



# YMCA CAMP KERN PARENT PLANNER 2026





# WELCOME TO SUMMER 2026!

It's finally here! It's time to start thinking about summer camp! **This Parent Planner will include all the information you will need to prepare your camper** for their summer experience with us. Please look over it carefully; the information is important to both you and your camper.

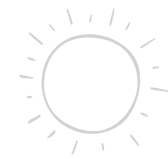
**We are beyond excited for this summer and all the adventures we have planned for your camper!** We cannot wait for them to come grow with us!



## THE PRE-CAMP CHECKLIST



- Register at CampKern.org
- Submit Payment
- Complete forms 1 month before arrival
  - Health History Form (including dietary restrictions)
  - Parent Camper Confidentiality Form
  - Permission to Treat and Health Notification
  - Publicity Waiver
  - Sunscreen and Bug Repellent Application Consent
  - Camper Code of Conduct
  - Any Program Specific Waivers
- Review Important Information (Pages 10-13)
- Pack (Page 7)
- Prepare Mail (Page 9)
- Load up the car for the BEST SUMMER EVER!



# DIRECTIONS

YMCA Camp Kern is located approximately 10 miles North of Kings Island off of I-71. Exit 1-71 at exit #32, head South on State Route 123, make a left onto State Route 350, travel 2 miles, YMCA Camp Kern will be on the right hand side.

## DISTANCE

30 miles from Cincinnati  
35 miles from Dayton  
80 miles from Columbus



## EMERGENCY CONTACT



**To contact camp:** There will be someone available in our office from 8:30 am - 5 pm from Monday to Friday at (513) 932-3756.

**After business hours:** You can call the emergency number provided to you during check in. This number will also be on the recording when calling our office after hours. Please follow the prompts to our On-Duty Director.

**In the event of an emergency:** You will be contacted via phone. Updates on weather emergencies will be communicated via E-mail and our Facebook page.

## GENERAL CONTACT

Phone: 513-932-3756  
Fax: 513-932-8607

Address:  
5291 St. Rt. 350  
Oregonia, OH 45054

# CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT LOCATIONS

## FULL WEEK CAMPS

**DROP OFF:** Parents will be able to walk campers to their cabins but will not be allowed in the cabin.  
**PICK UP:** Parents will park and head over to their camper's cabin to check out with their counselor.



<b>TRADITIONAL</b>	<b>DROP OFF SUNDAY</b>	<b>PICK-UP FRIDAY</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
FRONTIER (7-9)	2:30PM-4:00PM	5:30PM-6:30PM	SINGERMAN LOT
EXPLORER (9-11)	2:30PM-4:00PM	5:30PM-6:30PM	SINGERMAN LOT
ADVENTURE (11-13)	2:30PM-4:00PM	5:30PM-6:30PM	SINGERMAN LOT
PIONEER (13-14)	2:30PM-4:00PM	5:30PM-6:30PM	SINGERMAN LOT
<b>COUNSELOR IN TRAINING</b>	1:30PM	5:30PM-6:30PM	SINGERMAN LOT
<b>FULLY THEMED CAMP</b>	3:00PM-4:00PM	5:30PM-6:30PM	WILDERNESS PAVILION
<b>TEEN CAMPS</b>	3:00PM-4:00PM	5:30PM-6:30PM	SINGERMAN LOT
<b>LEADERS IN TRAINING</b>	3:00PM-4:00PM	5:30PM-6:30PM	SINGERMAN LOT
<b>HORSE CAMPS</b>	2:30PM-4:00PM	5:30PM-6:30PM	ELK LODGE

**TASTE OF KERN - A**

**DROP OFF SUNDAY**  
3:00PM-4:00PM

**PICK-UP TUESDAY**  
6:00PM

**LOCATION**  
SUGARWOOD CABINS

**TASTE OF KERN - B**

**DROP OFF WEDNESDAY**  
8:00AM-9:00AM

**PICK-UP FRIDAY**  
6:00PM

**LOCATION**  
SUGARWOOD CABINS

# CHECK-OUT ACTIVITIES



PARENTS ARE INVITED!



