Inspire respect and reverence for food**, understanding the value of the food we have and the knowledge that many in our world go to bed hungry.
2. **Reduce the carbon footprint of our food programs**, both in getting food to our tables and reducing our waste.
3. **Educate and empower participants and staff toward action**. Spend time talking about what and why we are eating, and why we compost our food waste. Be mindful of the link between how we fuel our bodies and development of our best self.
4. **Develop menus that provide a variety of healthy options** for our participants and staff. We seek to offer “premium fuel” menu options including whole grains, fresh fruit, and vegetables.

Due to COVID-19, there may be some changes to our usual family-style meal process. When possible, groups of campers and staff will eat outdoors, and food choices may be more limited than in past summers. Each meal will also include a vegetarian option for campers who have signed up in advance.

What about my camper’s allergies or dietary needs?

It is essential we have detailed information regarding any special dietary needs to determine if the Miniwanca Food Program staff can meet your child’s needs. If your camper has food allergies or special dietary needs, please share as much detail as possible in the Camper Health History forms and contact the Camp Director to talk more about your child’s needs.

What about peanut and tree nut allergies?

Miniwanca’s menu does not include tree nuts, and we serve many campers who have severe nut allergies. Our kitchens do not serve food containing peanuts, peanut butter, or peanut oil in their ingredient listings. Note that some snacks and desserts that we serve may contain trace amounts of peanuts or they may have been manufactured in a facility that processes peanuts (cross contamination).

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do campers live at camp?

Your camper's cabin is their home, and their cabinmates will be their family. A cabin consists of four to six campers who are the same age and a Cabin Leader who is 18 or older. We try to mix campers from different communities and schools. Our cabins are rustic, screened-in spaces without electricity and with bunkbeds.

Can I request that my camper be in a cabin with another camper?

While we cannot guarantee cabin placement requests, we do take them into consideration. If there is a specific concern about cabin placement (with or without another camper), please communicate that via phone or email to the Registrar prior to the beginning of camp. We strive to place campers in the strongest possible cabin groups. Having detailed information about each camper is essential in forming these communities.

Who are my camper's Cabin Leaders?

Campers will have at least one leader that will live in their cabin, but they will get to know many of the leaders through the camp activities and interest groups. Our leaders are thoroughly trained youth development professionals who are just as excited about camp as the campers. Many Miniwanca leaders grew up as Miniwanca campers themselves. Cabin Leaders are at least 18 years old and have had at least one year of post high school-graduation experience. Leaders go through an extensive hiring process, including interviews, three reference checks, and a background check. They receive all training needed for a successful summer before camps starts. All leaders are certified in CPR and first aid.

How do I pack my camper's belongings?

We have provided a packing list ([Darer/Seeker Packing List](#), [Wayfinder Packing List](#)) with our recommendations on what to bring to camp. **We highly recommend clearly labeling all of your items.**

We dare you to live more simply while at camp. Pack fewer clothes, bring fewer bags, and aim to bring or buy less plastic (such as plastic drawers). To support those efforts, we have updated our packing lists and have added an extra laundry day for this three-week session. We encourage all campers to bring no more than two large bags or a trunk and a carry on-sized bag with them.

We suggest campers keep their belongings in the container they bring to camp, as there is limited hanging space is available in the cabins. Trunks/foot lockers, duffel bags, or suitcases are popular choices. The best container for your camper is one they can easily access and organize during camp (See Preventing Homesickness on page 11 for more information on packing).

Do you offer horseback riding?

For summer 2021, we will not be offering horseback riding in order to observe COVID procedures.

How can my camper keep in touch with his/her friends after camp?

We want to help campers continue the positive friendships they create this summer. At the end of the summer, we will email your child a contact list that includes campers' names and contact information so they can keep in touch all year. If you would prefer your camper's information not be included, please contact the camp office.



