

SUMMER 2023



BYNDEN WOOD DAY CAMP PARENT HANDBOOK



— ACCREDITED BY —
PRAESIDIUM
— 2022-2025 —

SOUTH MOUNTAIN YMCA CAMPS

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Connect with us!

WWW.SMYMCA.ORG

Facebook.com/smymcacamps

[@smymcacamps](https://Instagram.com/smymcacamps)



Updated 03/03/2023

This handbook will be updated throughout 2023. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to keep your families up to date.

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Welcome to Day Camp

Surrounded by nature, Bynden Wood's outdoor mountaintop facility provides campers with a unique summer camp experience. Our goals for your child are that they make new friends, try new activities, grow in independence, spend significant time outdoors, and learn about the YMCA's values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.



Bynden Wood's programming and schedule begin with a "try-everything-on-your-plate" philosophy where we encourage our campers to experience everything camp has to offer. As our campers grow, we allow them to express their independence and choose some of their own programs based on their interests. Our staff are professional role-models and they provide the support, leadership and supervision for children to learn new skills, build self-confidence and make new friends. At Bynden Wood, our staff truly believe that ***Kids Come First***.

What to Bring

Each camper must wear **closed-toed shoes**, such as sneakers or comfortable hiking boots. Most activities done at camp require such footwear at all times. We also recommend **clothing that can get dirty**, since camp is mostly outdoors!

- ☐ Swimsuit (worn to camp)
- ☐ Beach Towel
- ☐ Sunblock
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Bug Spray
- ☐ Small backpack/bag
- ☐ Nut-free packed lunch and snack

PROTIP
Label all your camper's belongings with their **FIRST** and **LAST** name!

You do not need to pack these items, but some campers have found them helpful:

- ☐ Swim Goggles
- ☐ Flip Flops or sandals (For use at the Pool)
- ☐ Jacket or sweatshirt (weather dependent)

Leave this Stuff at Home!

Cell Phones, Tablet Devices, MP3 players, Computers, Video Games, Smart Watches, Knives, Weapons, Fireworks, Aerosol Spray, Wheeled Shoes, Skateboards, In-line or Roller Skates, Trading Cards, and Money.

If these items are seen at camp, they will be held by the Camp Director and returned to the parent or guardian at the end of the day. Our ***Memo of Understanding***, which is signed by both Guardian and Camper and required before your camper attends Bynden Wood Day Camp, outlines our policies on these items.



Welcome to Day Camp

Your child's safety is our primary concern. Safe and orderly check-in and check-out procedures help us avoid stress and accidents that could mar your summer camp experience. There are two options for getting your camper to our site:

1. **Bus Transportation** (Must register in advance for a fee)
2. **Arriving by Car**

Driving Into Camp

The main entrance to the South Mountain YMCA Camps is at the top of Cushion Peak Road. The entrance is marked by a large sign to let you know you have arrived. Please be aware that cars do approach our entrance from both directions. Please pay attention to your surroundings and follow the rules of the road as you turn onto our drive.

Our main drive into Camp is a single lane. We have installed "pull-overs" along the drive so motorists can pass one another safely. Please be alert as you drive in, and yield appropriately.

At Bynden Wood Lodge, you will find signage directing you into our loop for camper drop-off. Please enter the loop at the second set of pillars and follow through to exit.

Check-In & Check-Out

Each morning you pull through the loop to drop off your child, we ask that you remain in your vehicle while your camper is signed into camp.

Please make sure that your camper's tuition is paid and all required forms (i.e. Health History) are complete before arriving at Camp. **We must have all required paperwork before campers will be allowed to attend the program.** Your child will be given a nametag and whisked off to an activity with our counseling staff.

At the end of the day, we'll follow the same procedure in reverse. **At sign-out, everyone is required to show their ID every day.** Many thanks for your patience and understanding.

At the time of registration, parents are able to list individuals approved to pick their children up from Camp.

If you need to make a change to these arrangements for any reason, or schedule an early departure, we ask that you provide us with written permission (in advance) for another individual to pick-up your child.



The Posted
Speed Limit
Driving into
Camp is
15 mph!

During Camp

Starting the Day

Families dropping off campers are greeted along the Bynden Wood Loop for sign in and sign out each day.

