



2026 OVERNIGHT CAMP HANDBOOK



WELCOME & GREETINGS FROM YMCA CAMP CULLEN

Dear Camp Cullen Families,

Our camp team is so excited to welcome your camper(s) to the 2026 Overnight Summer Camp season. First and foremost, thank you. Thank you for entrusting us with the opportunity to provide a safe, fun, and transformational experience for your child. Since 1975, Camp Cullen has been a place where campers from around the world safely discover independence, belonging, and a deeper connection to our core values: Honesty, Caring, Responsibility, Respect, and Faith.

Whether your camper is returning for another summer or joining us for the very first time, we'll be thrilled to greet you. At Camp Cullen, we believe in the transformative power of the great outdoors and the magic that happens when young people unplug and connect with one another. From soaring down the zipline to earning a standing ovation at the talent show, every camper can find magic at overnight camp.

We know that safety is top of mind for families, especially following the tragedies in the Hill Country in 2025. While Camp Cullen was not directly impacted, we recognize the emotional weight these events carry for so many in our community. Please know that our commitment to safety is unwavering. Camp Cullen is proudly accredited by the American Camping Association at 100% and we continue to build on that foundation with annually reviewed emergency protocols, new weather monitoring systems, and enhanced staff training to ensure your camper's wellbeing is always our top priority. This has been an expectation of ours for many years and is now part of the compliance for licensing to operate an overnight camp in Texas.

Our staff, hailing from across the globe, are passionate about creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where every camper can thrive. They bring warmth, energy, and a deep belief in the power of camp to change lives. As someone who grew up attending YMCA overnight camp, spent college summers as a counselor, and now entering my 20th year with the YMCA, I can say with full confidence: there is nothing quite like overnight camp. The independence gained, the friendships made, the confidence built; it's magic that simply can't be replicated anywhere else.

As you review the following guide, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. Share anything you feel will help us make your camper's week successful. Prepare your camper - and yourself - for the adventure ahead. If you're nervous, they will be too. Let's work together to make this a summer they'll never forget.

On behalf of our entire camp team and the YMCA of Greater Houston, thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Cullen. We can't wait to welcome your camper and help them create memories that will last a lifetime.

Happy Camping,

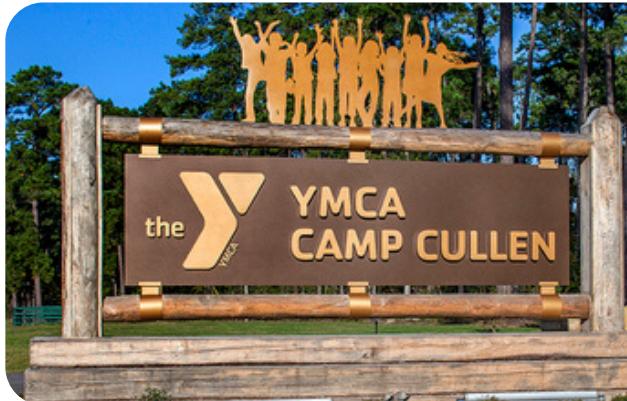
BOBBY THOMAS
Executive Director
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YMCA CAMP CULLEN

Is a summer overnight camp and year-round retreat facility nestled among 530 acres of tall pines along the shores of Lake Livingston in Trinity, Texas. It is a perfect place for people of all ages to enjoy a camp experience, providing campers with a safe, value-centered, and educational experience in an enriching, outdoor environment. YMCA Camp Cullen seeks to encourage the best in spirit, mind, and body for all its programs.

SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS

We happily welcome campers of all faiths. We make room for campers to explore their own spirituality through a variety of non-denominational songs, stories, graces at meals, and our core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Faith.



OUR STAFF

YMCA Camp Cullen employs more than 80 staff for our summer camp programs. Staff members complete an application process that includes state and national screenings, criminal background checks, and multiple interviews prior to being hired. All staff attend two weeks of Counselor Education where they will be trained in topics including:

- Safety and supervision policies
- Age-appropriate activities
- Transitional activities
- Special activity certifications
- Child abuse prevention
- Tactics for homesickness
- Rainy day activities
- Diversity and inclusion
- CPR, First Aid, and emergency procedures
- Progressive discipline



ESCAPE TECHNOLOGY

Camp is great because it's about getting away from day-to-day technology and the "everyday" routine. We encourage campers to get to know their new friends face to face. Please assist us by making sure your child leaves their phone at home.

SUMMER CAMP 2026 SESSIONS & RATES

Ages 7-16 | \$1350

- Session 1: June 7-12 — Crazy Carnival
- Session 2: June 14-19 — Myths & Magic
- Session 3: June 21-26 — Aqua Adventure
- OPC: June 28-July 3 — Operation Purple
- Session 5: July 5-10 — Holiday Hullabaloo (\$1,150)
- Camp Corral: July 12-17 — Camp Corral
- Session 7: July 19-24 — Wild Wild West
- Session 8: July 26-31 — Galaxy Vacation

NEW MINI CAMPS

The ideal first-time-camper experience, Sunday-Wednesday!

*Mini Session 1: June 7-10 (\$750)

*Mini Session 7: July 19-22 (\$750)

Save \$\$ by registering at the SUPER **EARLYBIRD** rate before the end of summer or the **EARLYBIRD** rate before December 31, 2026



SPECIALTY CAMP ADD ON

Same Dates as Sessions Above | Ages 9-16 | \$250/\$225

EQUESTRIAN CAMP

Half day daily dedicated to riding, grooming, and learning about Horses

WATERSPORTS CAMP

Half day daily dedicated to all watersports



Offered Specific Sessions | Ages 9-16 | \$200

DRAMA CAMP- AVAILABLE SESSION 3 & 8

Half day daily dedicated to planning and rehearsing a full play!