**Check-out Programing for Leadership, Fully Immersed, and Traditional Camp** will begin at 5:30pm with a village cheer-off followed by check-out. Your camper can give you a tour of Camp Kern and see all the fun that has happened during their week at camp! We will also be serving hot dogs and chips at this time.



**Ranch check-out programing will start at the Ranch** with a horse show at 4:30pm followed by check-out. Campers are free to walk their parents/guardians around the ranch and show where all the fun happened that week at camp.

# SEMI-RESIDENTIAL & DAY CAMPS

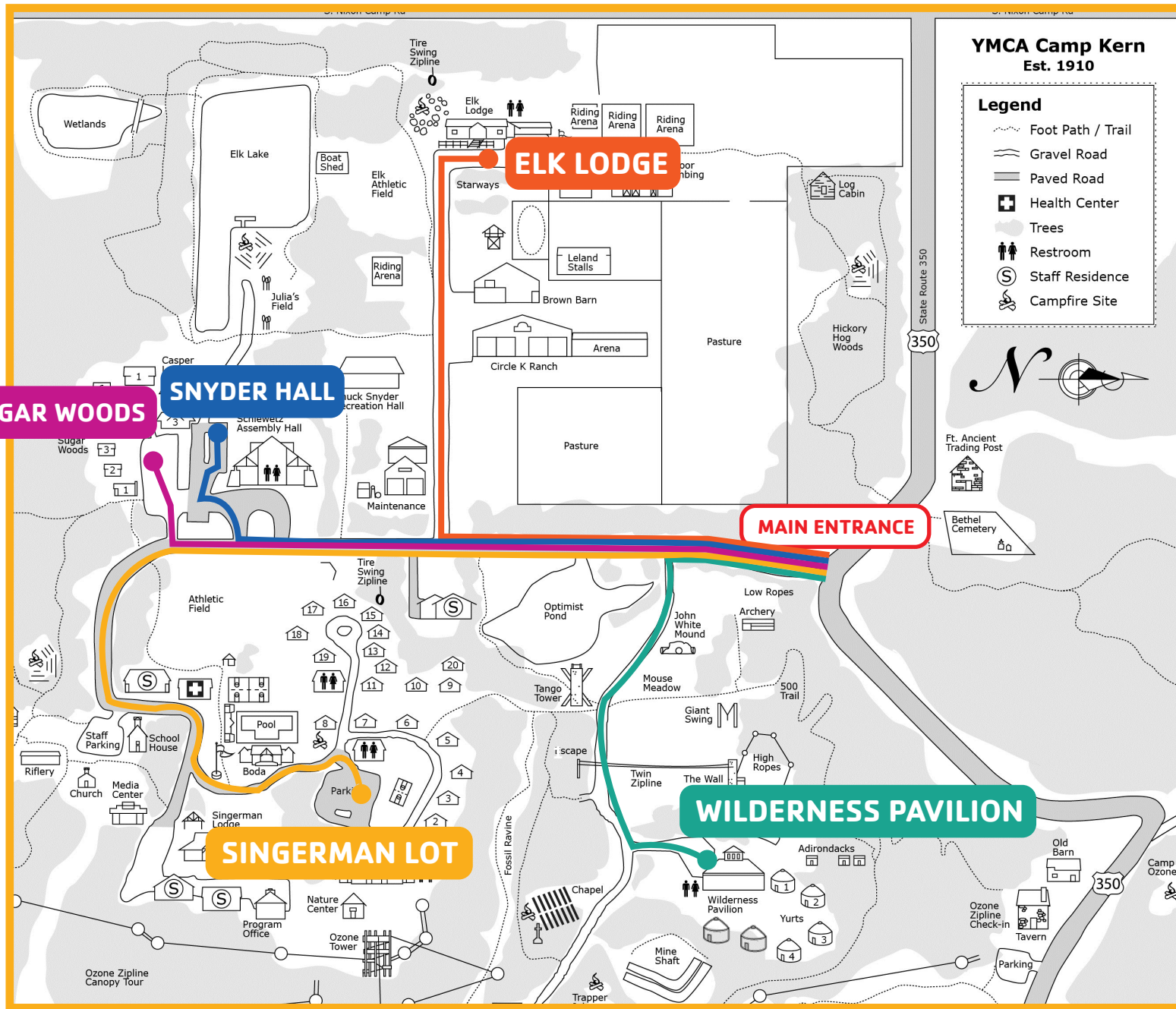


	DROP OFF TIME	PICK-UP TIME	LOCATION
<b>SUNRISE CAMP</b> MONDAY-FRIDAY	8:00AM-9:00AM	5:00PM-6:00PM	ELK LODGE
<b>BOOTS &amp; BITS</b> MONDAY-FRIDAY	8:00AM-9:00AM	5:00PM-6:00PM	ELK LODGE
<b>CAMP BLAZE, HTTYD, RANCH</b> MONDAY-FRIDAY	8:00AM-9:00AM	5:00PM-6:00PM	ELK LODGE

## MEALS

We provide a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack.  
Nut-free packed lunches and snacks are welcomed.

# DROP OFF & PICK UP LOCATIONS



# PACKING LIST

- Sleeping bag\*
- Pillow
- Summer clothes that can get messy!
- Underwear and socks (6-7 sets)
- 2 pairs of shoes
  - Closed toe required for climbing
- 1 pair of flip flops (for the shower)
- Bath towel & wash cloth
- Beach towel
- 1 pair of long pants
- 1 sweatshirt or jacket
- 2 swim suits
- Rain gear
- White shirt (for vespers)
- Laundry bag
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray
- Shampoo/conditioner & soap
- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Water bottle
- Small backpack (for day use)
- Flashlight
- Disposable camera
- For Ranch Campers: a pair of pants for each day. And boots!