Camper Belongings

Lost and Found

Campers should frequently check the Lost and Found for missing items. Items left or found at the end of camp that are **clearly labeled with your camper's name** can be mailed back to you. The family is responsible for shipping costs, plus a \$10 handling fee. There is no guarantee that lost items will be found. We will hold all items for two weeks following the session. If unclaimed, these items will be donated.

Safekeeping

Miniwanca is not responsible for personal items lost, stolen, or damaged during your camper's stay at camp. Electronics such as smartphones **must** be left with parents/guardians. If the camper still has a smartphone or other electronic devices after arrival, Miniwanca staff will place them in safekeeping for the duration of the session. Campers will not have access to these items during their time at Miniwanca. All safekeeping items will be returned on Closing Day.

Laundry

Clothes worn at camp are subject to hard use; we suggest you avoid bringing expensive or favorite items. Miniwanca staff will do camper laundry twice during the three-week session. All clothing, equipment, and laundry bags must be marked with the camper's name. In the event of an accident or emergency, laundry facilities are available. Please see the packing list ([Darer/Seeker Packing List](#), [Wayfinder Packing List](#)) for suggested items and gear to bring.



Typical Daily Schedule

Below you will find a sample of our typical daily schedule. Though there will be a few special days throughout the summer, we primarily stick to this schedule.

Girls Camp

7:50 a.m.	.....	Polar Bear
8:00 a.m.	.....	Rising Bell
8:45 a.m.	.....	Morning Stretch
9:00 a.m.	.....	Breakfast
10:30 a.m.	.....	Community Time
11:30 a.m.	.....	Interest Group 1
12:45 p.m.	.....	Lunch
1:45 p.m.	.....	Rest Hour
2:45 p.m.	.....	Assembly
3:30 p.m.	.....	Interest Group 2
4:15 p.m.	.....	Snack Time
4:30 p.m.	.....	Interest Group 3
5:15 p.m.	.....	Free Time
6:15 p.m.	.....	Dinner
7:30 p.m.	.....	Night's Doings
9:00 p.m.	.....	Evening Reflections
9:45 p.m.	.....	Bedtime Prep
10:00 p.m.	.....	Lights Out (grades 3-8)
11:00 p.m.	.....	Lights Out (grades 9-12)

Boys Camp

7:50 a.m.	.....	Polar Bear
8:00 a.m.	.....	Rising Bell
8:30 a.m.	.....	Flag Raising
9:00 a.m.	.....	Breakfast
10:15 a.m.	.....	Interest Group 1
11:15 a.m.	.....	Community Time
12:00 p.m.	.....	Quad Games
12:45 p.m.	.....	Lunch
1:45 p.m.	.....	Rest Hour
3:00 p.m.	.....	Assembly
3:30 p.m.	.....	Interest Group 2
4:15 p.m.	.....	Snack Time
4:30 p.m.	.....	Interest Group 3
5:15 p.m.	.....	Free Time
6:15 p.m.	.....	Dinner
7:30 p.m.	.....	Night's Doings
9:00 p.m.	.....	Evening Reflections
9:45 p.m.	.....	Bedtime Prep
10:00 p.m.	.....	Lights Out (grades 3-8)
11:00 p.m.	.....	Lights Out (grades 9-12)

Additional Resources

Please visit www.ayf.com to find additional resources and the most current information regarding summer 2021.

Visit the American Camps Association website at www.acacamps.org for helpful tips and research about the camp experience.

See you this summer!



American Youth Foundation
Miniwanca

8845 West Garfield Road
Shelby, MI 49455

Main Office: (231) 861-2262

Main Office Fax: (231) 861-5244

Girls Camp Summer Office: (231) 861-3343

Boys Camp Summer Office: (231) 861-3342

The American Youth Foundation inspires people to discover and develop their personal best, to seek balance in mental, physical, social and spiritual living and to make a positive difference in their communities and in the wider world.

My own self, at my very best, all the time