SCIENCE CAMP- AVAILABLE SESSION 2 & 7

Half day daily dedicated to learning more about science

HIGH ROPES CAMP- AVAILABLE SESSION 1 & 5

Half day daily dedicated to all High Ropes Elements



TEEN CAMPS

TEEN ADVENTURE CAMPS

Ages 13-16

Session 5: July 5-10 (Canoe Trip) \$1350

Session 7: July 19-24 (Backpacking Trip) \$1350

LEADERS IN TRAINING (FORMERLY TLC)

Ages 14-17 | Two Weeks | \$2300

LIT 1: June 14-26 (Age 14-15) \$2300

LIT 2: July 19-31 (Age 16-17) \$2300

BUS TRANSPORTATION

TO CAMP:

Session 2, June 14

Session 3, June 21

Session 5, July 5

Session 7, July 19

FROM CAMP:

Session 2, June 19

Session 3, June 26

Session 5, July 10

Session 7, July 24



WEEKEND BRIDGE

Bridge Together Two Sessions | \$200

Offered between: Session 2-3 & Session 7-8



CAMP REGISTRATION AND FEES

Registering for camp is easy! Register online at ymcacampcullen.org. A non-refundable \$100 deposit is required. We have a new registration system that is super easy to use. You can fill out all of your information AND, if desired, schedule a payment plan that works best for you. The full registration cost must be paid in full at least two weeks prior to the start of camp. Failure to complete payment will result in a cancelation of the registration and the advancement of another camper from the waiting list.

CHANGING/CANCELING SESSIONS

Should it be necessary for you to change or cancel your child's session, you must do so at least three weeks prior to the beginning of the session. Changes can be made right from your online account and will be accepted based on availability. Your registration must be canceled in writing (email) 2 weeks before your check-in day to be eligible for any applicable refunds.

REFUNDS

A \$100 non-refundable deposit is required for summer 2026. Your registration must be canceled in writing (email) at least 2 weeks before check-in day for any applicable refunds. Prorated camp session fees may be refunded when the camper is unable to complete their stay due to a medical condition. If the camper has received a scholarship, this will apply to the final days of the camp session. Homesickness or disruptive behavior that results in leaving camp early are not conditions for refunds. Camp leadership may allow refunds at their discretion in uncommon extenuating circumstances.

CABIN REQUESTS

Campers are assigned to their cabins just before each session begins. Campers are assigned to cabins according to age, gender, and allotted camp space. We will try to honor cabin requests but cannot make any guarantees. Campers wishing to share the same cabin need to request each other during the registration process. This can be altered after registration if needed. Requests must be of the same gender and within a year in age. If there is an age gap, the older camper will be put into the younger camper's cabin. Younger campers will not be placed into older camper cabins. Please be mindful of how much time campers spend with their cabins and how unbalanced ages could affect experiences. Beds within the cabins are not reserved and are filled on first-come basis on check-in day.



MEDICAL AND EMERGENCIES

SPECIAL NEEDS ACCOMODATION & POLICY

YMCA Camp Cullen leadership is consistently evaluating our abilities to successfully serve campers with special emotional or physical needs. While our staff are trained in a variety of topics to keep campers safe and provide a great camp experience, unfortunately there are some campers who may need more assistance than we can confidently provide. Please reach out to the Camp Cullen office before registering to discuss your camper's special needs to ensure we are setting them up for camp success. If, after that conversation, we are unable to agree that your camper will be most successful here, there are camps nearby who have the staff, the training, and the certifications to host your camper and we would be delighted to put you in contact with them. Camp enrollment may be dependent upon the appropriate qualifications of camp staff.

INJURIES

Our medical staff will treat routine scrapes, cuts, and minor illnesses in our new, state of the art, Health Center. Services rendered by the camp medical staff are administered at no charge. It is our policy to inform parents of any injury that is more serious than a minor cut or scrape. In the case of serious illness or accident, the staff will notify EMS and contact you immediately. In the event you cannot be reached, we will attempt to reach your designated emergency contact. Your signed authorization on the registration form allows us to secure prompt treatment. Parents or guardians are responsible for charges incurred for outside medical treatment of their child if treatment is required while in attendance at camp.

ILLNESS

It is the policy of YMCA Camp Cullen not to keep campers with symptoms lasting more than 24 hours in our camp Health Center. After all, who wants to come to camp only to be sick and rest in the Health Center? Therefore, we ask parents of campers who are ill for more than 24 hours to care for their child at home and to see the family doctor. Transportation is not provided for campers returning home due to illness. If your child is scheduled to come to camp and becomes ill, please do not bring them to camp as that illness could spread rapidly through our close knit camp community. Call the camp office as soon as possible Monday–Friday 8:30 am–5 pm or email campcullen@ymcahoustion.org after hours or weekends in order for us to schedule another session for you.



INSURANCE

Parents or guardians must include their camper's health insurance information when completing registration. This information will only be used to facilitate outside medical treatment, if required. In the event of serious illness or accident, EMS will be notified and then the parent/guardian will be notified.



EMERGENCIES

Emergency calls to campers should be made by calling the camp office at 936-594-2274 from 8:30 am–5 pm. After 5 pm, call the camp Director on Duty's site phone at 936-200-8611.

Our Emergency Action Plans can be found on the final pages of this packet.

MEDICATIONS

All prescription medication brought into camp must be in original containers that include the camper's name, dosage, and medication administration times.

All medications, including over-the-counter (vitamins, creams, lotions, etc.) must be turned in to be dispensed by the camp's medical team. Medications must remain in the original bottle to be dispensed by camp staff. YMCA Camp Cullen stocks most over-the-counter medications needed at camp, so it is not necessary that your child brings these items. If there are any over-the-counter medications that you do not want your child to take, please specify these on the medical form during registration.

Please give all prescription and over-the-counter medications directly to the Medical Station upon check in at camp. If your child will be arriving by bus, please check in medications with camp staff at the bus site. Make sure your camper's name is on all items. It is recommended that all campers stay on regular daily medication during their time at camp. It is our policy for campers with Epi Pens and/or Inhalers to have 2 with them at camp. 1 will stay with our nurses at the Health Clinic and 1 will remain with the camper or their counselor depending on the camper's age and ability.