\*Campers will participate in an outdoor camp-out one night during the week and will need a sleeping bag. For everyday use, you can also pack twin sheets, a pillow, and a blanket to put on their bunk or they can use their sleeping bag in place of bedding.

## ADDITIONAL HORSE CAMP ITEMS

- Jeans, breeches or long pants required daily for riding
- Boots with a heel

## FIRST CAMP & DAY CAMP SHOULD ALSO BRING:

Swim Suit, Water Bottle, Change of Clothes, Backpack, Sunscreen & Bug Spray

## ALL ITEMS BROUGHT TO CAMP SHOULD BE LABELED

If your camper forgets or is in need of a required item, alert a camp staff member at check-in, we'll be glad to help.



## WHAT NOT TO BRING TO CAMP

- Cell Phones which includes smart watches, tablets, etc.
- Cash
- Electronics
- Jewelry and other irreplaceable items
- Pets
- Personal Sporting Equipment, camp will provide everything
- YMCA Camp Kern is nut-free. All food will be provided by camp.
- YMCA Camp Kern is a drug and weapon free zone. Any camper found in possession of drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, weapons of any kind, or fireworks will be immediately dismissed without a refund.
- Any cell phone found will be confiscated and held in a locked cabinet until check-out.

# CAMP SCHEDULES

## TRADITIONAL CAMP SCHEDULE

**7:00AM** Rise and Shine  
**7:30AM** Flag Raising  
**7:45AM** Breakfast  
**8:50AM** Morning Assembly  
**9:25AM** Morning Activities\*  
**12:00PM** Lunch  
**1:10PM** Rest Hour  
**2:15 PM** Cabin Activity  
**3:30PM** Snack  
**3:45PM** Cabin Activity  
**4:45PM** Flag Lowering  
**5:00PM** Dinner  
**6:15PM** Village Time  
**7:15PM** All Camp Activity  
**8:50PM** Evening Program  
**9:00PM** Snack  
**10:00PM** Lights Out