Campers are assigned to their group of **6-8 campers**, by age, with consideration of special requests (**made prior to the camp week**) with **one adult counselor**. Our camp day has a packed activity schedule.

Each group follows a different weekly schedule. The activities may include: **creative arts, climbing tower, low ropes, target sports, field sports, nature, boating at the pond, swimming at the pool, and other special programs.**



Sample Schedule: Monday-Friday

7:45 AM Standard Drop Off Begins

8:50 AM Bus Arrives at Camp

9:00 AM Activity 1

10:00 AM Activity 2

11:00 AM Lunch Break

11:30 PM Pool Time

1:00 PM Activity 3

2:30 PM Activity 4

3:30 PM Snack Break

4:00 PM Bus Departs from Camp

4:15 PM Standard Pickup Begins

5:15 PM End of Standard Day

Activities include target sports, climbing, nature, field sports, swimming, and much more.

*Be sure to notify our camp staff at drop off in the morning (or at pickup the night before) of any early pickups or late drop offs.

During Camp

Lunch/Snack

Lunch will be provided at a designated time each day for campers attending Bynden Wood Day Camp. The Menu for each week will be posted online the Friday prior to the week, and will also be available in the weekly parent newsletter. Families are more than welcome to pack an alternate lunch if preferred to what's posted on the weekly menu.

Families will be asked to pack a snack each day for their children attending Bynden Wood Day Camp. Camp stands as a nut-free facility. Out of consideration for campers with allergies, please be mindful when packing your campers lunch and avoid nuts or heavily nut-based products like peanut butter or Hazelnut spread.

EXAMPLE

Day	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Date	8/15	8/16	8/17	8/18	8/19
Main	Crispy Chicken On a bun Waffle Fries Carrots and ranch dip	Turkey and Cheese Wrap Chips and Salsa	Chicken Fingers Mac & Cheese Fruit Cup	Pierogies Peppers and onions Sausage	Cheese Pizza Pasta Salad Corn Chips

Friend Requests



Please submit camper friend requests online at registration or after the fact by reaching out to camp.

Please e-mail your requests to ycamps@smymca.org

Camp is all about making new friends, however we understand that for some campers it's scary to go somewhere new when you don't know anyone.

We will work to honor requests for friends to be together in groups, but only in pairs. These requests must be **mutual**, and campers should be **within the same age/grade range**. Requests can be made at the time of camper registration or after the fact by reaching out to the camp office.



During Camp

Riding Lessons



English style horseback riding lessons are available for day campers ages 7 and older for an additional \$150. Riding lessons are one hour a day for the five days of the session.

Campers who choose to take this program will be escorted to the riding ring by barn staff for their lessons. Campers will miss the regular group activity that is already taking place during that hour.

Day Camp Themes



At Bynden Wood Day Camp, we include a different theme each week to keep our program fresh for kids and staff who visit the mountain year after year, for multiple weeks each summer. New crafts, games, and activities are presented each week, focused on the given theme. For a complete list of themes and a descriptions please visit our webpage at WWW.SMYMCA.ORG.

Gogglewoods

Campers can now explore the art world on a whole new level at GoggleWoods! Our campers spend the first half of their day (M-F) at the GoggleWorks, in Reading, taking classes from trained Artists and Instructors, then return to Bynden Wood Day Camp in the afternoon for a jam-packed day of fun!

Campers will be dropped off at camp and transported by van to and from Goggleworks each day by camp staff.



Before & After

Before & After Care



Bynden Wood Day Camp is bringing back Before & After Care to assist our families with long working days. Families can choose this feature in the add-ons section of registration, selecting either Before, After, or Before & After care.

NOTE: If dropping your camper off before 7:45am or picking up after 5:15pm families will be required to sign up for the Before and After Care Program

Extended Thursdays



Extended Thursdays is an opportunity for Day Campers to experience a little more of what camp has to offer. This program will be available every Thursday from 5pm to 8pm with dinner provided. Programming for Extended Thursdays will rotate from week to week and be announced in the weekly family newsletter the weekend prior.

Space is limited and registration for each week will close Wednesday night.

Thursday Overnight

Thursday Overnight is back in 2023! A chance for day campers to try out an overnight stay at camp. Campers participating will arrive at their regular drop off Thursday morning and stay with us till Friday checkout, Dinner and Breakfast provided.

