

SUMMER 2025



BYNDEN WOOD YMCA DAY CAMP HANDBOOK



SOUTH MOUNTAIN YMCA CAMPS

201 Cushion Peak Rd
Reinholds, PA 17569



— ACCREDITED BY —
PRAESIDIUM
— 2022-2025 —

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Quick Information

Bynden Wood YMCA Day Camp

Nick Raines: nraines@smymca.org, 610-670-2267 ext. 223

Associate Program Director

Our Address:

201 Cushion Peak Road

Reinholds, PA 17569

Our Phone:

Main Office: 610-670-2267

Bynden Wood Director Cell: 484-355-858

After Hours Director On Duty Emergency Cell: 484-345-8296

Our Website:

WWW.SMYMCA.ORG



SOUTH MOUNTAIN YMCA CAMPS

201 Cushion Peak Rd

Reinholds, PA 17569

P: 610-670-2267

Tax ID#: 23-2239399



Bynden Wood YMCA Day Camp



Goals of the Bynden Wood Day Camp Program:

1. Every camper makes at least **1 new friend**.
2. Every camper **meets, and learns about, someone who is different from themselves**.
3. Every camper **grows in independence**.
4. Every camper **grows in confidence**.
5. Every camper **becomes empowered through leadership and stewardship experiences**.
6. Every camper spends at least **4-6 hours outdoors, daily**.
7. Every camper **learns about our YMCA values: Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility**.
8. **HAVE FUN!**

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***.



NUTS & BOLTS (Paperwork and More)

Once you have registered your camper at Bynden Wood YMCA Day Camp your child is signed up for camp. However, there are still other steps you'll need to take to complete the registration process. These steps include:

1. **Payment:** This could be done online ([Link](#)) or by phone (610-670-2267).
2. **Forms & Waivers** need to be completed online **2 weeks prior** to the start of camp. If you arrive at camp without these forms, you may be turned away. ([Link](#))
3. **Tuition Balances must be paid 2 weeks prior to your child's session at Bynden Wood Day Camp.** If this step is not complete by check-in, you may be turned away.
4. **Trading Post.** The Trading Post is our camp store. It will sell T-shirts, souvenir's, snack and other Bynden Wood items. It will be open in the afternoons during checkout and pickup.
5. **Cancellations and Refunds.** All deposits are refundable until Feb 1, 2025. If a cancellation occurs after Feb 1, 2025 and at 60 days or more prior to the beginning of the session, payments will be refunded, MINUS the deposit. Less than 60 days prior to the beginning of the session no refunds will be given with documentation listed below:
 - Physician documented medical reason.
 - If camper is sent home for medical reasons by the Camp Health Care Team, a full or partial credit on the family balance will be given to use for a later make-up session.

No refunds for late arrivals or early departures, homesickness, dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal.

No refunds for horseback lessons that are cancelled due to inclement weather.

6. **Behavior.** We want all children to be successful in Bynden Wood YMCA Day Camp programs. There are, however, behaviors we will not tolerate. For example, if a child is unable to stay with their group, for their own safety, a camper may be dismissed from the program. Likewise, racially insensitive language or violence may result in immediate dismissal. For minor transgressions, we will make every attempt to work with the camper and family. We believe in partnering with parents to ensure every camper's continued growth and success.

Getting To Camp

Daily Packing List

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

PRO TIP
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 , Crocs or sandals (For use at the Pool only)
- ☐ Jacket or sweatshirt (weather dependent)

Leave this Stuff at Home!

Cell Phones, Tablet Devices, 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.



When parents are polled on the reasons they send their children to summer camp, they often express the desire for their campers to develop independence, make new friends, learn new things, and have fun. Prior to arrival, **share your "summer camp reasons" with your child.**

Encourage your child to "speak up" while at camp. The best way for campers to ensure they have a great session at camp is to positively express themselves with our staff, and their cabin mates. Let your child know it's okay to be vocal about their hopes and concerns. While our staff is trained to "draw your child out," your conversation with your camper prior to arrival will make a big difference in their experience.

Finally, give your child a chance to ask us questions before camp begins. Call, email us, attend an Open house or Family Fun day. We'd love to engage with your child before camp starts.

Getting To 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

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.

**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.

Campers are assigned to their group of **10-14 campers**, by age, with consideration of special requests (**made prior to the camp week**) with **two adult counselor**.

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



Sample Schedule:

7:00 am

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

At Bynden Wood YMCA Day Camp meals are just as important as our other programs. We strive to make our meals both fun, nutritious and a vehicle to connect with other campers and staff.

Lunch will be provided at a designated time each day for campers. The weekly tentative menu will be posted online. The final menu for the week will be available in parent newsletter. Folks are more than welcome to pack an alternate lunch if preferred to what's posted on the weekly menu.

Camp provides an afternoon snack just before camp pickup time. Families may pack a snack each day for their children if more than one snack is needed. Out of consideration for campers with allergies, please be mindful when packing your campers lunch or additional snacks and avoid nuts or heavily nut-based products like peanut butter or Hazelnut spread.

We understand that you may still pack your camper snacks or foods that are nut based. If that is the case we still want them to be able to eat, we will just ask that they move to a designated table for those who also bring nut based foods to eat their lunch.



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

Friend Requests

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 in grades 1-9 for an additional fee. Riding lessons are one hour a day for the five days of the session, 7:45-8:45AM or 4:15-5:15PM.

