

### **Why have you decided to hold day camp during the pandemic?**

After much review of the American Camping Association (ACA) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines our YMCA Corporate Board, with the recommendation from the Camp Minikani Advisory Board decided to not hold overnight camp, but to continue with Day Camp. As a result of this decision, Camp Minikani is offering ACA Day Camp as part of our mission to serve families in our community. We know that many families have been juggling parenting with working, and it has been a challenging spring with at home learning. We have heard from many parents that they still wish to have their child attend Day Camp. While there are no guarantees that the virus won't impact our camp participants, we are confident that with our experience in operating Emergency Response Camps for the past ten weeks in partnership with our regional health providers, we have in place the appropriate safety checks, cleaning standards that will provide campers a safe way to spend time this summer.

### **If you think it is safe to do day camp, why couldn't you do overnight camp?**

Running an overnight camp following social distancing protocols is very different from running day camp. The capacity of day camp is 150 campers on property a day versus a combined 540. Factors in addition to capacity reduction included sleeping arrangements, meal preparation, bathhouses, group dining create a much more challenging environment. We ultimately made the decision in alignment with WI DHS guidelines and the Branch Advisory Board recommendation to the Corporate Board of no overnight camp, and the Corporate Board approved. We know it's a big disappointment for many families, but we feel this was the safest path forward.

### **Was your decision to hold day camp financially motivated?**

No, the decision was based on serving the needs of families. We did weigh the option of closing Camp Minikani for the summer, but with over 1,300 children enrolled in Day Camp, we wanted to be sure we could serve the families who registered for care and provide a great camp experience. Additionally, like all non-profits and other organizations during this unprecedented time, we are balancing several factors as we make decisions, but we would not be moving forward if we didn't think we could hold camp safely.

### **Who will lead the Day Camp Program?**

Eli Fyksen, Senior Director Operations, will lead the ACA Summer Day Camp program. Eli has 15 years of experience at Camp and had been involved with Day camp since the start of day camp in 2005. He will be assisted by Rachel Kornetsky, who has 10 years of Camp Minikani experience, and previously served as counselor, day camp and assistant summer camp director. In addition, Camp has 20 camp counselors, which include many veteran counselors.

**Why did you wait so long to make a decision, and why didn't you communicate more often?**

While we communicated periodically that we were still planning to hold camp and gave regular updates on social media, we apologize if you did not feel well informed at key points in this process.

Up until May 22, we were still hoping that circumstances would align to hold traditional overnight camp. We held off on a final decision until we had the appropriate recommendations from the American Camp Association and YUSA which did not occur until the week of May 18. Other decision factors included the status of Gov. Evers' Safer at Home order for Wisconsin, input from families and staff through surveys and other means, and the advice and recommendations from our Camp Minikani advisory board and our YMCA Association board committees. All this occurred in a fluid and quickly evolving situation before a final Y board decision and vote could occur.

Our goal was to wait to communicate the final plans until we had final answers. That said, we will certainly reflect on all feedback and look at ways to improve on our communication with you in the future. Please know many people were working around the clock to consider and plan for every possibility. As soon as the final decision was made by the YMCA Association board on Friday, May 22, we communicated to families by the end of the day.

Again, we apologize for any inconvenience this timeline has caused, and we ask for your understanding due to the unique circumstances. You are important to us, and we always strive to serve you in the best way possible.

**What specific steps are you going to take to keep kids safe at camp during the pandemic?**

We are following guidelines from the American Camp Association, YUSA, CDC, and the WI DHS and are confident we can maintain a safe environment. Adjustments to all aspects of camp are being made to ensure health and safety. For example, we are forgoing busing and cancelling day camp overnight campouts. We have added additional cleaning services and have built in extra time to our schedule to allow for appropriate hygiene in between activities. Staff will be required to wear facemasks and all children will be given bandana coverings to identify them in their group.

Campers will be required to have their temperatures checked each morning, along with parents answering a series of questions regarding possible COVID-19 exposure. We are using an electronic system, Cleared for Entry, across our YMCA Association to be able to monitor our program participants for possible exposure to the coronavirus. Parents and Guardians will have to be partners in this process. We are encouraging families to limit their social circles, practice social distancing and practice hand washing often.