LOST & FOUND

We will make every effort to return lost and found items. Please mark all items with your child's name in a permanent marker or laundry label for easy identification. Please check your child's belongings and the lost and found display prior to leaving camp to make sure your camper has not left anything behind. We will have an area dedicated to lost and found items during check out for parents/guardians and campers to check before leaving.

Please be especially thorough on check-out day to make sure that bags are not left.

After the camp session is over, you will receive a link to our Lost and Found form. Please fill this out and we will do our best to locate the item(s). Items found after your child's camp session will be held for 2 weeks after the last session of camp and may be claimed by description. We will do everything we can to make arrangements for the item(s) to be returned to you promptly. Arrangements can also be made to pick up the item(s) at YMCA Camp Cullen.

After September 1, all remaining items will be donated to a local non-profit. Undergarments and socks that are left at camp will be thrown away immediately after each session.

YMCA CAMP CULLEN CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST, STOLEN, OR DAMAGED ARTICLES.



DISCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The YMCA Camp Cullen Advisory Board and Staff work hard each year to raise money for camper subsidies. Financial assistance is available on a limited basis.

Visit YMCACAMP CULLEN.ORG for more information.

We welcome contributions to our scholarship fund. If you would like to help send a child to camp who otherwise might not be able to afford it contact Bobby.Thomas@ymcahouston.org.

FIRST-TIME CAMPERS

Going off to YMCA Camp Cullen is a thrilling adventure for campers and parents. We know both parties may be a bit anxious about the camper leaving the comforts of home, adopting new routines of daily activities, and meeting new friends. Here are some helpful tips for first-time campers.

- Talk to your camper about what to expect. They'll be living in a close community and sharing space with others. They may find some things strange or goofy, but that's what camp is all about!
- Enforce how proud of them you are for trying something new.
- Send pre-addressed stamped envelopes or postcards with campers so they can send mail to family and friends.
- Send old clothes they recognize as their own. Avoid packing new ones they will not remember as their own.
- Do not send valuable clothing. Pack with your camper and make a list of what they bring so that you both know what they should bring home.
- Please do not send family heirlooms or expensive items
- Remember: label everything and pack light!

MISSING HOME

Temporarily missing home is not an unusual feeling, particularly for new campers. Our staff are trained in constructive and caring ways to work with campers to help them overcome their feeling of missing home. Overcoming these feelings is an important learning experience and it helps your child grow stronger. With proper handling by staff and guardians, a homesick camper can make big strides.

Messages/mail can affect a camper who is missing home. Please avoid telling your camper that "you cannot get along without them" or "how much they are missed at home". Instead, please send encouraging emails and talk about the photos you have seen of them online and how proud you are of them. We recommend you plan ahead to send letters/purchase care packages so that they have something at the beginning of the week. It is difficult for a camper when they see all their cabin mates receiving mail and they receive nothing.

Campers who are missing home will occasionally ask our staff to call home. Our procedure is to try and work with our campers through their feelings before we try calling home. We find that when these campers speak with their parents/guardians, their feelings may only get worse. We believe in redirecting our campers to ensure that they have a successful, fun experience at camp.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT

If your child is missing home or has any other problem you should know about, we will notify you of the situation. Our counselors are well trained and can usually prevent potential issues before they become a problem. Because we have so many campers and a packed schedule, no news is good news.



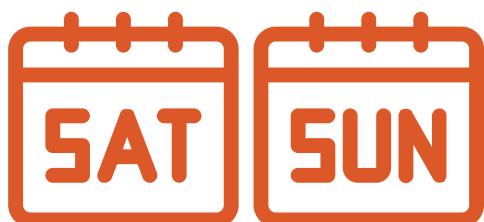
BEDWETTING

If you know that your camper may wet the bed, please indicate it on their camper information forms during registration and notify your camper's counselor during check-in. Our staff are trained to work with your camper directly to deal with bedwetting discreetly. Campers should be instructed to ask their counselors for help and every effort will be made to prevent accidents. Please send a plastic sheet and protective apparel and/or an extra set of sheets with your camper if this may happen.



Whether it is your camper's first or tenth summer at camp, mail-call is an important part of every camper's day. Here are some hints to make corresponding with your camper more enjoyable:

- Leave letters for your camper to receive throughout the week on opening day.
- Send photos of family, friends, or pets.
- Have family members write a letter or send messages through the 'Email a Camper' in your registration account.
- Non-food items like magazines, books, costumes and items related to our camp theme are great!
- Talk about how glad you are that they have the opportunity to go to camp and how much you will enjoy talking about the fun things they were able to do when they return home.
- Please refrain from sending food or snacks in the mail. We like to keep all the ants and bugs at camp OUTSIDE of the cabin.



MAIL

It is a great idea to bring mail with you when you drop your campers off to avoid any post office delays. Please write the camper's name, session number, and the day that you would like the mail delivered to your camper. If mailing, please allow five business days for mail to reach camp. We recommend writing to your camper at least once before camp begins to make sure it arrives for the first day. This will guarantee that your camper will receive at least one letter from home while they are at camp.

PLEASE ADDRESS MAIL THIS WAY

YMCA CAMP CULLEN
460 Cullen Loop
Trinity, TX 75862
Camper's Name/Session Number/Cabin Name

Mail can be slow, so some mail may be received after the camper is home. Please ensure they know their mailing address. You can also send pre-addressed envelopes with your camper.

CAMP STORE

We have a lot of fun camp apparel and other exciting camp items available. The store will be open during check-in and check-out and a couple times during the week, though only for drinks and snacks. During registration you will be able to add funds to your camper's store account. We recommend \$10-\$20 and any unused funds are not refundable.

