



YMCA CAMP MINIKANI OVERNIGHT CAMP HANDBOOK



Dear Families,

We look forward to working with you to ensure a fun and enriching experience for your child this summer. This guide will help prepare your child for Overnight Camp at YMCA Camp Minikani. Please read and save this guide, as it will be a useful resource when questions arise in the coming months.

Your reason for sending your child to Minikani may change summer-to-summer. Perhaps, your hope is that they will enjoy a week or two of boating and swimming; building friendships; or trying archery and exploring the arts. For children like yours, Camp Minikani becomes more than a beautiful place with fun activities.

The heart of Camp Minikani is a strong sense of community—dedicated to helping your child realize that their best self already exists. Your child will have an incredible amount of fun. Those fun experiences—like meeting a new friend or scaling the climbing wall—will expand your child’s comfort zone. They will come out of the experience with a sense of accomplishment that builds their confidence and resilience for years to come.

All of this is possible because of the intentionality of Minikani’s program. Every element—from the daily order of events to the dynamic of your child’s group—is thoughtfully designed to produce all types of social and emotional growth. Staff members are selected for their maturity, character and leadership capabilities, as well as their desire to be a positive role model for your child. The majority of staff—all but a handful of seasoned international counselors—were once campers at Minikani and have been trained through our extensive three-year Leadership Training program.

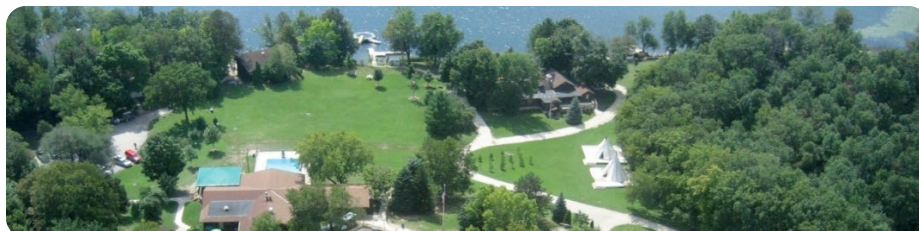
We are excited to share these aspects of Minikani with your family this summer. If you have any questions that are unanswered in this guide, please feel free to call or email the office at 262-251-9080 or minikani@ymcamke.org.

In the Spirit of Minikani,

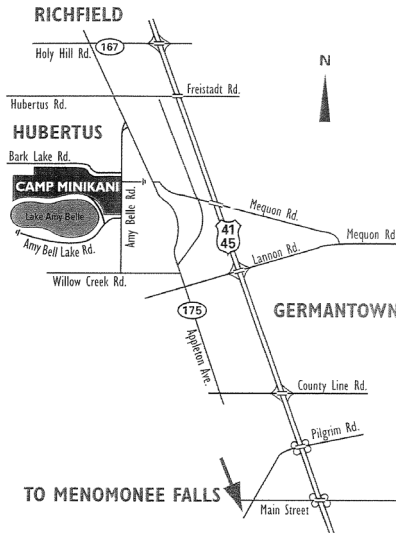
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YMCA Camp Minikani
875 Amy Belle Rd
Hubertus, WI 53033
262-251-9080



DIRECTIONS

YMCA Camp Minikani is located about 30 minutes from downtown Milwaukee at 875 Amy Belle Road in Hubertus, Wisconsin. Please note that many GPS units and online maps may direct you to our Equestrian Center located at 860 Amy Belle Lane, which is on the opposite side of the grounds from the main entrance. Here are detailed directions to Minikani's main entrance:

From Milwaukee

- Take US-41/45 north from Milwaukee and exit on Lannon / Mequon Road.
- Go LEFT on Lannon Road to the roundabout, which is Hwy 175 (Appleton Avenue).
- Turn RIGHT on Hwy 175 and proceed one block to Willow Creek Road.
- Turn LEFT on Willow Creek Road and drive west for about one mile to Amy Belle Road.
- Turn RIGHT on Amy Belle Road and go one mile to the camp entrance, which will be on your left (there is a large camp sign just after the driveway).