## RANCH CAMP SCHEDULE





**7:00AM** Rise and Shine  
**8:45AM** Breakfast  
**9:00AM** Riding Lessons\*  
**12:45PM** Lunch  
**1:10PM** Rest Hour  
**2:15PM** Trail Rides/Cabin Activities\*  
**3:30PM** Snack  
**4:00PM** Swimming  
**5:15PM** Flag Lowering  
**5:30PM** Dinner  
**6:15PM** Evening Activity  
**7:15PM** All Camp Activity  
**8:50PM** Round Up  
**9:00PM** Snack  
**10:00PM** Lights Out

\*\*\*These are only example schedules. Activities and times will vary based on program and weather.\*\*\*

# SENDING MAIL TO YOUR CAMPER



**Receiving mail at camp can be a fun addition to your child's week.** If you would like to send something please check out the following guidelines:

-  No care packages. Not everyone gets packages and this can become a negative experience for some of our campers who feel left out.
-  Prevent homesickness by using upbeat camper focused language: "We can't wait to hear about what you've done this week!" VS "We miss you so much."
-  Mail can be from anyone! Feel free to share the address with extended family just be sure to remind everyone we are only accepting letters. No packages.
-  You can also send letter through Companion. Here is the information you need to send you camper a letter. Letters are delivered every day by snack time.

\*Please use this format for addressing all mail sent to YMCA Camp Kern: YMCA Camp Kern  
Camper Name Session # Cabin #  
5291 St. Rt. 350  
Oregonia, Ohio 45054

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## REFUND/PAYMENTS

**Full payment is due by May 1st or with your registration if registering on or after May 1st.**

If you elect to register your child for additional sessions during the summer payment is due at registration. There is a \$20 charge for any returned checks.

Campers who leave early due to a medical condition will receive a prorated refund. Dismissal due to unsatisfactory conduct is not refundable. The Executive Director has the final decision in incidents of behavioral dismissal. The \$100 deposit becomes non-refundable after March 1st.

## MEDICAL CARE

**Your camper's mental, physical, and emotional safety is our highest priority.** YMCA Camp Kern strives to accommodate a wide range of health needs, and we encourage parents and guardians to contact us prior to camp to discuss any medical, emotional, or wellness considerations so we can best support your camper's experience. We kindly ask all parents and guardians to ensure the most up-to-date health history and medication information is completed in your CampInTouch account prior to arrival. All campers will receive a brief health screening at check-in, including a temperature and lice check, and at that time all prescription and over-the-counter medications must be turned in to the camp nurse in their original containers. It is important that campers continue taking their regular medications as prescribed while at camp. To avoid disruption to program flow, medications will be distributed by the nurse at designated times—during meals (8am, 12pm, and 5pm) and before lights out (9:30–10pm). Tylenol, antacids, and other incidental over-the-counter medications are available from the nurse during the week on an as-needed basis at no charge. Any medical expenses incurred during a camper's stay are the responsibility of the camper's parent or guardian.

## HOMESICKNESS/VISITING

**Homesickness is a natural feeling experienced by many campers, counselors, and parents too!** For most it passes in a day or two and our counselors receive special training on identifying and caring for homesick campers. It is the policy of YMCA Camp Kern to keep campers involved in constant activities to reduce the feeling of homesickness. In the case of severe homesickness, a member of the leadership team will contact you for advice in assisting your camper. To prevent homesickness, visiting is strongly discouraged during the camp week. If you have an extenuating circumstance please call the camp office to discuss your options. No refunds are granted for campers leaving early.

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## MEDICAL CARE (CONT)

**You and your insurance company will be billed directly for Doctor, pharmacy, urgent care or emergency room visits.** In the event off site care is needed every attempt will be made to contact you prior to transporting your child for care. A registered nurse is on call and health coordinators live on-site throughout the summer.

## DISCIPLINE

**Campers are expected to treat each other and staff with respect and to abide by camp rules at all times.** It is our policy to use a three step procedure when disciplining campers:

1. Verbal Warning
  2. Behavior Agreement made between camper, counselors, and leadership staff
  3. Conference with Program Director
- Severe behavioral incidents require a phone call to the parent or guardian and may result in bypassing the three steps directly to a conference with the Executive Director.

