

Camp Lowe Parent Handbook



Licensed by:
Lancaster Board of Health.

Accredited by:
The American Camp Association



Where Families Belong

**Camp Lowe
Fort Pond Road
Lancaster, MA
978-537-8477**

www.montymca.org

Table of Contents

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| Welcome | 3 |
| Dates and Times | 4 |
| Camp Payment Policy | 4 |
| Camp Refund Policy | 4 |
| Rainy Days | 4 |
| Extended Care | 5 |
| Bus Stops and Information | 5 |
| Things to Remember | 6 |
| Important Numbers / Notes | 7 |
| Camper Information Packet | 8 |
| Medications | 8 |
| Camp Attendance Policy | 8 |
| Waterfront | 8 |
| Emergency Procedures | 9 |
| What to Bring | 9 |
| Lunch | 9 |
| Camp Store | 9 |
| Family Nights | 9 |
| Code of Conduct | 10 |
| FAQ's | 11 |





Welcome to Camp Lowe!

Welcome! On behalf of the Montachusett Regional YMCA and the staff of the Joseph A. Lowe YMCA Outdoor Center, I am pleased to have you join us this summer.

Our staff at Camp Lowe works hard to instill in children the values of the YMCA: Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility. Our camp staff is experienced in working with children and providing a safe environment for all. Each counselor is carefully chosen from area college and high school students who intend to pursue a career in education. Our senior staff is comprised of teachers and YMCA professionals. Camp Lowe is proudly accredited by the American Camping Association; this program has been developed exclusively for the camp industry to insure program quality and the health and safety of campers.

We hope that throughout the camp season you will support your child in our program by coming to Family Nights and showing an active interest in your child's camp activities. Through your support and interest we can combine our efforts to make Camp Lowe a fun and rewarding experience for children.

Please read all of the enclosed materials so that you will be completely prepared for your stay at Camp Lowe.

We look forward to serving you and your family this camp season. If you have any questions or concerns please call me at (978) 343-4847 x216. Camp Lowe # (978)537-8477.

Sincerely,

Lenny A. Rivera
Camp Director
Lrivera@montymca.org

Summer 2010

DATE:

BASIC FEE: \$175 each session

Session 1: June 21- June 25
Session 2: June 28 – July 2
Session 3: July 5 – July 9
Session 4: July 12 – July 16
Session 5: July 19 – July 23
Session 6: July 26 – July 30
Session 7: August 2 – August 6
Session 8: August 9 – August 13
Session 9: August 16 – August 20

| |
|---|
| <p>Camp hours are Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.</p> |
|---|

Camp Payment Policy:

A non-refundable \$20.00 Non-refundable registration fee and a \$50.00 Non-refundable deposit per session is required per camper. Camp fees must be paid three weeks prior to the session your child is attending. If your child will not be attending camp you must give us a two-week written notice. We need to know of any cancellations so we can give the reservation to another child. Unless we receive a two week written notice of cancellation you will be responsible for payment of the entire session. If your child is attending camp for the whole summer you may make weekly payments. Questions about your account? Contact Laurie Sleeper, at (978) 343-4847ext 208.

Camp Refund Policy:

Once a camp session has begun, refunds will not be made for any reason except in the case of extended illness or accident (missing camp 5 or more consecutive days) which will require documentation of the illness from a physician.

Rainy Days:

We are outside rain or shine, except in the event of severe weather such as thunderstorms or heavy downpours. It is a good idea to send a change of clothes to camp with your child along with a poncho or raincoat and grubby sneakers to play outside in. Mud Soccer, Tug-O-War, and Puddle Splashing are just some of the ways we enjoy mother nature's bath!

Extended Care

YMCA: A.M. Extended Care: 6:30 - 8:00AM \$40.00*

**(Includes transportation fee to Camp Lowe)*

Camp Lowe: A.M. Extended Care: 6:30 - 8:30 \$30.00

Camp Lowe: P.M. Extended Care: 4:00 - 5:30 \$30.00

(Additional \$1.00 per minute if late pick-up occurs)

Bus Stops

| <u>A.M.</u> | Location | <u>P.M.</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| <u>Pick Up</u> | | <u>Drop Off</u> |
| 1. 8:00 | Reingold Elem, Fitchburg | 4:15 |
| 2. 7:40 | Academy School, Fitchburg | 4:25 |
| 3. 7:30 | Mt. Wachusett Comm. College | 4:45 |
| 4. 8:15 | Doyle Field, Leominster | 4:45 |
| 5. 8:00 | Lunenburg High School | 4:30 |
| 6. 8:10 | Bull Run Restaurant, Shirley | 4:15 |
| 7. 7:45 | Westminster Library | 4:30 |

Bussing Info

All campers should be at their assigned bus stop at least 10 minutes before pick up times. All buses are planned to arrive at the camp at 8:30 a.m. Buses will leave the camp at 4:00 p.m.