Ready-made bedding/towel sets are available for purchase if pre-ordered 2 weeks prior to camp by calling the office or emailing cynthia.drake@ymcahouston.org

WEEKEND BRIDGE CAMPERS

Campers staying multiple sessions are allowed to remain at camp between certain sessions for an additional fee of \$200. This must be arranged at time of registration or within your account ahead of time. Please send two weeks of clothing for these campers, or detergent for laundry on Saturday. Counselors will assist with laundry if needed.

TEEN CAMP WEEKENDS

Both of the LIT sessions include the weekend stay. If your camper is in the Teen Adventure Camp program during session 7, they could register for the Bridge Weekend to be a traditional camper for Session 8.

MEALS & DAILY SCHEDULE

The dining hall is modern and roomy. Our well-balanced meals are served by professional food service staff. If your child has any special dietary needs, please notify us upon registration and we will do our best to make accommodations. We are able to accommodate most general food allergies. It is hot in Texas in the summer, thus, water is our primary drink at camp and we encourage all campers to drink plenty throughout the day.

After including it in your registration, if you are concerned about your camper's special dietary needs, please give us a call to discuss it with our Food Service Director. Please inform the camp upon enrollment, by phone or email of any special needs at least two weeks prior to arrival.

Generally, our campers all follow one schedule that you will see below. When we experience weeks with a high number of campers, we may have split meal schedules. We split the meals by ages. Split meals will not affect the number of activities either age group has the opportunity to do. It will alleviate the noise and traffic within the dining hall.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00- Wake up
8:00- Breakfast
8:40- Cabin Duties
9:10- Flag & Morning Show
10:00- Cluster 1
11:35- Cluster 2
12:30- Lunch
1:10- Siesta
2:15- Clubs
3:30- Cluster 3
4:45- Cluster 4
6:00- Dinner
6:40- Cabin Rec Time
7:20- Evening Program
8:45- Meds and Showers
9:30- Lights out for Youngers
10:30- Lights out for Teens



COMMUNITY LIVING



Personal responsibility and group cooperation are important elements of life and there's no better place to perfect them than during a summer camp experience.

Mature and caring staff members work with campers on the importance of caring for one's personal space and belongings, assisting in daily cabin clean-up, and pitching in with shared responsibilities around camp. We strive to impart caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility in our camp community so that it may carry over into our lives outside of camp.



Summer Camp is a great place to learn new skills and try new things. At YMCA Camp Cullen, we have a lot of great activities because a great camp should have something for every child.

For campers who want to water ski and play sports all day, we have the right mix. For campers who enjoy nature exploration and sailing, we have that too. And for campers who love horses and swimming, no problem! Our camp activities are led by trained and experienced facilitators who guide campers in having an unforgettable experience. Because campers return year after year, nearly all of our programs include a progression model. This way campers can fine tune their skills each session they come!

SOME ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Arts and Crafts
- Alpine Tower
- Archery
- Basketball
- Canoeing
- Fishing
- Kayaking
- Outdoor Skills
- Performing Arts
- Riflery / BBs
- Swimming
- Horseback Riding
- Zip Line
- Environmental Discovery
- Tubing
- Wet Willie Slide



CLUBS

A camper's club is the activity they sign up for on Sunday to be a part of everyday while at camp. Clubs are meant to give campers the opportunity to participate in an activity they have an interest in, to learn more about and to develop their skills. If a camper decides they want to switch their club, we can of course make that happen. But we can't guarantee they can switch into their number 1 choice. Club options vary by week, but some staples are Sailing, Pottery, Arts n Crafts, Theatre, General Athletics, Target Sports, Table top games, High Ropes, Paddle sports, Swim Lessons, Survival, and more!

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

CLUSTERS

Cluster activities are free choice activities that are offered every morning and afternoon. The two age groups, younger and older camps, will be split between aquatics and land activities. If the older campers have land in the morning, they will have aquatics in the afternoon and vice versa for the younger campers. Campers who are at aquatics activities will check in and out with a staff members on one of the Splash and Dash boards. This helps us keep accountability over camper locations.

CABIN ACTIVITIES

After spending all day exploring and meeting new people, campers will get to spend quality time with their cabin and their counselors. The age group coordinators will work with cabin counselors to schedule each cabin's preferred activities.

EVENING PROGRAM

We end every day with an evening program. Evening programs are large group or even all camp activity. It could be a campfire with songs and skits, a huge game of capture the flag, a House Tournament, Talent Show, or Ice-Cream Social.

All campers must take a swim assessment each time they visit the pool to demonstrate their level of swimming ability, providing information to the lifeguards on duty throughout the week. Personal flotation devices are required and provided for participation in any of our lake front activities.



Our swim assessment will assess the following skills:

- Jump into water that is over the camper's head and return to surface
- Ability to swim the entire length of the pool (~25 yards) without touching the floor
- Treading water for 1 minute
- Ability to orient themselves to floating on their back
- Swim to side of the pool and climb out



HOUSE SYSTEM

Our YMCA House System is primarily aimed at creating a sense of belonging for your child, and legacy for your family. Throughout all of your child's YMCA camping experiences, week by week and year by year, they will have the same 'House'. This allows for familiarity and an instant sense of community.

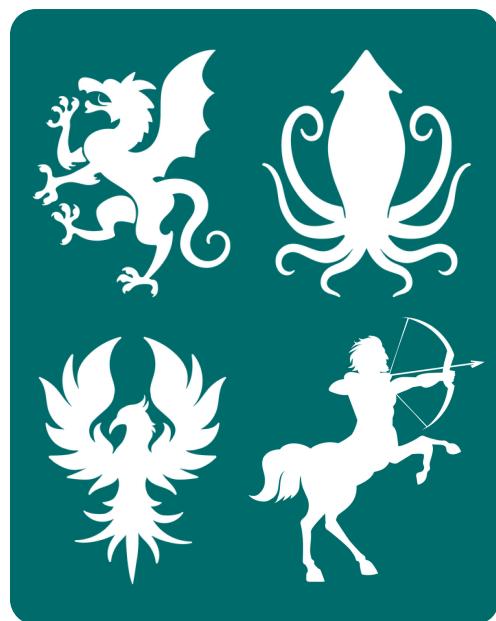
A camper's House gives them a symbol to call their own, to uphold the value of, to compete for, and hold themselves accountable to. It creates a feeling of small community within the larger camp community. Cabin groupings change every year, the Y camp they attend may change, but their House will remain the same. As with all camp programs, the teaching of core values is woven into the fabric of this aspect of the camp program.