## FOOD SERVICE

**Three balanced meals are planned and served by the food service team.** Snacks are also provided twice a day, between lunch and dinner and before bedtime.

Note: If your child is vegetarian or has special dietary needs please include this on the Health History Form.

## PHOTOS

**There will be updates on Facebook and Instagram throughout the week.** All photos will be uploaded to **Companion**. Photos will be available to view and purchase. The password to access the galleries will be given to you at check-in. Our focus is always on the camper experience, we cannot guarantee photos of every camper. All proceeds from photo sales will go towards our Annual Campaign which helps ensure all children can enjoy a week of Camp.

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of YMCA Camp Kern that no behavior that would be classified as sexual harassment will be tolerated by staff or campers. Such behavior will result in dismissal or termination.

## AQUATIC SAFETY

All campers are screened for swimming ability at their first swim and identified with wristbands to determine the portions of the pool available to them. Wristbands also aid our lifeguards in ensuring safety at the pool for all swimmers. Non-swimmers are still able to participate in aquatic activities, however, there will be portions of the pool that are off limits to them. **Any camper unable to pass a swim test will be required to wear a life jacket.** Life jackets are available to any camper who would feel more comfortable using one. Life jackets are required for all campers and staff members taking part in Lakefront Activities.

## PROHIBITED ITEMS

We reserve the right to search all campers personal belongings if we have reason to believe prohibited items are on camp property.

## DRUGS & ALCOHOL

We reserve the right to seize any drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or drug paraphernalia found in camper possession. Possession of any of the aforementioned items will result in immediate contact with the camper's guardians and dismissal with no refund.

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## LOST & FOUND/PERSONAL ITEMS

**Lost and Found items are displayed prominently at meal locations throughout the week Monday until check-out on Friday.** Please check your child's belongings before leaving camp. Unclaimed articles will be held at YMCA Camp Kern for one week past the session end date and then donated to a local charity. Please label all items your child brings to camp.

## HEAD LICE

**When your child arrives at camp they will be screened for head lice and nits.** If it is discovered that a camper has head lice or nits they will not be permitted to remain at camp. It is Camp Kern's policy not to treat head lice or nits at camp. The campers will only be readmitted when lice and nits have been treated and removed.

## BED WETTING

**Our staff are trained to handle bed wetting confidentially.** Please notify your child's counselor at check-in and note on the camper information form any history of bed wetting. We are happy to follow preventative measures you use at home (bedtime voiding, reduced liquid intake in the evening, using GoodNites, etc.) Please instruct your camper to inform their counselor right away if they wet the bed, or need help. While we do have washing facilities at camp, sending an extra sleeping bag or sheets can help ensure everyone gets back to sleep quickly and discreetly.

## CHANGING AT CAMP

**All campers will be changing in private areas like the pool house and bathroom partitions.** At no point in time will a cabin change together in an open area.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