It is very important for the children's safety, that parents supervise their campers before they are picked up and after they are dropped off at camp bus stops. Unless written permission is given, the YMCA will not let a child off the bus unsupervised. We ask one week written notice to change camper's bus stops. **No exceptions.**

In the event that a bus is late in picking up or dropping off campers, please be patient. At times buses may run into traffic along the route. If a bus is considerably late in picking up, please call the Camp Office 978-537-8477 or the Fitchburg YMCA at 978-343-4847 and inform the staff member of the lateness of the bus. You will be notified as soon as possible as to the delay.

While on the bus, children are expected to remain seated and refrain from unruly or unsafe behavior that may distract the driver. The YMCA reserves the right to revoke or deny transportation to any child due to behavioral concerns. No refund will be given for behavioral dismissal.

Things to Remember

Every day parents should:

- ▶ Begin each day with a wholesome breakfast.
- ▶ Pack a full lunch and plenty of fluids.
- ▶ Label all personal belongings.
- ▶ Pack a bathing suit and towel.
- ▶ Dress for the weather (layers).
- ▶ We operate and play outside, rain or shine.
Be prepared.
- ▶ Sneakers or closed toe sandals only.
- ▶ Have valid photo ID ready at pick-up.
- ▶ Remember bug spray and sun block.
- ▶ Talk/listen to your child about their camp day.
- ▶ Notify the camp of any concerns.

What's good/bad? Let us know.

Important Numbers:

Montachusett Regional YMCA:978-343-4847

Camp Director, Lenny A. Rivera:.....978-343-4847 ext. 216

Billing, Laurie Sleeper.....978-343-4847 ext. 208

Camp Lowe: (Seasonal) 978-537-8477

Notes:



We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

YMCA Camp Lowe
Montachusett Regional YMCA

www.montymca.org

Camper Information Packet:

All medical/emergency information sheets must be completed in full and submitted at the time of registration. A copy of your child's immunization record and proof of physical from within the past year is also required. Incomplete Registration packets will not be processed. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Unless otherwise specified, all children will be required to participate in the total camping program.

Medications:

Any medicine to be administered at camp must be noted on the Medical Information Form, and the order signed by a Parent/Guardian for over the counter medicines and by the physician for all prescription medicines. The medicine must be delivered to the camp office by an adult, in the original container with pharmacy label with correct dosage and times attached. The nurse or office staff will administer.

Camp Attendance Policy:

If you know in advance that your camper will not be attending camp on any day, please inform the camp office as soon as possible. Parents picking campers up must come into the camp office and sign their child out.

Campers will only be released from camp in the custody of his/her legal parents or guardian unless written permission is granted to another named individual by the legal parent or guardian and approved by the Camp Lowe Director.

YMCA policy requires a photo ID for release of children.

Waterfront:

All campers are expected to partake in instructional swim every day unless they have written permission from home. Campers are constantly supervised during all swim times by American Red Cross or YMCA certified Lifeguards and the YMCA camp counselors.

Swim tests are given on the first day of camp each session to determine your child's swimming ability. Your child will then take part in instructional swim and recreational swim based on his or her abilities within marked boundaries for each level.

Camp Lowe participates in the buddy system as an additional safety precaution on the waterfront. The counselors will assign your child with a child of similar swim ability in that group. They are to alert the nearest staff person should the other child need assistance. The lifeguards also clear the water every fifteen minutes so that the counselors can double-check the buddies.

Emergency Procedures:

If an emergency arises, please call the numbers below:

Camp Lowe: (978) 537-8477

YMCA Fitchburg: (978) 343-4847

If you need to reach camp after 5:30 p.m., please call the YMCA in Fitchburg.

In the event that a parent must be notified because of sickness, medical emergency, or behavior problem, the YMCA will make every attempt to contact parent or guardian at home or work, followed by the emergency contacts as provided by parents. If these individuals cannot be reached, the YMCA shall act promptly in a manner that is appropriate to the situation and in the best interest of the child. It is very important that the YMCA be informed immediately of any changes in phone numbers and emergency contacts.

What to Bring:

Children should wear appropriate summer clothes and rubber soled shoes or sneakers (no sandals, please!) On rainy days they should bring a raincoat and hat, a sweatshirt or jacket for cold days. A swimsuit and towel is required each day. Each camper should have a bag or backpack in which to carry their lunch, towel, and a one-piece bathing suit. A lost and found area will be kept on the side of the recreation building. Please mark all clothing with child's name, especially towels and swimsuits! Any unclaimed lost and found will be donated to Goodwill after September 1st.