THE HOUSES

The Houses at YMCA Camp Cullen are Dragon, Phoenix, Centaur and Lusca. Incidentally these houses also tie into elements; Dragon is air, Phoenix is fire, Centaur is earth, and Lusca is water.

As a legacy program, your child's House will be consistent throughout camping and from year to year. Your child's siblings will also be in this House, and with an eye to the future, your children's children will also be in the same house.

Each House has its own symbol and color scheme to help create the feeling of ownership and belonging. Being in one house or another will not in any way take time from your child being with friends or result in your child spending less time in age-appropriate groupings.



CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT

All parents/guardians will receive multiple communications via email with complete details, including specifics for multi-camper families.

CHECK IN

Sundays | 1:00-3:00 pm

This summer, we are asking families to arrive for check in based on the first letter of their camper's last name. Arriving before or after your time window will not affect any part of your check in process. We are just hoping to make the check in process even smoother.

A-H: 1:00-1:40

I-P: 1:40-2:20

Q-Z: 2:20-3:00

Step 1: Enter gates and drive down Roy's Way
Step 2: Receive Cabin assignments at archery
Step 3: Drop off luggage with Wranglers
Step 4: Park, Check in at the Dining Hall, Check House
Step 5: Drop off Meds
Step 6: Head to your cabin

CHECK OUT

Fridays | 4:30-6:00 pm

All parent/guardians must check out with camp staff and show proper identification before campers will be released. If someone other than the parent is picking up the camper, please note in your registration under AUTHORIZED Pickups or notify the camp office in writing via email. Please make sure you pick up your child's medication from the camp medical staff and get your child's luggage (including laundry bags that may have not made it back into the suitcase).

Step 1: Enter Gates and drive to Parking lot

Step 2: Pick up Luggage along the loop

Step 3: Park and head inside dining hall to check out
Step 4: Either wait at Dining Hall for campers or head to their cabin

Dinner available starting at 4:45-5:30 pm

EARLY PICK UP

If there is an emergency and you need to pick up your child early, please notify the camp office before Friday at 4 pm or email Cynthia and Lauren at least 2 hours before pickup, so we can have them ready upon your arrival.

AWARDS & CEREMONY

Starting summer 2026, we will not be holding a Closing Ceremony after check out. We want to respect the time of our Camp Families and their desire to get home after a fun-filled week at Camp. Campers and Staff will still have a Ceremony prior to the end of camp so Laurel Awards can be given out and the House Cup winner to be announced. Make sure to ask your Camper about these on the ride home!

ATTENTION GUARDIANS OF EQUESTRIAN CAMPERS:

There will be a horse show on closing day (Friday) each week for Equestrian Camp participants of all riding levels. The show will begin at 4 pm at the equestrian center. Families should come directly to the equestrian center and camper checkout will take place, at the Equestrian Center, prior to the show. The entrance to the equestrian center is located on Taylor Cemetery Rd., south of FM 356 (on the opposite side of the highway from main camp). You will be able to meet your camper's horse, watch them ride, and collect their luggage. If you are not able to attend, please email bailey.teague@ymcahouston.org to let us know and we will make sure to get photos for you and arrange for your camper to be picked up at main camp. After the horse show, you are invited to dinner at the dining hall at 5pm! Please, don't forget to visit the nurse's station for your camper's medication!



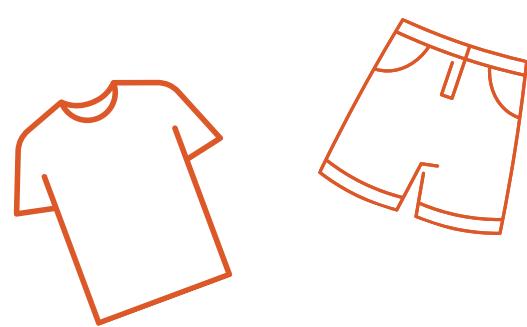
YMCA CAMP CULLEN PACKING LIST

(1-WEEK SESSIONS)

Campers staying for longer should pack accordingly.

CLOTHING

- 2 pairs of closed-toe shoes such as sneakers or athletic shoes
- 1 pair of sturdy closed-toe shoes with a smooth sole (if camper wants to do horseback riding)
- 1 pair of water shoes for the showers and waterfront activities
- 1 pair of jeans (required for horseback riding)
- 2 swimsuits (Girls- One pieces or "tankinis", Boys- no speedos)
- 7-8 pairs of underwear
- 7-8 T-shirts (please, nothing promoting, alcohol, tobacco, sexual innuendos, etc.)
- 7-8 pairs of shorts
- 7-8 pairs of socks
- 1 set of shirt and shorts for MESSY night activities
- 1 raincoat or poncho
- 1 hat or cap (protection from the sun)
- 1 water bottle or canteen (heavy duty)
- 1 backpack



BEDDING

- 1 sleeping bag or 2 single sheets and 1 light blanket
- 1 pillow
- 1 laundry bag (pillowcase will work too)
- 1 vinyl mattress cover for twin bed (optional)



TOILETRIES

<input type="checkbox"/> Soap and soap dish	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 washcloths
<input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush and toothpaste	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 bath towels
<input type="checkbox"/> Brush or comb	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 beach towels
<input type="checkbox"/> Shampoo and conditioner	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 flashlight with extra batteries



OPTIONAL

- Insect repellent (non-aerosol)
- Paper, pen, envelope, and stamps
- Camera (disposable)
- Sunscreen or sunblock



DO NOT BRING TO CAMP

Personal Electronic Devices: iPods/iPads, expensive digital cameras, cell phones, "Smart glasses", computers and any other electronics that are expensive and can be broken or disruptive to camp.