YMCA CAMP KERN OFFICE (513) 932-3756

## Traditional and Semi-Residential Camps

**Jesús Castaño**

**Summer Camp Director**

jcastano@daytonymca.org  
(513) 932-3756 ext 1528

## Registration and Financial Assistance

**Loretta Deters Bailey**

**Director of Administration**

ldeters@daytonymca.org  
(513) 932-3756 ext 1513

## Horse Camps

**Jessica Mullins**

**Equestrian Director**

jmullins@daytonymca.org  
(513) 932-3756 ext 1531

## Meals

**Dawn Preston**

**Kitchen Director**

dpreston@daytonymca.org  
(513) 932-3756 ext 1516

## Teen and Theme Camps

**MacKallie Householder**

**Teen and Family Director**

Mhouseholder@daytonymca.org  
(513) 932-3756 ext 1530

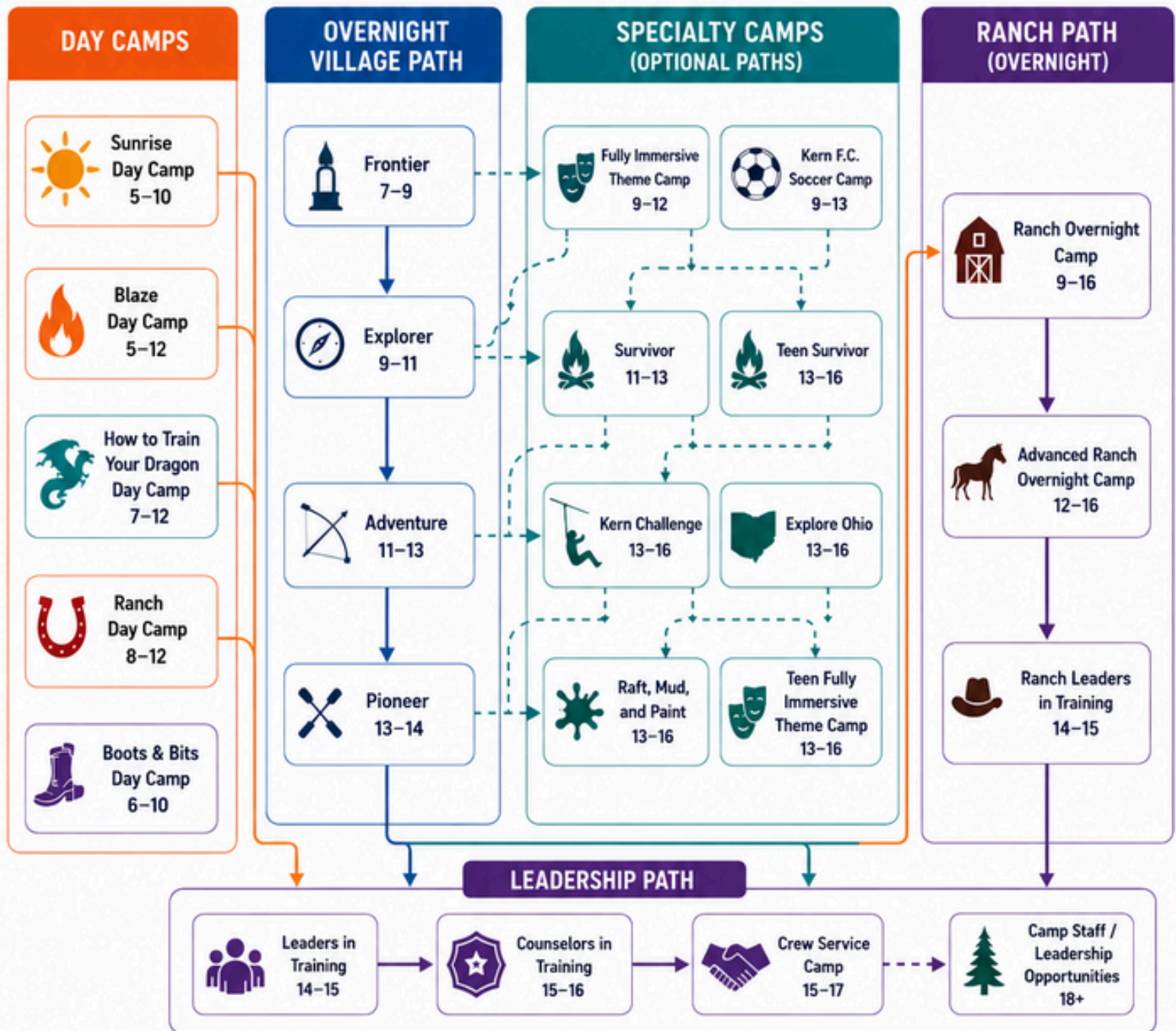


# YMCA Camp Kern Outcomes Guide

Type of Program	Program	Age	Program Goals and Outcomes	Your camper will develop...	My Camper's Exposure to Nature
Day Camp Programs	Sunrise Day Camp	5-10	<b>Build comfort and confidence in camp.</b> Campers learn routines, meet staff, and explore spaces at a pace that feels safe and welcoming. They gain a sense of belonging that sets them up for success in future sessions.	Independence, social skills, emotional growth.	Outdoor exploration and play.
	Blaze Day Camp	5-12	<b>Encourage discovery through camp activities.</b> Campers try new things, explore interests, and learn what excites them. Activities are designed to spark curiosity and help campers find joy in exploration.	Confidence, friendship, decision-making.	Daily outdoor experiences and nature exposure.
	Boots & Bits Day Camp	6-10	<b>Introduce horses and ranch experiences.</b> Campers gain early exposure to ranch life through hands-on experiences like grooming, feeding, and basic riding. They build comfort around large animals in a supportive environment.	Confidence, responsibility, curiosity.	Learning about animals and outdoor environments.