Campers **should not** bring expensive clothes, large sums of money, sports or hunting equipment, radios, CD players, video games, musical instruments, or pets to Camp Lowe. The YMCA will not be responsible for items lost, stolen, or damaged while on the camp property or the bus.

Lunch:

Each camper should bring a large, wholesome lunch to camp that is carefully wrapped and placed in a strong lunchbox. Please mark your camper's name on all lunches. Water is always plentiful and available to campers throughout the day. You may wish to send in extra snacks as well. Please keep in mind that food cannot be heated. If a child does not have a lunch, parents will be called to bring a lunch for them.

Camp Store:

A snack shop will be available for campers to purchase ice cream, chips and other snacks, during lunch hours only. However, the snack shop is not intended to replace a lunch from home. Parents should still pack a hearty and wholesome lunch each and everyday. T-shirts and other camp items may be purchased at the store as well.

Family Nights:

We will be having 2 Family Nights, dates to be determined at the start of camp. We provide boating, swimming and a special event. Come meet our camp staff and share in the camping experience with your child.

YMCA of the USA Code of Conduct for YMCA Staff and Volunteers

To protect YMCA program participants, staff, and volunteers, the YMCA of the USA prohibits employees and volunteers to be alone with a single child where he or she cannot be readily observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should position themselves in such a way that other staff can see them.

Staff shall never leave a child unsupervised.

Staff shall not abuse children in any way, including:

- Physical Abuse - Striking, spanking, shaking, slapping...
- Verbal Abuse - Humiliating, degrading, threatening...
- Sexual Abuse – Touching, or speaking inappropriately
- Mental Abuse – Shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel...
- Neglect – Withholding food, water, or basic care.

No type of abuse will be tolerated and will result in immediate dismissal if substantiated.

Staff must use positive techniques of guidance including redirection, positive reinforcement & encouragement rather than competition, comparison, criticism. Staff will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline.

Staff are not to be alone with children the meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, driving or riding in vehicles and inviting children to their homes. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to the approval of the YMCA administration.

Staff will act as positive role models for youth by maintaining an attitude of loyalty, patience courtesy, tact and maturity. Staff will act in a caring honest and respectful manner consistent with the mission of the YMCA.

Under no circumstances shall staff release children to anyone other than the authorized parent or guardian or authorized adult as granted by the parent.

| Question | Answer |
|---|---|
| Registration Info | |
| When and where do I register? | <i>Camp Lowe has arranged for in-person registrations at several local libraries, the YMCA and at Camp Lowe. For details see our parent registration letter.</i> |
| If my child attended camp last summer, why do I still need to supply another physical? | <i>At the end of each camp season, all records are kept in a storage facility and a new record is created each season.</i> |
| My child is enrolled in the YMCA After-School program, why do I still need to fill out paperwork for camp? | <i>While both programs are operated by the YMCA, they are licensed under two separate authorities: Dept. of Early Education & Childcare, and the Lancaster Board of Health. We can not interchange folders.</i> |
| Financial | |
| Do you accept Childcare Vouchers? | <i>Yes. <u>You</u> will need to have your voucher provider issue the summer camp voucher to the YMCA.</i> |
| What is your Refund Policy? | <i>A two-week written notice is required for refunds. Once the session has begun, refunds will only be made for medical reasons. Documentation from a physician is required. Please note that the \$50.00 deposit is not refundable for any reason.</i> |
| How and where do I make payments? | <i>Final payments can be made on-line, once we have a complete camper file. Payments can be made in person at the YMCA or mailed to the YMCA. If you would like to make a payment while at the camp, please note that we can only accept checks. Sorry, no cash or credit transactions can be processed at the camp. Please make these types of payment at our main facility.</i> |
| When are payments due? | <i>A deposit of \$50.00 per session is due at the time of registration. Final payments are due 3 weeks prior to session.</i> |
| Is Financial Aid available, and how do I apply? | <i>Yes, through the generosity of our members and other local sources, the YMCA does offer a limited number of scholarships. To apply, please contact Laurie Sleeper at 978-343-4847 x 208 by the end of May.</i> |
| What if I am late picking up my child from camp? | <i>Parents are charged a late fee of \$1.00/minute late fee for all late pick-ups.</i> |
| Medical | |
| What if my child needs to take medicine while at camp? | <i>Medications Must be hand delivered to the Health Care office by the parent or guardian. A Med order must be on file with the camp.</i> |
| My Child had a physical last year, do they need another one this year? | <i>A current physical must be submitted at the time of registration.</i> |