**What does it mean when you say you will practice social distancing when possible? When will you maintain six feet and when will you not?**

Campers will be required to practice six-foot separation from Campers who are not their siblings or residing in the same home when not at camp. The official phrase is "social distancing," but it can help to think of it as "physical distancing" instead. We can still be social, just in different ways. We will do our best to have campers maintain social distancing in all activities.

**How are you going to hold the counselors accountable to the standards above?**

Our camp counselors will have a week of training prior to Day Camp and interacting with Campers. Counselors will be trained on techniques we have learned from operating the Emergency Responses Camps during the start of this pandemic; including re-direction, using the term "physical distancing", encouraging Camper to still be social, just in different ways. We have built into the schedule extra training and cleaning protocols for all counselors during the week to emphasize the importance of the standards.

In addition, our counselors will be trained to complete the Cleared for Entry check-in procedures, which emphasize the importance of our standards for keeping themselves and the Campers safe.

**What are you going to do if a staff member or camper is diagnosed with COVID-19? Will communication occur to the entire camp?**

We will follow local, state and federal guidelines for notification; which means that if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 the Washington/Ozaukee Health Department will be notified. We are using Cleared for Entry which provides us the opportunity to know the exact time of entry, which will all be helpful for the health department to trace possible exposures at Camp Minikani.

In addition, we will notify all staff, campers and parents that a case has been confirmed in Camp. Confidentiality of diagnosed camper will be maintained by all Camp personnel. Camp will be closed for 24 hours while we do a deep cleaning of those areas where the infected individual may have been. We have the necessary procedures, equipment and supplies to respond quickly.

**Will you be able to guarantee the safety of my children if I send them to your day camp?**

No, we cannot. Just as you cannot guarantee the safety of your child as they move about their day. Accidents happen, but we are going to do everything we can to uphold appropriate safety measures to keep your child safe and use best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We know the risk of children contracting COVID in general is extremely low but whether it's during the pandemic or the normal risks of outdoor play, families will need to make personal decisions about their own

comfort with a certain amount of risk. We respect the decisions that individuals make after considering their own unique circumstances.

### **What is going to happen to the LT program?**

The LT program will be on pause this summer. We have notified LT's and their parent/guardian that their spot as an LT for 2021 is secure. We will be placing a pause this year and resume with the selected 2020 LT team in 2021. If they were registered to be a LT1 this year, they are automatically enrolled to be a LT1 in 2021. If they were registered to be a LT2 this summer, they are automatically enrolled to be a LT2 next summer. The same for LT3's. We gave parents three options for payment of your 2020 LT program: they can move the payment to 2021; they can request a full refund, or they can donate to operations of Camp Minikani. The financial decision was separate from the selection of their child as an LT; their child is granted a spot in 2021. We also let parent/guardians know that we will continue to be in contact over this next year with them and their LT regarding any Camp Minikani important events and deadlines.

### **What are you going to do with the deposit if I decide to donate?**

As you may be aware, we have many fixed costs to maintain the grounds, facilities and pay our year-round employees. The monies you donate will help to maintain camp for the future. We also will thank you for the donation and provide you a receipt for this tax-deductible donation.

### **If I want my deposit back, will I still have the same chance of getting my kids into overnight camp next year? I need the money now and it's not fair if that is held against my family.**

We certainly understand these are difficult times for many of our families, and we are refunding deposits and camp fees as requested by Campers parents/guardians. If you would like to leave your deposit for the same overnight camp or another camp option in 2021, we will honor your priority. Usually returning campers are basically guaranteed a spot next year if they want one. Next year we will give first registration to those who moved this year's payment to next year. Then we will open registration to anyone else who was registered this year, which would be you. Then we would open to any waitlist from this year. Then we would open to general public.

### **Why did you furlough the Exec Director at Minikani if you planned to proceed with day camp?**

The YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee, which includes YMCA Camp Minikani, has been deeply impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Furloughs have been taken across the organization the past few weeks and will continue the rest of this month as we have more clarity on reopening our membership branches and other summer programs. The executive director at Minikani was furloughed in relation to the significant reduction in programming at the Minikani branch. Given that we are proceeding

## YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee - CAMP MINIKANI FAQs

with day camp we have retained the critical staff needed to execute the day camp program.