From the North

- Take US-41/45 south and exit on Lannon / Mequon Road.
- Go RIGHT on Lannon Road to the roundabout, which is Hwy 175 (Appleton Avenue).
- Turn RIGHT on Hwy 175 and proceed one block to Willow Creek Road.
- Turn LEFT on Willow Creek Road and drive west for about one mile to Amy Belle Road.
- Turn RIGHT on Amy Belle Road and go one mile to the camp entrance, which will be on your left (there is a large camp sign just after the driveway).

OUR STAFF

We take great pride in the quality of our counselors. Approximately 95% of our summer staff are homegrown leaders who have completed our three-year Leadership Training (LT) program. These individuals know and love camp deeply, and many have called Minikani their home as a camper prior to their acceptance in our LT Program. All counselors are at least 18 years old, CPR and First Aid certified, and undergo fingerprint-based background checks before working with children. All staff receive training in boundaries, camper supervision, and mandatory reporting protocols. In addition to our Resident Counselors, many cabins are supported by Junior Counselors, individuals in their third year of our LT Program, who undergo the same pre-summer training as all other staff.

CAMPER SAFETY AND PRIVACY

Camper safety is our top priority. To ensure a safe and respectful environment:

- Staff are never alone with a camper in private settings. We abide by the “Rule of Three” principle where no fewer than three people are always present to ensure supervision during programming (e.g. one adult and two children, or two adults and one child).
- Counselors have designated staff-only changing areas that are separate from campers.
- Campers are encouraged to change in private either in the restroom or by using a towel, sleeping bag, or a hanging sheet for appropriate and complete coverage.



YMCA Camp Minikani is accredited by American Camp Association by meeting more than 300 individual health, safety and program quality standards. These standards establish criteria for program, personnel, transportation, administrative procedures, health care, food service, program activities and emergency procedures. Accreditation assures parents and campers that Minikani has been measured against national standards in the camping industry. We are proud to be among the 25 percent of accredited camps in the United States.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Our vision is to provide a welcoming atmosphere and a sense of home for all our campers through our dedication to quality programming, outstanding service, and inclusion. The Spirit of Minikani fosters relationships, builds character, and creates memories that last a lifetime. To ensure that every camper has a positive experience, we prioritize the physical and emotional safety of all campers. Bullying, in any form, is unacceptable and may result in immediate dismissal from camp depending on its severity. Please note that refunds are not available in such cases.

Bullying can manifest in different ways, and we want to be clear about what that entails:

- **Physical Bullying:** Harming another person through actions like hitting, pushing, or any form of aggressive physical contact.
- **Verbal Bullying:** Using words to hurt someone, including name-calling, insults, or threats. This includes racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia.
- **Emotional Bullying:** Hurting someone by excluding them, spreading rumors, or manipulating social relationships to isolate them.
- **Indirect/Passive Bullying:** Instigating or encouraging others to bully, standing by without intervening or reporting, or creating an environment where bullying is encouraged or tolerated.

During staff training and throughout the summer, we work diligently with our team to identify and prevent any incidents of bullying. We also set the expectations for campers, fostering an environment where everyone feels safe, accepted, and valued.

Our proactive approach includes creating cabin unity, fostering understanding, and helping campers see the “common ground” they share. We know that a positive camp culture is the best way to reduce bullying and ensure a fun, safe, and inclusive atmosphere. Our policy was formed to help offer a fulfilling experience to each of our campers. In the event that harmful behavior does occur, we will prioritize a tiered, restorative approach, working with campers involved to build conflict resolution skills, reintegrate them into the group, and communicate with families as necessary. In more serious cases, further steps may involve meetings with a director, calling home, or dismissal from camp. If your camper is dismissed from camp for behavioral or health reasons, an authorized adult must pick them up within 3 hours to avoid undue stress and/or discomfort on your camper, cabinmates, and staff.