Campers who choose to take this program will need to be pre registered. Riders will be escorted by barn staff for their lessons to camp. Morning riders can be checked in at the barn fifteen minutes prior to the start of the lesson and afternoon riders can be picked up from the barn fifteen minutes after their lesson.

When arriving for lessons be sure to have long pants, boots or shoes with heel on and all items your camper will need for the day

Note: Afternoon Riding Lesson participants can not participate in extended Wednesday.

Day Camp Themes

At Bynden Wood Day Camp, we use weekly themes to add variety and energy to the summer—especially for campers who join us for multiple weeks or return year after year. These themes help keep our program fresh and fun without taking away from the core camp experience.

Each week's theme is posted on our website: [Bynden Wood Theme Weeks](#). While our themes inspire new games, crafts, and activities each week, they aren't woven into every part of the day. We're still a traditional camp at heart—just with a creative twist.

Fridays Are Theme Days

Campers are welcome (but not required) to dress up on Fridays to match the weekly theme. Think simple and fun—nothing that will get in the way of running, climbing, swimming, or playing. Please avoid fake weapons, oversized props, or costumes that could limit movement. If we do need campers to bring anything specific, we'll send an email at the start of the week.

What to Expect

Activities: Campers can expect special themed activities during the week—sometimes including guest performers or outside vendors.

Decorations: Camp spaces may be decorated to match the theme, helping to set the scene without requiring anything extra from home.

Optional Participation: Dressing up is entirely optional. No camper will feel left out if they choose not to. Our goal is to make theme weeks feel special, not stressful. If you have questions or your camper is unsure how to join in, reach out—we're happy to help.

During Camp

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

If your child becomes sick during the day, we will ask you to pick up your camper within 2 hours. 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 Director and/or Medical staff.

During Camp

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/guardians 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 parent/ guardian 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 parent/guardians and will do our very best to make the camp experience successful for each individual child.

Behavior 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

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

Photos from Camp: Some photos from Camp will appear on our South Mountain YMCA Camps social media pages. However we will also provide families with a password protected site for more Bynden Wood Picture: <https://smymca.smugmug.com/>



Departure

Pick-Up Procedure

Each afternoon starting at _____ you pull through the Bynden Wood loop to Pick up your child, we ask that you remain in your vehicle while your camper is brought to your vehicle.

You must have your Photo ID and it must match the Authorized pick for submitted with your forms. If you need to add someone to as an Authorized pick up person please call the office at 610-670-2267 or send an email to ycamps@smymca.org

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Early Pick-Up & Late Arrival

We know that sometimes families need to pick-up there campers early. **We have a strict early pick-up and late Arrival window. Our early pick up times are _____ to _____.** Bynden Wood YMCA Day Camp and its activates are spread out through our large property. Pick-up throughout the day is disruptive for all campers.

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." 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/Guardian Updates**, prepared by your camper's counselors each day. It will give you some things to talk about.



Lost and Found

Please make sure all of your camper's items are clearly marked with their 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 on the Friday before Labor Day.

Extras and Add-Ons

Before & After Care



Bynden Wood Day Camp Before & After Care to assist our families with long working days. Families can choose this feature in the add-ons section of registration at no charge, After (must be picked up before 6pm).

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 Wednesday

Extended Wednesdays **no charge** opportunity for Day Campers to experience a little more of what camp has to offer. This program will be available every Wednesday from 5pm to 8pm with dinner provided at the Camp Conrad Weiser Dining Hall. Programming for Extended Wednesday will be in conjunction with the two youngest Camp Conrad Weiser Villages (Cubs and Rovers). Campers will meet some new friends and get a taste of the culture of Camp Conrad Weiser

There is NO early pickup from the Extended Wednesday Program.

Pick-Up will be from 8:00pm to 8:30pm at the Bynden Wood Pickup loop.

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

Note: Afternoon Riding Lesson participants can not participate in extended Wednesday.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation to and from camp for campers who choose to sign up. Your child should be at the designated bus stop 5-10 minutes before the scheduled time in the morning. All campers must be signed onto and off the bus by a designated parent/guardian or someone previously approved, in writing, by the parent/guardian. Identification must be shown to the bus counselor when signing campers on the bus and at pick up everyday.

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.



Other

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 nraines@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/>. The report will go directly to the COO, or the CEO. Together, we can keep our children safe.



Social Media



Please know our camp discourages camper-staff interactions on social media. This is part of our training. If 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). 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 social media 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". ,

Links and Recourses

American Camp Association

Expert Advice

<https://www.acacamps.org/parents-families/planning-camp/expert-advice>

Good Reads

A Parent's Guide to Crushing Camp: Managing Camper Worries About Sleep-Over Camp: [Link to Download](#)

Homesick and Happy: [Link](#)

Child Protection Resources:

Praesidium Accreditation:

<https://www.praesidiumaccreditation.com/>

Know, See, Respond Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvLpsCXBHal&t=4s>. This video resource introduces you to the principles of Know, See, Respond.

Five Days of Action: <https://www.fivedaysofaction.org/>. This page has a variety of resources for parents, from *online safety* to *talking with your children*.

- **For reporting suspected child abuse or neglect in PA:** Department of Human Services 1-800-932-0313
- **Child Help's National Child Abuse Hotline:** 1-800-4-A Child (1-800-422-4453)
- **24-Hour Stress Hotline:** 1-855-427-2736
- **The Children's Advocacy Center:** 1-800-932-0313

