



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Planning Your Trip

Planning Assistance

YMCA Camp Bernie offers several options to assist you in trip planning. This guide tells you what to expect, and gives you a description of the information we need to prepare for your arrival. The Group Information Sheet is designed as a step-by-step framework for planning your trip to YMCA Camp Bernie. The earlier you can turn this in, the better but it **must** be turned in **three weeks prior** to the trip start date. If you're already contracted and are ready to work out the details of your trip, please contact Paige Evans, our Program Coordinator. She can be reached by phone at (908) 832-5315 or by email at pevans@campbernieymca.org. www.campbernieymca.org also provides more information.

Camp Tour

Our staff members are available at your convenience to host your tour of Camp Bernie facilities. A tour is a great way to visualize trip logistics, participant housing and program activity areas. We prefer you visit the camp prior to making arrangements for a contract. **Please call ahead to arrange.**

Consultation Meeting

This meeting is optional and includes step-by-step schedule planning and a Q&A session for trip planners. If desired, a consultation meeting will be arranged at no charge for contracted groups. Consultation meetings may be held at the school, over the phone, through video call, or combined with a camp tour.

Informational Meeting Offerings:

Camp Bernie staff are glad to hold meetings to get information out to students and/or parents.

- **Student Information Session:** Typically a student information meeting would be held during the school day. This gives students a better understanding of what to expect at camp. We also review packing suggestions and answer questions. These meetings can also be done via Zoom.
- **Parent Information Meeting:** This meeting is held at the school and is for the benefit of the parents whose children will be attending the YMCA Camp Bernie program. This meeting alleviates parent apprehensions about sending their children on the trip and can also serve in recruiting parent chaperones. The meeting includes a video presentation familiarizing parents with the facility, program, safety procedures, and staff. A question-and-answer session follows the video. The school is responsible for sending invitations to parents.
- **Chaperone Information Meeting:** This meeting is to familiarize chaperones with the camp schedule and to review their specific responsibilities.

The Group Information Sheet

After reading this packet, complete the Group Information Sheet. This form provides us with specific information pertaining to your group. Meal planning and staff scheduling need to be confirmed well in advance to minimize the potential problems and ensure correct coverage for your groups. Please return this form no less than **three weeks prior** to your visit. This form is included in this booklet.

- **Arrival and Departure Times**

If arrival or departure times conflict with standard mealtimes (Breakfast - 8:00 a.m. Lunch - 12:30 p.m. Dinner -6:00 p.m.) please designate an alternate mealtime on the Group Information Sheet. Groups leaving on days where more than one group is in camp may be asked to eat lunch at 11:30 a.m.

- **Final Numbers**

Please indicate your expected numbers of participants by role & gender so that we can best plan for your trip. We use these numbers to plan for staffing, lodging, meals (including ordering food & supplies), meeting space and your schedule. Therefore, this number should reflect the actual number you will be bringing and may not increase or decrease by more than 5%.

- **Lodging**

Lodging will be assigned to your group by the Senior Program Director based upon the needs of your group and those of the other groups on camp. Once you have received these assignments, please use the cabin floor plans to determine where you would like all participants to stay. Please keep in mind that the capacities listed are the maximum numbers set by the State Fire Marshall and must not be exceeded. Also note the capacities of individual rooms within each cabin. In addition, the layout of certain cabins makes them more suitable as co-ed facilities than others. Please also let the Program Coordinator know the lodging arrangements your nurse or medical officer will need.

- **Meeting Space Needs**

Please use this section to indicate the meeting space(s) arrangements you will need during your stay. Please be sure to include the size group that will need to be accommodated in each space, how many spaces and what times you will need these spaces as well as any equipment requests you have. You may also attach a copy of your meeting/retreat schedule to this form to help us best understand your needs. Meeting spaces will be assigned based upon the needs of your group and those of the other groups on camp.

- **Meals / Table Groups**

Please make sure to notify Camp Bernie as to any special dietary needs including the number of vegetarian meals you require. Our kitchen prepares exactly the requested number of vegetarian meals, so please make sure to include staff and chaperones in this count. Please record your required number of tables. Our tables seat 10 people (please be sure to seat at least 1 chaperone per table to assist with supervision and cleanup).