Personal sports equipment, firearms, fireworks, matches, lighters, knives, tobacco products, drugs, alcohol, valuable items, gum, candy, animals, and snacks.

Self-management skills and positive social interactions among children and adults are encouraged and maximize everyone's enjoyment of camp. Our programs use positive guidance methods including reminders, distraction, logical consequences, and redirection. Self-management skills are taught according to the following guidelines:

- Consistent rules are clearly stated. Campers are expected to work and play within known limits.
- Behavior expected of campers is age-appropriate and based on developmental level.
- An atmosphere of trust is established in order for campers to know that they will not be hurt nor be allowed to hurt others.
- Staff members strive to help campers become acquainted with themselves and their feelings. This will help them learn to cope with their feelings and control them responsibly.

Camper safety, both emotional and physical, is the most important concern of our programs. Therefore, campers whose behavior is dangerous or repeatedly disruptive will be discussed with the camper's parent and may result in loss of privileges or activities leading up to possible removal from the camp program. Parents are financially responsible for intentional damage to equipment and facilities caused by their camper.

CONDUCT POLICIES

The following conduct policies apply directly to each individual camper and will be used in determining the camper's eligibility to continue as a participant in the camp program. Infractions are documented in an incident/discipline report. Please make certain that both you and your child are completely familiar with these policies.

A camper may lose camp privileges leading up to removal from camp, without refund, for the following behavior while participating in the program or while being transported:

- Leaving the YMCA campsite without permission, or going into unauthorized areas
- Consistent use of foul language, fighting, being rude or discourteous to staff and other campers
- Defacing Y property, camp facilities, or any property visited
- Engaging in fighting, intentionally injuring another camper, or bullying
- Bringing or using any illegal substances and/or weapons
- Inappropriate for camp displays of affection
- Stealing or defacing another camper's property
- Refusing to remain with the group while at camp and during outings
- Refusing to follow check in and out procedures or refusing to follow basic rules of safety
- Not remaining seated at all times while being transported
- Not keeping his/her seat belt fastened while being transported
- Having any body part out of the window, defacing the vehicle and/or being rude and discourteous to the driver or to other drivers on the road while being transported

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

FIRST INCIDENT:

Documented conversation with the camper write-up

SECOND INCIDENT:

Parent notified by phone and/or in writing

THIRD INCIDENT:

The action taken at this point is at the discretion of the Program Director after appropriate consultation with the parent.

RANGE OF DISCIPLINE:

Removal from camp activities to removal from camp. Parents are responsible for picking up any child that must be removed from a session within 3 (three) hours of initial notification. Once the decision has been made to remove a camper from the program they are immediately removed from their cabin and activities until the parents/guardians arrive.

VIOLENCE:

We take acts of intentional harm very seriously. Should a camper aim to harm another, they may be automatically suspended from Camp.

TEEN ADVENTURE CAMP

Ages 13-17

Our re-imagined one-week Teen Adventure Camp is an exhilarating experience that immerses teens in the great outdoors, fostering a deep connection with nature while building physical endurance, self-reliance, and teamwork. Over the course of the week, campers will participate in a variety of outdoor activities designed to challenge them physically and mentally, while also providing ample opportunities for fun, exploration, and personal growth. Choose the Canoe Trip session, the Backcountry Trip session, or do both with our weekend bridge option. By the end of their session, campers will have gained not only new outdoor skills but also a deeper appreciation for nature, enhanced physical fitness, and a stronger sense of self-reliance. They leave with unforgettable memories, lifelong friendships, and the confidence to take on new challenges in the future.



LEADERS IN TRAINING (LIT)

Ages 15-17

This two-week program for teens focusses on building leadership skills that campers can use for their entire life, not just at camp. Of course we will have some fun along the way with participation and learning how to facilitate traditional camp activities. Teens aged 15-17 are introduced to a camp community of peers with whom they will spend two weeks maximizing their leadership skills and growing their impact as a leader in their home communities. The program is carefully crafted to foster leadership qualities, teamwork, and personal growth while ensuring that every moment is filled with fun, adventure, and memorable experiences.



COUNSELORS IN TRAINING (CIT)

Ages 16-17

This is the final step in the camper experience and the first step towards becoming a counselor at camp. This two-week volunteer program is the next step after being an LIT. CITs will sleep in a cabin with staff and campers to learn how to be servant leaders at Camp while taking an active role in helping manage the cabin and leading activities.

To be a CIT, campers must have gone through the LIT program or be 17 years old. CITs will also earn 150 volunteer hours for their 2 week stay.

CAMPER NON-NEGOTIABLES

PLEASE DISCUSS THESE WITH YOUR CAMPER. THESE ARE THE EXPECTATIONS WE HAVE OF OUR CAMPERS.

RESPECT

Respect Others: Treat fellow campers, counselors, and staff with kindness and respect. We do not allow bullying, teasing, or exclusion of others at camp. You may not hit another person for any reason.

Respect Property: Take care of camp facilities, equipment, and other campers' belongings. Please do not vandalize or misuse property at camp.

Respect Personal Space: Honor others' personal space and privacy. Knock before entering cabins or bathrooms and ask before using someone else's belongings.

RESPONSIBILITY

Follow Camp Rules: Be active in the cabin group while creating camp rules. Adhere to those rules and guidelines at all times. They are not meant to restrict fun, but to keep everyone safe and happy.

Stay Safe: Follow safety instructions given by counselors and staff. Use equipment properly and report any unsafe conditions to staff immediately.

Participate: Engage in camp activities with a positive attitude. Be punctual and prepared for scheduled events.

Cooperation and Teamwork:

CARING

Work Together: Cooperate with fellow campers and counselors. Participate in group activities and support team efforts.