We encourage parents and guardians to notify us of any concerns related to bullying at camp or any camp related emails, instant messages or other incidents. With strong staff training, clear expectations for campers, and open communication with families, we are confident in creating a successful and supportive camp experience.

PAYMENT, CHANGES, AND CANCELLATIONS

Deposit & Payments

A deposit of \$100 or \$200 is due at registration depending on length of session

- Overnight camp: \$100 per week/per child (Two weeks=\$200)
- Payment Plans can be set up at time of online registration or by calling the office.
- Deposits are refundable until January 15. You may choose to pay camp fees in full or set up a payment plan for the remaining balance. Full payment and paperwork are due by April 1.
- **If, by April 1, fees are not paid in full or have an automatic credit card payment plan set up, your camper(s) will be unenrolled, and all monies will be forfeited.**

There will be a \$30 charge for all returned (NSF) checks

Cancellations & Refunds

All monies are refundable until January 15. After January 15, all monies less the above deposits are refundable until April 1. After April 1, all monies are forfeited due to cancellation. If there is sickness or injury, a medical note from a physician is required for a full refund. All monies are non-refundable if your camper leaves early due to homesickness or disruptive behavior, as determined by the camp director.

Financial Assistance

YMCA Camp Minikani is a community inclusive to all, founded on the belief that everyone is stronger when they have the opportunity to participate. In this spirit, we are happy to offer two prices, actual and adjusted. Families may choose the most suitable cost with no change to their camper's experience.

- **Actual:** The actual rate reflects the true cost of running YMCA Camp Minikani, including facility upkeep, support staffing and utilities.
- **Adjusted:** The adjusted rate is the lowest price a family may choose. If your financial needs are greater, please consider applying for a campership by visiting here.

YMCA Camp Minikani is committed to making camp available to as many children as possible. Through the generosity of many donors, the YMCA Camp Minikani Annual Campaign provides funds to families that would otherwise not be able to send their child to camp. For financial assistance information, please contact our office at 262-251-9080. You may also contact us regarding donating to the Annual Campaign.

Payment Plans

You may set scheduled payments before your balance is due by April 1. If you are interested in a payment plan, please contact the office at 262-251-9080.

Session Changes

We understand that schedules can change throughout the year. If you need to switch sessions, you may do so, if there is availability, until January 15. After January 15, priority will be given to campers who are on waitlists that are not registered for any session.

Waitlists

If a spot becomes available, your child is automatically enrolled, and you are notified via email. You have 48 business hours to confirm the spot and pay the deposit. If the office does not hear from you, a phone call will be made, and another email sent. If the office does not hear from you within three (3) days and no deposit has been made, your child is cancelled from the session and removed from the waitlist.

Cabin Assignments

Overnight cabin assignments are made based on camper/staff gender, and age of campers. Campers may request one (1) friend to be in their cabin. Requests are honored if the campers are the same gender, within one year of age, and reciprocate the request. Requests must be made 7-10 days before the start of the session. Please place your request by emailing the office at: minikani@ymcamke.org. Requests among three or more friends are not honored as we strive to balance cabin assignments so that all campers feel comfortable being an equal participant in the cabin. If you have questions or concerns about your camper's cabin placement, please don't hesitate to reach out to us directly.

Camp Store

The Minikani Camp Store is fully stocked with tons of great apparel and souvenirs for our campers. The store is open at check-in and check-out in so that parents and campers may make purchase decisions together. We also have an online store with a wide assortment of products! Check out our website for more information.



PACKING FOR CAMP

Consider a few non-material things to give your child before they attend Minikani. Prior to their arrival, discuss the positive aspects of overnight camp with your child. Share your enthusiasm for the new friends that they will meet or the new activities they will try.

Since the majority of camp play time is outdoors, please do not pack clothing that is too valuable to be dirty or stained. Please mark all clothing and equipment with the camper's name to ensure that lost items have better chance at being returned. The list below is for a one-week session. Please double this list if your child is attending a two-week session. Laundry facilities are only available in special cases.