- **Activity Selection**

Use the accompanying Activity List (page 22) to make your selections. Generally, groups participating in a three-day program will participate in eight (8) daytime activity periods and during a 2-day, overnight program students participate in four (4) daytime activity sessions. Class times are somewhat flexible but most are designed for a 90 minute period. On occasion, groups have expressed interest in having their own school staff teach classes. Camp Bernie is willing to accommodate this whenever possible but it must be arranged with the Program Coordinator ahead of time and may require additional training for the visiting instructors.

- **Learning Groups**

Learning groups should consist of around 15 students. This requirement minimizes supervision responsibilities made more challenging by the outdoor environment, and hopefully creates a better experience for the students. Each study group must include one adult chaperone. We recommend placing parent chaperones in different groups from their respective children.

- **Extra Activities**

Please specify which of our additional activities interest your group. If you choose to do weather station, 1-5 students should be designated to participate in weather station at each meal. If you choose nature reading, one student per meal should be designated.

Create a tentative schedule

We will prepare a tentative schedule for your group based on the number of learning groups, duration of stay, and class selections. It's important for us to work together to create an effective schedule. We reserve the right to create and modify schedules based on the events taking place at camp during your group's stay. We will make every effort to accommodate all requests that have been submitted in writing at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the trip.

Sample Schedule

Day One:

9:45am	Arrival
10:00am	Settle in Cabins
10:30-10:45	Transition
10:45-12:15	Orientation
12:15-1:30	Set-up & Lunch
1:30-3:00	Activity 1
3:00-3:15	Restroom/Water
3:15-4:45	Activity 2
4:45-5:00	Restroom/Water
5:00-5:45	Open Sports
5:45-7:00	Set-up & Dinner
7:00-9:00	Evening Program
9:00	Retire to Cabins
10:00pm	Lights Out

Day Two:

7:45-9:00	Set-up & Breakfast
9:00-10:30	Activity 3
10:30-10:45	Restroom/Water
10:45-12:15	Activity 4
12:15-1:30	Set-up & Lunch
1:30-3:00	Activity 5
3:00-3:15	Restroom/Water
3:15-4:45	Activity 6
4:45-5:00	Restroom/Water
5:00-5:45	Open Sports
5:45-7:00	Set-up & Dinner
7:00-9:00	Evening Program
9:00	Retire to Cabins
10:00pm	Lights Out

Day Three:

7:45-9:00	Set-up & Breakfast
9:00-10:30	Activity 7
10:30-10:45	Restroom/Water
10:45-12:15	Activity 4
12:15-1:30	Set-up & Lunch
1:30pm	Departure

Note: Meal times (if applicable) are firmly set at the times specified above. We also offer day trips.

Additional Information

Chaperone Information Booklet

It's recommended that the group provide parents with an information booklet containing trip details, chaperone responsibilities and the necessary forms. Items you might want to include in the booklet are the schedule, directions to Bernie, bus information, date of trip, *Packing List*, the camp's main office number, permission form, *Program Waiver* and any authorization for medical treatment form. This packet can be mailed to parents, sent home with students or distributed at an informational meeting.

Participant Packet

This packet can include an information booklet and/or a participant journal. Other suggested items for this packet might include fun facts about camp, scavenger hunts, nametag, and kid friendly nature tips.

- Information Booklet

We recommend that the group leader prepares and distributes an informational booklet to the participants. This booklet can include any or all of the following: 1) schedule of activities 2) waiter and weather assignment schedule 3) bus assignments 4) cabin assignments 5) activity group assignments 6) table assignments 7) group and camp rules/guidelines 8) suggested packing list.

- Participant Journal

Creating a journal for your participants prior to the trip is a great way to introduce the program and help reinforce and process their experiences upon their return to school. Journals can include specific questions pertaining to activities or their overall experience. If you need assistance in developing journal questions or topics, please contact us.

Final Confirmation

After we receive your Group Information Sheet, we will contact you to confirm final numbers, meals, class selections and scheduling. At this time we will provide you with a copy of the final schedule.