Space is limited and registration for each week will close Wednesday night.



During Camp

Bus Transportation

Bynden Wood provides bus transportation to and from Camp for campers who choose to sign up and take advantage of it. Your child should be at the designated bus stop 5-10 minutes before the scheduled time in the morning. All children must be signed onto and off of the bus by a parent/guardian or someone previously approved, in writing, by the parent/guardian. Identification must be shown to the bus counselor on Monday when signing a camper onto the bus and every day at pickup.



Changes in original bus stop plans must be submitted in writing to the Day Camp Director, one week prior. If there is not a parent/guardian to pick up a camper at their bus stop, the camper will stay on the bus with the counselor and will be taken to the end of the bus route where they will need to be picked up.



Staff

The number one priority of all staff is the health and safety of our campers. **Kids Come First.** We take great pride in selecting the best team to create a FUN and SAFE atmosphere in which your camper can do their best.

Our team is specifically chosen to excel in a busy camp program, bringing enthusiasm and energy to create an atmosphere of fun for all of their campers. Counselors are hired because they have demonstrated a true desire to develop, work with, and mentor children.

All staff are individually selected after an extensive application, interview, and national background check process. The age of our staff ranges from 18-24. We value diversity in our campers and staff.

If you know a young adult that would be a great addition to our team, please encourage them to apply at WWW.SMYMCA.ORG!

Health Care

Each camper must submit a completed Health History form **2 weeks** prior to their first session at camp. All forms must be submitted online. We have a Registered Nurse on-site 24 hours each day during our summer season.

Medications

Children may not keep medication with them. All medications must be turned over to the Camp Nurse upon arrival. This is for the safety of everyone at camp. Medication **MUST** be in its original container and clearly labeled with written directions signed by the parent. If your camper has medication such as an inhaler or Epi-Pen, their counselor will carry it with them.

Our Medical Staff will not administer any medications not in the original container or without a doctor's prescription.

Emergencies/Illness

In an emergency, we will transport your child to the local hospital. In the case of serious accident, or illness, you will be contacted by our medical staff. If your child becomes sick during the day, we will ask you to pick up your camper within 2 hours.

Behavior at Camp

Our staff will make every effort to provide positive, realistic expectations for your child. Campers who cannot operate within the rules of camp, or those that are adversely affecting the experience of other children, will be dismissed without a refund. In this case, it is the parent's responsibility to come to camp to pick up their children.

3 Strike Policy

For minor behavioral issues, Bynden Wood Day Camp has a 3 strike policy. Unacceptable behavior will be documented and brought to the attention of the Day Camp Director. The Director will call the parents and explain the warning their child is getting. After 3 warnings the camper will not be allowed back at camp that week and no refund will be given.

We believe in partnering with parents and will do our very best to make the camp experience successful for each individual child.

Zero Tolerance Policy

For the safety of your child and everyone at camp, the South Mountain YMCA Camps cannot and will not tolerate any of the following:

- Offensive or threatening language.
- Bullying (physical or emotional).
- Physical violence or abuse.
- Possession or use of any illegal substances, alcohol, tobacco, lighters, matches or knives (including pocket knives) or any other instruments that may be construed as a weapon.

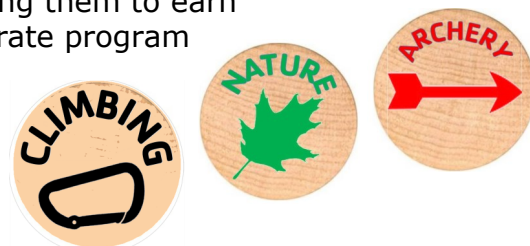
Any of the above actions may require immediate dismissal from camp with no refund.

MORE ABOUT CAMP

- 1) **The 2023 Day Camp Themes** are listed on the registration form and descriptions of these themes can be found on the website at WWW.SMYMCA.ORG, or you can call us with any questions at 610-670-2267.
- 2) **Unplug at Camp!** We're asking families to keep all phones, tablets, smart watches, and other devices at home. If you feel that your camper needs to carry a phone on the bus each day for peace of mind, we understand. Please make sure your child understands that their phone must stay off and in their backpack during the camp day. South Mountain YMCA Camps is not responsible for lost or stolen items
- 3) **Photos from Camp**: Some photos from Camp will appear on our South Mountain YMCA Camps Facebook page. However, in 2023, we will also provide families with a password protected site for more Bynden Wood Picture:

<https://smymca.smugmug.com/>

- 1) **The Coin Program**. In addition to allowing our older campers to choose more of the programs they'd like to focus on, we're also allowing them to earn wooden coins (pictured on the right) as they demonstrate program knowledge and proficiency. In 2023, there will be 3 possible levels to earn in Archery, Nature, and Climbing.