Listen and Communicate: Listen to instructions and communicate effectively. Raise any concerns or issues with counselors promptly.

Help Out: Assist with cabin and program area clean-up and other responsibilities, such as, cleaning up after meals, and picking up litter.

HONESTY

Be Honest: Tell the truth and be honest in your actions. Do not lie, cheat, or steal. Set a good example for others.

Take Responsibility: Own up to mistakes and learn from them. Apologize when necessary and make amends. Let your counselors help you navigate tricky situations.

Stay Positive: Maintain a positive attitude, even when faced with challenges. Encourage and support others.

PERSONAL CONDUCT

Stay Healthy: Practice good hygiene, check out the salad bar, and get enough rest. Avoid risky behaviors that could lead to injury or illness.

Respect Camp Quiet Hours: When your counselor says "lights-out" respect those quiet hours to ensure everyone gets enough rest, including yourself.

Be Open-Minded: Be open to trying new activities and making new friends. Embrace the camp experience fully.

**Allow your experiences at camp to help you become the best version of yourself.
You can be anyone you want to be at camp, why not choose to be the best you.**

PARENT/GUARDIAN NON-NEGOTIABLES

PLEASE REVIEW THE EXPECTATIONS WE HAVE OF THE PARENT/GUARDIANS WHO ARE ALLOWING US TO CARE FOR THEIR CAMPER.

RESPECT

Respect Others: Please treat our staff with respect, as they will treat you with respect. Our summer staff work very hard and do this work because they believe in the power of camp and enjoy youth development. Our staff want to help your camper be successful. We never want to send a camper home early, but it does occasionally happen. Please know that if your camper does need to leave camp early, we have exhausted every option to help them be successful. It is also not forever. Everyone deserves a second chance. We ask that if your camper must depart camp early, that you make every reasonable attempt to make it to camp within 4 hours.

RESPONSIBILITY

Prepare Yourself, Your Camper, and Us: Play an active part in preparing your camper for their time at Camp Cullen. Talk to them about what to expect when living in a communal space. Tell them that they will have the opportunity to be themselves without judgment and to try new things without fear of ridicule from failure. Tell them how this week away will prepare them for other times they'll be away from home as they grow up. Help set us up for success by giving us as much info on your child as possible. Be honest if there are things they may struggle with. The more we know ahead of time, the better!

CARING

Work With You Camper on Conflict Resolution: Our counselors are always around and present, but we have a lot of kids at camp so they may not always be looking in the perfect direction to capture and prevent every conflict. Talk with your camper how to deal with conflicts. Tell a counselor and let them take care of the problem. Use their words rather than becoming physical. Camp is meant to be a fun place, but someone who acts out physically lessens the fun aspect significantly.

HONESTY

Stay Positive: If you are dropping your camper off for the first time, you will almost certainly have some emotions. Do your best to hide those until you are out of sight of your camper. They know you love them. They know you will miss them. But in this moment, they are looking to you to be strong and positive about their upcoming camp experience.

To maintain a positive and safe environment for all participants, camp staff will not become involved in personal, legal, or interpersonal disputes between families outside of camp, including disagreements or conflicts between members of the same family or between multiple families unless a situation arises that impacts a camper's safety or our ability to provide appropriate care, camp leadership

Our role is to support each camper's well-being during program activities. We do not mediate family conflicts, interpret custody arrangements, or enforce agreements made outside of camp.

PATIENCE

Have Patience in the Camp Process: On Sunday, we are checking a lot of campers in and moving as fast as possible while trying to stay accurate in our documentation. We are taking photos as quickly as possible, reviewing them to make sure they are good, and then uploading them from multiple cameras for you to view. They may not be uploaded until late at night or the next morning. We would love to call and give daily progress reports on every camper, but it just isn't feasible. Just think, no news is good news at camp. Please be patient with our processes.

Thank you for doing your part to ensure your camper is set up for success at camp!

OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

At Camp Cullen, camper safety is our highest priority. Our team follows a comprehensive Emergency Action Plan (EAP) that outlines exactly how we respond to medical incidents, severe weather, missing campers, facility hazards, wildlife concerns, and other emergencies. We train, drill, and prepare so that every response is fast, calm, and coordinated.

ABOUT THIS SUMMARY

This document is a simplified version of Camp Cullen's full Emergency Action Plan. Our staff are trained extensively on a far more detailed set of emergency procedures, response roles, and operational protocols to ensure they are prepared for any situation. This public summary is designed to give parents, guardians, and our community a clear understanding of how we keep campers safe while maintaining appropriate security and operational confidentiality.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

To ensure quick and accurate information flow during emergencies, Camp Cullen uses:

Weather Monitoring

In addition to cell applications like WeatherBug and My Lightning Tracker, NOAA weather radios are stationed in key locations around camp (offices, cabins, director residence, staff on duty).

UHF Two-Way Radios

Staff announce emergencies using the phrase "ALERT" and the EAP name.

All-Camp Public Address (PA)

Announcements can be activated through any two-way radio if immediate notification is required. These radios do not require internet or cellular and have a battery backup.

Cell Phones

Used for direct communication with leadership when more detail is needed.

CAMPER ACCOUNTABILITY

Keeping track of every camper at all times is central to our safety plan.

How Accountability Works

- Each camper is assigned to specific set of counselors and leadership staff.
- Rosters are kept in multiple secure locations (cabins, program office, main office, health center).

Camper counts occur:

- Before movement
- Upon arrival to emergency locations
- During extended incidents
- After relocation

If a Child Cannot Be Accounted For

- Leadership is alerted immediately.
- Nearby areas are checked.
- If not resolved within 10 minutes, the Missing Person EAP is activated and 911 is notified.



EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Primary assembly areas include:

- Outdoor: Dining Hall Parking Lot, Top of camp/Allen Center
- Indoor: Dining Hall, Allen Center

For extreme elevation needs follow designated routes to the Allen Center muster location

- If we must evacuate the property, the off-site assembly area is Trinity High School (500 E Caroline St, Trinity, TX 75862).