- Sleeping Bag & Pillow
- Toiletries
- Flashlight
- Pajamas
- Sweatshirt (two)
- T-Shirts (six)
- Shorts (four pairs)
- Swimming Suit (two)
- Underwear (six pairs)
- Socks (six pairs)
- Sneakers
- Raingear/Poncho
- Sandals (optional, but NO flip-flops, must be athletic sandals with a heel strap)
- Hat or Cap with Brim
- Warm Sweater or Jacket
- Towels (one bath & one beach)
- One Fitted Twin Bed Sheet
- Water Bottle
- Insect Repellant
- Sunscreen & Lip Balm (SPF 30 or higher)
- Backpack*
- Quiet activity (books, coloring materials, crosswords)

*Campers do not return to cabins between activities, so they need a bag/backpack to carry their swimsuit, water bottle, etc.

Returning Campers: Don't forget to bring your Rag, Bearclaw, Trail Blazer Unit Accolade, or Pioneer Unit spirit necklace!

Additional items needed for Corral: closed-toe shoes or boots with heel, long-sleeved shirt, two pairs of pants, ASTM certified riding helmet (if you wish to use your own).

Absolutely NO cell phones, video cameras, personal music or video game devices, laptops or other electronics, pets, fireworks, aerosol spray cans, alcohol, tobacco products, illegal substances or weapons of any kind should be brought to camp. These items will be confiscated. Pocket knives may be brought to camp but can only be used after the camper has received their Knife Card, and while under the supervision of a counselor. Counselors will carry the camper's pocket knives with them.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Please make sure to read everything below so that check-in goes smoothly for you and your camper.

- The check-in process begins when you enter the grounds with the Leaders in Training (LTs) cheering for your arrival. We will start checking in cars in the upper parking lot at 1:30.
- As you continue into camp, you'll be guided to Norris field to prepare for check in.
- From here you can finish any housekeeping items such as heading to the nurse tent to drop off camper meds, stopping at the paperwork tent to provide missing camper forms or payment.
- If you have no missing items or meds to drop off with the nurse, then once the bugle blows at 2 you and your camper may head to the cabins where you'll be greeted by your camper's counselor.

While the official check-out for camp begins at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, you may join us earlier, if you would like. Parents may arrive as early as 8:40 a.m. to watch the closing password at Council Bluff prior to camper dismissal. Please note that pets are not permitted on the grounds. For the safety of our campers, all parents must present a valid photo ID at the cabin, prior to departure. Please check that your camper has all belongings before leaving camp. We ask that you pack your car before touring camp or visiting the camp store. If a camper will be arriving or departing at a time other than those indicated above, please contact our office as soon as possible to make those arrangements.

Free bus transportation is available from the Northside YMCA, located at 1350 W North Avenue in Milwaukee. The bus departs at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday and returns to the Northside Y at 10:15 a.m. on Saturday. Please call the office at 262-251-9080 to make bus reservations. Your photo ID is needed to drop off and pick up your camper from the bus. You will receive communication from a camp staff person if there are any changes or emergencies that would affect your child's pick-up or drop-off time or location. Campers are expected to follow Minikani's behavior expectations outlined in this handbook, as well as in the Behavior Agreement form that is signed as if they are at camp when riding the bus. Campers should also follow any rules posted in the bus or directives given by the bus captains at all times.

Lost and Found

The camp experience is an opportunity for a child to learn responsibility for their personal items. As a family, please discuss the importance of caring for and keeping track of gear as Camp Minikani is not responsible for lost or missing items. If an item is lost, please check the lost and found table during check out. Every effort is made to return clearly marked items; however, due to the large volume of items we accumulate, long-term storage is not possible. Unclaimed items are held for two weeks before they are donated to local charities.



SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

Each day at camp is packed full of fun activities where campers focus on learning new skills and making new friends. For more information on our schedule and skill choices, please visit www.minikani.org.