	How to Train Your Dragon Day Camp	7-12	<b>Use storytelling to inspire adventure and creativity.</b> Narrative-driven activities help campers imagine, create, and immerse themselves in themed adventures. Storytelling becomes a tool for confidence, expression, and collaborative play.	Imagination, teamwork, problem solving.	Connecting fictional adventures to real outdoor experiences.
	Ranch Day Camp	8-12	<b>Introduce horsemanship and animal care.</b> Campers learn foundational skills such as grooming, tacking, feeding, and understanding horse behavior. They develop responsibility and empathy through animal stewardship.	Responsibility, confidence, empathy.	Understanding animals and stewardship.
Traditional Overnight Camp	Frontier	7-9	<b>Successfully transition campers into overnight camp.</b> Campers practice independence, sleeping away from home, and navigating camp life with support. They gain readiness for longer, more immersive overnight experiences.	Independence, friendship, self-confidence.	Discovering and enjoying nature through camp traditions.
	Explorer	9-11	<b>Expand comfort zones through new experiences.</b> Campers stretch themselves by trying activities that feel challenging but achievable. They learn resilience, courage, and pride in personal growth.	Resilience, social development, confidence.	Increased engagement with outdoor activities.
	Adventure	11-13	<b>Encourage healthy risk-taking and challenge.</b> Campers learn to assess risk, make safe choices, and push themselves appropriately. Staff guide them through challenges that build confidence and judgment.	Teamwork, perseverance, leadership.	Adventure activities that build appreciation for the outdoors.
	Pioneer	13-14	<b>Prepare campers for future leadership opportunities.</b> Campers practice communication, responsibility, teamwork, and initiative. They begin to see themselves as contributors to the camp community.	Responsibility, maturity, leadership.	Advanced outdoor experiences and stewardship.