| Question | Answer |
|---|--|
| Food | |
| Lunch- Does Camp Lowe provide lunches for the children? | No. Campers need to bring lunch from home. Campers <u>should not bring any lunches that need to be heated or refrigerated.</u> |
| Does camp provide snacks for the children? | No, It is strongly recommended that campers bring snacks such as apples and other nutritious items from home. |
| What about water and other beverages? | Camp does have a water fountain available and recommends that campers bring along a refillable water bottle. There is also a Gatorade machine on site for \$1.00/drink. |
| What is your policy regarding Peanut and other Nut Allergies? | Camp Lowe recognizes this allergy among children, but can not provide a Nut-Free eating area. We encourage parents to educate their children about their allergy and to communicate any concerns to the camp administration. |
| Transportation | |
| Bussing- Is transportation available to and from camp? | Yes, Camp Lowe offers transportation from several surrounding communities for a nominal fee. A sibling discount is available and advance transportation arrangements are required. |
| Do I need to wait with my child at the bus stop? | Yes, Parents need to wait with their children at the bus stop both morning and afternoon. |
| What if I would like for my child to get off the bus unsupervised? | Children 12 and over may get off the bus unsupervised ONLY if the camp office has a written release from the parents on file. Camp does not allow non-written, verbal permission. |
| Can my 12 year old supervise my 8 year old off the bus? | No. |
| How come Camp doesn't check ID's at the bus stop? | We do verify that there is an adult waiting at the stop for the child, but because of the number of children getting off at the stop and the traffic concerns, we are unable to check ID's. |
| What happens if I fail to meet my child at the bus stop in the afternoon? | In order to stay on schedule for the rest of the stops, the bus can only wait a few moments. The bus will then continue on the route (With your child on board) and YMCA staff will make every effort to contact you or an emergency contact to alert you that the bus will finish the route and then transport your child and the bus monitor to the YMCA in Fitchburg. Parents will be able to pick up their child at the YMCA upon showing a valid photo ID. <u>A late fee of \$15.00 will be charged.</u> |
| What to Bring | |
| What type of shoes should my child wear to camp? | Children should wear sneakers, as we are very active and to help protect feet from rocks, poison ivy etc. Flip flops are not recommended. |
| What clothing items should I pack for my child? | Each day, campers should bring: Shorts, T-shirt, sneakers, One-Piece bathing suit, towel, hat, and a sweat shirt. |

| | |
|---|---|
| What about Sun Block and Bug Spray? | <i>Parents should apply both products at home prior to sending their child to camp. It is recommended that parents send extra to be reapplied throughout the day as needed by the camp staff. A note from home is required. Hats and sunglasses are also recommended.</i> |
| Question | Answer |
| What Not to Bring | |
| Can my child bring their own Sports Equipment | <i>Camp Lowe asks that campers only bring their own baseball gloves (if they want) as well as any personal safety equipment such as shin guards, mouth guards etc. Otherwise please leave all balls, bats etc. at home. Be sure to label personal belongings and keep in mind that the YMCA is not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged items.</i> |
| What about cell phones and iPods? | <i>The YMCA recognizes parents desire to maintain contact with their children, however we do require campers refrain from using the phones while at camp and on the bus. This may include turning off the phone and leaving it in the office during the day. If a parent or child must call one another, they may do so through the office phone 978-537-8477. iPods and other personal music devices are not part of the camp program and should be left at home as we prefer to have our campers be alert and attentive to one another and more readily to interact.</i> |
| Required legal statement | <i>Persons may not bring any hunting or fishing equipment: Knives, guns, bows/arrows etc., or any illegal substances.</i> |
| Other Important info | |
| What about rainy days? | <i>Camp is open rain or shine. Unless there is a thunder-storm or other potentially hazardous weather, we will still operate our program outside. Thus, children should dress for outdoor, rainy activities and should bring a rain coat or poncho.</i> |
| Who is able to pick up my child from camp? | <i>Parents must complete an Emergency Contact form at the time of registration. Only persons listed on this form may pick up from the camp. They must have a valid photo I.D. at time of pick-up.</i> |
| What if I forgot to list someone on my child's contact list? | <i>We can only release to persons on this list. You will need to come in to the office and add them in person. No exceptions.</i> |
| Is there an open house for new campers? | <i>Yes, there will be an Open House and tours available. Please call 978-343-4847 x216 for dates and times.</i> |
| How does Camp Lowe screen its employees to make sure my child is safe? | <i>Camp Lowe is licensed by the Lancaster Board of Health and accredited by the American Camp Association, and follows national guidelines established by YMCA of the USA. Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires camps to comply with 105 CMR 430.090</i> |

**What is 105 CMR
430.090?**

At a minimum the operator shall require for each camping season, the following with regard to each staff person:

- A. Prior work history for previous five (5) years including, a name, address and phone number of a contact person at each place of employment.*
- B. Three (3) positive reference checks from individuals not related to the staff person.*
- C. Self-reporting of any felony conviction.*
- D. Obtain criminal offender record information and juvenile report (CORI/Juvenile Report) from the Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB).*
- E. Sex offender registry information (SORI) check from the Massachusetts Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB).*