

LGBTQIA+ Inclusion Policy/Guidance/Practices for YMCA Camp Manitou

Introduction

The purpose of our policies are to inform all persons associated with YMCA Camp Manitou of the expectations that support a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment and how our stance on inclusion will be operationalized in our programs so that all community members have equitable access to safety while participating at Camp.

YMCA Camp Manitou welcomes all participants. Our goal is to promote kindness and consideration for all people in the camp community. We strive to ensure that everyone, regardless of ability, age, cultural background, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender expression, gender identity, ideology, income, national origin, race, or sexual orientation, feels welcomed, affirmed, supported, and has the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity and respect.

All participants are expected to respect other people, including campers, family members, guests, and Camp Manitou employees. We will not tolerate emotional or physical abuse or sexual harassment. Participants must be responsible for themselves and their actions. It is not acceptable in our community to mock, bully, harass, intimidate, or attempt to exclude people. Participants and guests are expected to practice respect, cooperation, and compromise within camp. For the protection of every participant, we reserve the right to deny or cancel the enrollment of, or immediately dismiss any participant, without refund, as a result of any behavior which affects another participant's or guest's ability to enjoy the community of camp, or seriously disrupts our program. Parents, legal guardians, or group leaders will be notified of our decision to terminate a minor's participation at camp.

Program Eligibility

Main Session campers entering grades 3-7 , Mini Session campers entering grades 2-5, and Teen Week campers entering grades 8-10 with an exception of a 1 grade swing either direction for accommodating circumstances approved by Admin Staff. Physical limitations at camp are cabins not being handicap accessible and staff are not trained to support a participant with these needs. If you have other eligibility requirements please reach out and we can discuss accommodation options.

Staff Eligibility

Prospective employees will all receive consideration without discrimination because of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, handicap or veteran status. The YMCA of the Chippewa Valley is an equal opportunity employer.

Caregiver Communication

Non-disclosure of Cabin Mate's Identities

In keeping with our values of safety and respect, we will honor each individual's right to privacy as it pertains to their gender identity and/or sexuality. Caregivers will not

be notified if a transgender or gender non-conforming camper or counselor is placed in a cabin with their child. This is consistent with existing processes that state that families will not be notified of the legal names, medical histories, or any other personal information about a child's cabin mates or counselors before, during or after the camp session.

Non-disclosure of Camper Identity

If a camper discloses their gender identity or sexuality to staff members or their cabin mates during camp, staff members have no requirement to report this to administration, or to the camper's parents. Staff may choose to encourage the camper to share this information with their caregivers or another safe adult in their life. We strongly believe that the choice must remain with the individual camper to disclose this important part of themselves at a time that feels appropriate and safe.

Reporting of Safety Concerns

If a camper who has disclosed that they are LGBTQIA+ also discloses that they are at risk for self-harm or harming others this would be reported according to Camp's mandated reporting requirements, while still honoring the privacy of the individual's identity.

Housing

Housing options are as follows:

- Gender-inclusive cabins for any and all who feel comfortable in this space, including allies of campers. *Only able to offer based on interest of 6-12 campers to fill a cabin
- Cabins for girls, regardless of sex assigned at birth, non-binary campers who feel safe in this space, and Trans* boys who feel safer in this space.
- Cabins for boys, regardless of sex assigned at birth, non-binary campers who feel safe in this space, and Trans* girls who feel safer in this space.

We assign cabins based on the gender identity listed on the registration form or if they selected the gender inclusive cabin option. Other factors that influence cabin assignments are age/grade of campers and cabin mate requests.

A variety of reasons may result in us or a camper to believe a cabin switch is necessary. It could be due to medical accommodations, cabin mate requests, or the cabin that they were assigned to does not fit their gender or preference. Should the situation arise we would be in contact with caregivers to come to a decision.

In keeping with our prior policies, families will not be notified of the names, medical histories, or any other personal information about their child's cabin mates before, during, or after their session.

All campers have an orientation to their cabin space that talks about respecting others' privacy and boundaries.

Changing, Showers, and Bathrooms

Camp Manitou understands the need for camper privacy regardless of sex assigned at birth or gender identity. We know that when campers are respectful of others boundaries, and have appropriate supervision, anybody can be safe in any space.

- Campers will be allowed to use the restroom/shower/changing facility that best aligns with their gender identity without question.
- Staff will be trained in appropriate supervision practices for “vulnerable spaces” (showers, restrooms and changing areas).
- All bathroom stalls, showers, and changing spaces will be designated as single occupancy. Public nudity will be highly discouraged.

Gender Expression

Camp Manitou believes there is no “right way” to be a girl or boy and encourages all campers to be themselves regardless of cabin assignment. Campers may wear whatever makes them comfortable; no campers will be expected to dress “like a girl” or “like a boy.” Our dress code allows for anyone to be able to wear any type of clothing that makes them feel comfortable- including both plain clothes and swimsuits.

Names and Pronouns

Manitou staff will encourage campers to share the name and pronoun that makes them feel safest at the beginning of their time at camp. Staff will respect and use the names and pronouns that correspond with how campers introduce themselves. If a camper chooses to use a different name or pronouns than those listed on their registration form, counselors will affirm this name and set of pronouns.

If conflicts arise in a cabin group regarding the use of names and pronouns, staff will try to resolve the conflict by referencing Manitou's inclusion policies and expectations. If it continues, Admin Staff will intervene and assess.

Identifying and Addressing Bullying

Staff will have training in recognizing all forms of bullying including gender/sexuality based bullying and the proper protocol on how to handle such instances. For the protection of every participant, we reserve the right to deny to immediately dismiss any participant, without refund, as a result of any behavior which goes against our policies and expectations.

Counselors and Staff

We assign staff to be bunked in cabins based on their gender identity and what feels safe for them. All counselors undergo background checks and multiple screening procedures before being hired. We take great care in choosing the counselors our campers will have at camp and believe that they will best serve the campers in the cabin to which they are assigned.

We provide a week-long training experience before the summer begins which covers our inclusion policies/practices and educational sessions to prepare our staff to create all spaces at camp to be safe and inclusive.