7:15 a.m.	Wake up and cabin cleanup	2:30 p.m.	Cabin activity time
8 a.m.	Assembly, flag raising	5:20 p.m.	Dinner
8:10 a.m.	Breakfast	6:10 p.m.	Camper choice time
9:15 a.m.	Skill session 1	7:20 p.m.	Flag lowering
10:15 a.m.	Skill session 2	7:30 p.m.	Evening activity time
11:15 a.m.	Skill session 3	9:00 p.m.	Shower, prepare for bed
12:20 p.m.	Lunch	9:15 p.m.	Cabin vespers
1:15 p.m.	Rest period	10:00 p.m.	Lights out



HEALTHCARE INFORMATION

We have a well-equipped Health Center with a nurse onsite 24 hours per day. Counseling staff are also trained in emergency First Aid and CPR. Parents and guardians are contacted if the camper has any physical injury that is apparent or at all severe, such as scrapes or bruises. In case of sickness, we may make arrangements to send sick campers home. If campers are ill; have been exposed to a contagious disease such as chicken pox, COVID, strep throat or whooping cough in the last 24 hours; have a temperature, persistent cough, or recurring vomiting or diarrhea we ask that they not be sent to camp.

In case of injury, health care staff will take necessary steps to ensure proper emergency care, which may include treatment by staff for minor injuries, phoning the parent for instructions, calling local EMS providers or transporting to a doctor or emergency care facility. Parents must provide complete emergency contact information and health history on their online family account, located at [CampInTouch](#). If parents will be travelling while their campers are at camp, please list an itinerary and phone numbers where they may be reached. In the event of an injury requiring medical attention, we will make every attempt to contact the parents prior to treatment. In the event that parents are unable to be reached, we will have the health form on file, with parents' written authorization to treat the injury.

Insurance

Parents or guardians are responsible for all medical costs incurred because of injury or illness while children are at camp. Please upload a copy of your most recent insurance card to your online account.

Health Forms

All campers **MUST** have a completed health form. Campers are unable to attend camp without this form. Parents complete health paperwork through their existing online portal at [CampInTouch](#). A physician must complete and sign the examination form indicating the camper had a health exam less than 12 months prior to their session. Please call our office at 262-251-9080 if you have questions accessing or completing these forms.

CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Card

All campers are highly recommended to be fully vaccinated by the start of their camp session should a vaccine be available to them. If you do choose to have your child vaccinated, you can upload your camper's CDC Vaccination Card to your Family Portal online.

Medications

Do not pack any medication in your camper's luggage. All prescription and over the counter medications, vitamins and creams must be submitted to the health care staff in the original container with the licensed physician's instructions. Please place packaged medications in a clearly labeled bag (zip-lock bags work well), with camper's name, dosage, and directions for administering. All medications must be listed with usage directions in the Health History Form you fill out per the parent portal. Health History Per Parent Portal

Unused medications will be returned with the camper at check-out. Please note, unless taken daily, over-the-counter medications should not be brought to camp. The health care staff keeps a supply of common non-prescription medications on hand and will administer as necessary.

Meals/Dietary Restrictions

Balanced meals are planned and served by the food service staff. Campers eat family-style meals in cabin groups in the Dining Tent. Cereal is available as an alternative to hot breakfast and a salad bar is available for lunch and dinner each day. In addition, vegetarian meals are prepared for our vegetarian staff and campers. Please include information about food allergies or special dietary restrictions (including if the camper is a vegetarian) on the electronic health form on the family portal. Peanuts are not used in any of our meals or desserts due to the high number of peanut allergies. Please contact the camp office to discuss further dietary concerns or accommodation.

Lice Policy

Camp Minikani maintains a strict lice-and nit-free policy for our campers and staff. All campers are checked for lice and nits within 4 hours of their arrival at Minikani. If lice or nits are found, staff will contact the parent or guardian and ask that they pick up their camper to be treated. Campers may return to camp 24 hours after being treated, if they are 100 percent lice and nit free. Camp Minikani recommends treatment by a lice specialist or through your family physician. We do not recommend over-the-counter lice treatment products as they are not always effective. Upon their return, the camp nurse will clear the camper before they may return to their group.