During evacuation:

- Staff lead campers to the safe location.
- Headcounts are completed and verified before departure AND after arrival.
- Only emergency personnel can authorize re-entry.

Roles in Evacuations and Emergencies:

- Specific roles are defined in the extended EAP narrative.
- Primary response includes that of the Executive Director, Sr. Program Director, Program Directors, Business Director, Camp Nurses, and Summer Staff



EMERGENCY TYPES & OUR RESPONSE

Again, this information is a high-level overview of our response structure for major emergency scenarios. These summaries are intentionally streamlined to provide general understanding, promote alignment, and outline the core actions we follow in any emergency situation.

For safety and security reasons, the plans used internally by our staff are significantly more detailed. Staff receive comprehensive training on scenario-specific procedures, communication protocols, role assignments, and technical response steps that go beyond what is shared publicly. Keeping those operational details internal helps ensure the integrity of our emergency processes while still giving parent/guardians the clarity they need to trust our approach.

FIRE OR SMOKE

- Pull the nearest alarm and call 911.
- Evacuate to the designated assembly area.
- Staff conduct full accountability checks.

MAJOR ACCIDENT / INJURY

- 911 is called immediately.
- Emergency supplies (AED, oxygen, first aid) are brought to the scene.
- The area is cleared for EMS response.

MISSING CAMPER

- Staff gather all campers at the dining hall.
- Search teams sweep key areas (villages, pool, waterfront).
- If not found within 10 minutes, 911 is contacted.

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

- Thunder / Lightning
 - Outdoor activities stop for 30 minutes after thunder.
 - Campers are moved to safe indoor or covered areas.
- Severe Weather / Tornado-Type Threat
 - "Shelter-in-Place" is activated.
 - Campers stay in interior rooms away from windows.
- Flooding (unlikely based on geography)
 - Follow designated routes (indicated by blue solar powered lights and a map in each cabin) to elevated muster locations
 - Directors guide evacuation as needed.

UTILITIES EMERGENCY

- Examples: gas leak, chemical spill, power outage, water loss
 - Staff contact Maintenance or After-Hours Emergency Maintenance.
 - Gas leaks require immediate evacuation without using electronics.
 - Further instructions are given by leadership.

HOSTILE OR DANGEROUS SITUATION

- Our priority is protection and supervision.
- Avoid danger when safe exits exist.
- Secure indoors (locked doors, lights off, quiet).
- Account for all campers.
- Call 911 when safe.

WILDLIFE OR ANIMAL CONCERN

- If at the Waterfront, activities pause for 30 minutes after a confirmed animal sighting.
- Immediate-danger animals are isolated; Facilities staff and/or animal control may be contacted.

TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENT

- 911 is called; campers are evacuated to a safe area.
- First aid is provided.
- Parents are notified.



PARENT & GUARDIAN NOTIFICATIONS

Camp Cullen follows a structured communication plan in accordance with Texas youth camp requirements.

When Parents Are Notified: You will be contacted if any of the following occur:

- A serious medical incident
- EMS, fire, or police involvement
- Evacuation, shelter-in-place, or lockdown
- Missing camper
- Weather events affecting operations
- Any emergency that disrupts camp schedules

How Notifications Typically Happen

1. Direct Phone Call
 - a. For: medical emergencies, hospital transport, missing camper.
2. Mass Notification (email, text, phone)
 - a. For: weather events, camp-wide actions, general safety updates.
3. Email Follow-Ups
 - a. For: post-incident updates and summaries.

Message Standards: All communications are:

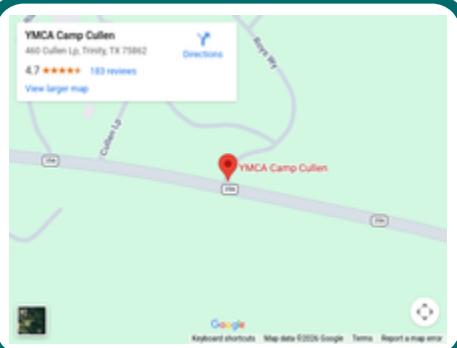
- Calm, factual, and clear
- Free of speculation
- Aligned with emergency responders

HOW FAMILIES CAN HELP

- Keep contact information on UltraCamp accounts updated.
- Ensure authorized pickup lists are accurate.
- Review safety expectations with your child in a calm way.
- Follow any instructions during emergencies (especially during shelter-in-place or delayed pickup situations).



FOR THE MOST SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS TO YMCA CAMP CULLEN, PLEASE USE YOUR GPS WITH OUR ADDRESS.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Bobby Thomas - bobby.thomas@ymcahouston.org

SUMMER CAMP DIRECTOR:
Lauren Scott - lauren.scott@ymcahouston.org

SR. PROGRAMS DIRECTOR:
Chance Orton - chance.orton@ymcahouston.org

CAMP BUSINESS DIRECTOR:
Cynthia Drake - cynthia.drake@ymcahouston.org

EQUESTRIAN DIRECTOR:
Bailey Teague - bailey.teague@ymcahouston.org

ASSOCIATE EQUESTRIAN DIRECTOR:
Anya Katz - anastasia.katz@ymcahouston.org

FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR:
Heather Mansel - heather.mansel@ymcahouston.org

OUTDOOR ED & GROUP RETREATS DIRECTOR
KJ Davis - kenneth.davis@ymcahouston.org



YMCA CAMP CULLEN
460 Cullen Loop
Trinity, TX 75862

PHONE NUMBER: 936-594-2274

TYPICAL HOURS: MONDAY–FRIDAY
8:30 AM–5:00 PM

EMAIL: CAMPCULLEN@YMCACHOSTON.ORG



[FACEBOOK.COM/YMCACAMP CULLEN](https://www.facebook.com/ymcacampcullen)



[INSTAGRAM.COM/YMCACAMP CULLEN](https://www.instagram.com/ymcacampcullen)