<b>Overnight Sports Camps</b>	Kern F.C. Soccer Camp	9-13	<b>Develop soccer skills and sportsmanship.</b> Campers improve technical skills, game understanding, and teamwork. They learn respect, fairness, and how to compete with integrity.	Teamwork, perseverance, confidence.	Active outdoor recreation and healthy living.
<b>Fully Immersive Overnight Camp</b>	Teen Fully Immersive Theme Camp	9-12	<b>Foster creativity and collaboration through immersive experiences.</b> Campers work together to build worlds, solve problems, and create shared stories or projects. They practice communication, imagination, and group decision-making.	Leadership, communication, teamwork.	Outdoor role-play and adventure experiences.
	Fully Immersive Theme Camp	13-16	<b>Connect campers to stories they love while building community and creativity.</b> Programs rooted in beloved narratives help campers bond, express themselves, and feel part of something bigger. Shared stories become a foundation for friendships.	Imagination, belonging, self-expression.	Using outdoor settings to bring stories to life.
<b>Overnight Teen Camp</b>	Survivor	11-13	<b>Promote positive competition and teamwork.</b> Campers learn to compete with respect, celebrate others, and work toward shared goals. They develop resilience, cooperation, and a healthy relationship with winning and losing.	Cooperation, communication, leadership.	Outdoor challenges that rely on environmental awareness.
	Teen Survivor	13-16	<b>Deepen leadership and team-building through competition.</b> Older campers take on roles that require strategy, communication, and group coordination. Competition becomes a tool for leadership development.	Advanced leadership and problem solving.	Outdoor challenge-based learning.
	Explore Ohio	13-16	<b>Expand horizons through travel and exploration.</b> Campers experience new environments, cultures, and challenges. Travel builds independence, adaptability, and a broader understanding of the world.	Independence, adaptability, cultural awareness.	Learning about Ohio's natural and historic environments.
	Kern Challenge	13-16	<b>Challenge campers to achieve more than they thought possible.</b> Through structured challenges, campers discover their strengths and build confidence in their abilities. They learn perseverance and pride in accomplishment.	Confidence, resilience, courage.	Outdoor challenge course and adventure experiences.
	Raft, Mud & Paint	13-16	<b>Create shared adventures through high-energy outdoor experiences.</b> Campers bond through activities like climbing, paddling, hiking, and team challenges. These shared adventures build trust, friendship, and community.	Teamwork, adaptability, confidence.	Direct engagement with rivers, trails, and outdoor recreation.
<b>Overnight Ranch Camp</b>	Ranch Overnight Camp	9-16	<b>Build confidence through horsemanship.</b> Working with horses teaches campers patience, communication, and self-assurance. They learn to trust themselves and their ability to lead.	Responsibility, perseverance, self-esteem.	Animal care and outdoor stewardship.
	Advanced Ranch Camp	12-16	<b>Develop advanced horsemanship skills and leadership.</b> Campers refine riding technique, deepen animal-care knowledge, and take on leadership roles in the barn. They model safety, responsibility, and mentorship.	Leadership, discipline, confidence.	Deeper understanding of horse care and land stewardship.

Teen Leadership Programs	Ranch Leaders in Training	14-15	<b>Prepare future ranch leaders.</b> Campers learn to manage barn operations, support younger riders, and uphold ranch culture. They gain the skills needed to step into junior leadership roles.	Mentorship, responsibility, leadership.	Modeling stewardship and care for animals and facilities.
	Leaders in Training	14-15	<b>Teach campers to become leaders at camp and in their communities.</b> Programs emphasize communication, empathy, initiative, and service. Campers learn how to influence others positively and contribute meaningfully.	Leadership, communication, service.	Leading peers in outdoor settings.
	Crew Service Camp	15-17	<b>Develop servant leadership through meaningful work.</b> Campers learn that leadership is about service, responsibility, and supporting others. They practice humility, teamwork, and stewardship of camp spaces.	Work ethic, teamwork, responsibility.	Caring for camp facilities and natural spaces.
	Counselors in Training	15-16	<b>Prepare future staff members through mentorship and practice.</b> Older campers shadow staff, learn program operations, and practice skills needed for counselor roles. They gain confidence, professionalism, and readiness for employment.	Leadership, professionalism, empathy.	Facilitating outdoor experiences for younger campers.



AGE OVERVIEW	AGES 5-10	AGES 5-12	AGES 6-10	AGES 7-12	AGES 8-12	AGES 7-9	AGES 9-11	AGES 11-13	AGES 1-13	AGES 9-12	AGES 13-13	AGES 9-13	AGES 13-16	AGES 13-16	AGES 14-16	AGES 12-16	AGES 15-17	18+
	Sunrise Day Camp	Blaze Day Camp	Boots & Bits Day Camp	How to Train Your Dragon Day Camp	Ranch Day Camp	Frontier	Explorer	Adventure	Fully Immersive Theme Camp	Survivor	Kern F.C. Soccer Camp	Kern Challenge	Explore Ohio	Raft, Mud, and Paint	Teen Overnight Teen Fully Immersive Theme Camp	Ranch Overnight in Training	Crew Service Camp	Camp Staff / Leadership Opportunities