After Camp

Talking with your child about Camp

There is nothing more exasperating than asking your child, "What did you do at camp today?" and getting the following response, "Nothing." While some children are bursting to share their experiences on the ride home, others are tired or may simply need a little more time to process. Over the week, draw your child out slowly by asking specific questions about fellow campers and counselors, or ask your child to show you a camp skit or sing a song. You can also use **Parent Updates**, like the one pictured here, prepared by your camper's counselors each day. It will give you some things to talk about.


Parent Update

Camper Name: _____

Counselor: _____

Activities for the Day: _____

Special Notes: _____



Bynden Wood YMCA Day Camp
Part of the South Mountain YMCA Camps
610-670-2267
www.smymca.org

Lost and Found

Please make sure all of your camper's items are clearly marked with his/her first and last name. We try to manage lost and found items continually throughout the camp season, but it is a challenge! If you discover your child is missing something upon their return home, please notify the Day Camp Director, in writing, so that we may assist you in finding your lost items. Lost and found items are not the responsibility of South Mountain YMCA Camps. After the camp session, all unclaimed items will be donated.

Quality Control

We will provide a survey upon your camper's departure. We value your feedback in order to improve our programs and services for campers. If at any time you have a concern or question, please contact our Bynden Wood Day Camp Director at askidmore@smymca.org or by calling camp at 610-670-2267.

If you wish to submit an anonymous Program Quality or Community Safety Report you can share those concerns online at <https://www.smymca.org/smymca-reporting/>



Social Media

Please know our camp discourages camper-staff interactions on social media. This is part of our training. If, however, your child seeks to "friend" camp staff after the summer is over, it may be very difficult for a young adult to deny or ignore the request (despite our best efforts to train them to do so). After all, we also train our counselors to be attentive role models for your children. If your child speaks to you regarding this issue, please explain that staff members "need their space" during their time away from camp.

We do encourage you to visit our official South Mountain YMCA Camps site on Facebook rather than contact any individual camp staff member. We also encourage parents to talk to their children about this issue, and research their own child's activities so they can stay "in the loop".

Things to Note

Bynden Wood Themes by Session

Session 1 :: June 12th to June 16th :: Around the World

Session 2 :: June 19th to June 23rd :: Star Wars

Session 3 :: June 26th to June 30th :: Stone Age

Session 4 :: July 3rd to July 7th (no camp on Tuesday July 4th) :: RED, WHITE, & BLUE

Session 5 :: July 10th to July 14th :: Superhero

Session 6 :: July 17th to July 21st :: Spy Vs. Spy

Session 7 :: July 24th to July 28th :: Holiday

Session 8 :: July 31st to August 4th :: Splish Splash

Session 9 :: August 7th to August 11th :: Pirates

Session 10 :: August 14th to August 18th :: Color Wars!

Further descriptions available on our website under the Day Camp Programs Tab

Cancellation Policy

All deposits are refundable until February 1, 2023. If a cancellation occurs after February 1, 2023, or at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the session, payments will be refunded, MINUS the deposit. After this time, no refund will be given except as listed below:

- If cancellation occurs for a physician-documented medical reason all fees, **MINUS deposit** will be refunded.
- If during a session it is advised to send a camper home for medical reasons, the remaining portion will be refunded.
- **No refunds** will be made for late arrivals or early departures.
- In the case of homesickness, dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal there is **NO refund of any fees**.

Weekly Family Newsletter

Every week you have a camper registered for Bynden Wood Day camp you will receive a Family Newsletter from the Day Camp Leadership Team. This Newsletter will have updates for the week including a rough weather report, menu for provided lunch, special reminders, and more. Many families will print this newsletter and go over it with the kids.