For a more detailed description of our policy or if you have any questions call the main office at 262-251-9080

Tick Policy

In the woods of Wisconsin, ticks are plentiful at the beginning of the summer. Wisconsin is home to both wood and deer ticks—the latter being more of a health concern. Deer ticks are the primary carriers of Lyme disease, which is a bacterial infection that affects the entire body. Should a tick be found embedded, the camper will be transported to a local hospital for removal. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns regarding tick procedures. Please also consider reading about tick prevention together by visiting www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/lyme/.



COMMUNICATIONS

Text Alerts

In certain circumstances Minikani may use a texting service to provide camp updates on trip arrivals, weather events, registration openings, or other pertinent information to your camper's stay. To stay in the know be sure that your cell phone number is entered correctly in the parent portal.

Letters, Emails and Faxes

Mail must include the following to be delivered: 1) Camper name 2) Session number and 3) Cabin name or number. Letters may be sent to:

Camp Minikani c/o Child's name, session, cabin
875 Amy Belle Rd
Hubertus, WI 53033

Family and friends may email campers a message. These emails will be printed and hand-delivered to campers with the daily mail. Emails may be sent by completing the form here: www.minikani.org/camp_email. Please note that we receive hundreds of e-mails daily and family members are limited to no more than one email per day so that we can deliver them in a timely fashion. E-mails are printed at lunchtime and delivered with mail in the afternoon. Emails received after 10 a.m. on Friday will not be delivered.

Campers may reply to emails by sending hand-written letters. Campers are unable to access the internet during session*. We suggest that parents and guardians help campers pack paper and pre-addressed and stamped envelopes.

*In the event of an emergency or emerging issue, campers may absolutely speak with their parents and/or guardians by the phone.

Care Packages

Campers love receiving mail! Care packages are screened for the safety of our campers. Food and candy are not permitted due to allergies and dietary restrictions. All food and beverages sent to campers will be disposed of.

Birthdays

If your child has a birthday while they are at camp, please feel free to drop off a card, present, or balloons at the office in Halquist Family Lodge. We will also sing a special birthday song for your camper at dinner! * No food please*

Homesickness Communication Procedure

We recognize that homesickness is a natural part of being away from home, and our staff are trained to support campers in working through these feelings to help them find success and enjoyment. In the event that a child expresses a strong desire to communicate home due to homesickness, our procedure is for a Unit Director to contact the parent first to discuss the situation one-on-one. Direct phone calls home in these cases can sometimes heighten emotions rather than ease them. We encourage you to speak with your child before camp about this procedure and reassure them that our counselors and directors are there to support them. If circumstances warrant a direct conversation between you and your child, a plan can be created in collaboration with the Unit Director or Camp Director. Additionally, we encourage campers to write letters home to express their immediate feelings. These letters will be mailed or, if needed, scanned and emailed from the camp office.

Communication From Camp

We will contact you via e-mail as well as phone prior to, during and after your child's stay. The e-mails come from minikani@ymcamke.org and phone calls come from 262-251-9080. Please make sure this address is not blocked as spam and set our phone number up as a contact in your phone.

Phone Calls

At camp, we strive to create an immersive experience that encourages independence, personal growth, and connection with the camp community. While campers do not have regular phone access, parents may receive calls from camp staff for a variety of reasons, including behavioral updates, general check-ins when appropriate, or other individual circumstances. Our goal is to ensure open communication while also fostering a positive and engaged camp environment for all campers. If a situation arises that requires direct parent involvement, a Unit Director or Camp Director will reach out to discuss the best course of action. In the case of an emergency, rest assured that your camper will absolutely be allowed to speak with you directly.

You can also stay in touch with what is happening through our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) page, and we will upload a selection of photos each day of camp, which can be accessed [online](#). While we do our best to make sure that we take photos of all campers during the week, we only upload a limited number to show what happened at camp that day.

We hope that this information helps you and your camper prepare for Minikani. Please feel free to call or e-mail the office if you have any further questions.



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