Upcoming Events



Kids at Camp/Parents Night Out

- **Spring Dates:**
 - April 1st
 - May 6th
- **Fall Dates:**
 - October 7th
 - November 4th
 - December 2nd

Family Camps on the Mountain

- **Alumni Family Camp:** (not just for Alumni)
 - April 14th to 16th
- **Memorial Day Family Camp:**
 - May 26th to 29th
- **Labor Day Family Camp:**
 - Sep. 1st to 4th
- **Fall Harvest Family Camp:**
 - Oct. 27th to 29th



Guided Night Hikes for the Parents

- **Spring Dates:**
 - March 25th (Dog Lovers)
 - April 29th
 - May 20th
- **Fall Dates:**
 - September 30th (Dog Lovers)
 - October 21st
 - November 18th

Family Fun Day Open Houses and Tours

Family Fun Day Open Houses

April 2nd, April 23rd,
May 14th, and June 11th
2-4 pm

Rain or Shine

To schedule a private tour please call Antonio Skidmore
at **610-670-2267**, ext. 228, or email
at askidmore@smymca.org to schedule a tour.



A Letter From the Director

Greetings from The Mountain!

Thank you for choosing Bynden Wood Day Camp for your child's camping experience. We work hard to make certain that it will be a positive one.

Our passion is creating a place for everyone to feel safe and appreciated. We want to challenge our campers to expand their minds and bodies, and to create relationships and bonds that will last lifetimes.

Our hope is for each of our campers to walk away with tools and skills they can use everyday, be it relationship building, conflict resolution, or simply being open to trying new things. That, in a nutshell, is what summer camp is all about.

I cannot express how grateful we are that you entrust your children to our Bynden Wood Day Camp program. Please know that we take that trust seriously and offer you our sincere thanks. Like you, we want every child to learn and grow in an environment that nurtures and values them as community members.

Until we see you back on the mountain.



Antonio Skidmore,
Youth and Family Director
South Mountain YMCA Camps
WWW.SMYMCA.ORG
610-670-2267
askidmore@smymca.org





SOUTH MOUNTAIN YMCA CAMPS

BYNDEN WOOD DAY CAMP

Summer 2023 Information Sheet



BYNDEN WOOD SUMMER 2023 DATES AND RATES

Session	Theme	Dates	Rate (Regular Day Camp)
Session 1	Around the World	June 12 - June 16	\$250
Session 2	Star Wars	June 19 - June 23	\$250
OR	Gogglewoods 1	June 19 - June 23	\$355
Session 3	Stone Age	June 26 - June 30	\$250
Session 4	RED, WHITE, AND BLUE	July 3 - July 7	\$200 Reduced Rate for 4 Day Week
Session 5	Superhero	July 10 - July 14	\$250
Session 6	Spy Vs. Spy	July 17 - July 21	\$250
Session 7	Holidaze	July 24 - July 28	\$250
Session 8	Splish Splash	July 31 - August 4	\$250
Session 9	Pirates	August 7 - August 11	\$250
Session 10	Color Wars	August 14 - August 18	\$250
OR	Gogglewoods 2	August 14 - August 18	\$355

Weekly Add-ons:

Before Extended Care 7am to 8am (\$30/wk)
After Extended Care 5pm to 6pm (\$30/wk)
Before & After Extended Care 7am to 6pm (\$50/wk)
Bus Transportation Morning and Afternoon (\$60/wk)
Extended Thursday 5pm to 8pm (\$35)
Bynden Wood Overnight, Thursday to Friday (\$65/wk)
Horseback Riding Lesson, 5 one hour lessons (\$150/wk)

MULTI-CHILD DISCOUNT

The first child in the family is full price and each addi-

Note on Lunches

Each Friday we post our lunch menu for the next week's session. If your child does not eat what we will provide on a certain day, we encourage parents to pack a lunch

Deposit and Tuition

- A \$50 deposit is required for each camp session with registration. Tuition balance is due 2 weeks before your child's session.
- Methods of payment accepted: Check, MasterCard, Visa. Make checks payable to South Mountain YMCA Camps.
- Please inquire about courtesy rate structure for YMCA Staff.

Cancellations and Refund Policy

All deposits are refundable until February 1, 2023. If a cancellation occurs after February 1, 2023, or at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the session, payments will be refunded, MINUS the deposit. After this time, no refund will be given except as listed below:

