

# Camp Mishawaka

SINCE 1910



## Parent Handbook 2026

**Camp Mishawaka**  
PO Box 368, Grand Rapids, MN

Phone 218-326-5011

Fax 218-326-9228

[www.campmishawaka.com](http://www.campmishawaka.com)

email: [info@campmishawaka.com](mailto:info@campmishawaka.com)



# Welcome to Camp Mishawaka

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am delighted that you have decided to make Camp Mishawaka a part of your family's summer plans. The traditional camp experience offered at Mishawaka aims to provide more than just a pleasant diversion for the summer. Of course, the 30+ land and water activities are designed for fun, but along the way, our goal is to help our campers find their best selves.

Camp Mishawaka is ideally sized to allow us to devote close attention to each camper's experience. The atmosphere is very familial, and each staff member knows not only the campers in his or her cabin group but in the entire camp. For the most part, the Girls Camp and Boys Camp programs run separately, though they do share many of the same facilities.

As long as anyone can remember, the motto of camp has been safety, health, and happiness. The safety of each camper is our highest priority. To help ensure that your child's experience is a positive one, we outline Camp Mishawaka's policies and practices in the pages that follow. In this Parent Handbook you will find information regarding transportation, healthcare tips, packing information, contact information, and tripping opportunities, as well as other pertinent items.

2026 marks Camp Mishawaka's 117th summer, and whether this is your first or eighth summer with us, we look forward to having your child at camp this summer!

Sincerely,

Steve Purdum  
Executive Director

**US Mail:**  
Camp Mishawaka  
PO Box 368  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

**For UPS / FedEx Shipping:**  
21525 Mishawaka Road  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Overview</b> .....                                | <b>5 - 8</b>   |
| Core Values.....                                     | 5              |
| Goals and Outcomes.....                              | 5              |
| Expectations for Participation.....                  | 6              |
| Gender Inclusion.....                                | 6              |
| Separation from Camp.....                            | 6              |
| Age Group within each Camp.....                      | 7              |
| Daily Routines.....                                  | 7              |
| Sessions.....  | 7              |
| Traditions and Awards.....                           | 7              |
| <b>Daily Program and Schedule</b> .....              | <b>8</b>       |
| <b>Activities Offered</b> .....                      | <b>9</b>       |
| <b>Program Eligibility</b> .....                     | <b>9</b>       |
| <b>Tripping &amp; Camping</b> .....                  | <b>10 - 12</b> |
| <b>Being Away from Home</b> .....                    | <b>13</b>      |
| <b>General Information</b> .....                     | <b>14</b>      |
| Opening and Closing Days.....                        | 14             |
| Clothing, Bedding and Laundry.....                   | 14             |
| Communication with Camp.....                         | 15             |
| Communication from Mishawaka.....                    | 15             |
| Housing.....   | 15             |
| Lost and Found.....                                  | 15             |
| Parent Visitation.....                               | 15             |
| Mail and Communications.....                         | 16             |
| Meals.....   | 16             |
| Birthdays.....                                       | 16             |
| Spending Money.....                                  | 17             |
| Change-Over.....                                     | 17             |
| Vespers.....   | 17             |
| <b>Packing List</b> .....                            | <b>18</b>      |
| Personal Program Items.....                          | 18             |
| What Not to Bring.....                               | 18             |
| Wilderness Trip Campers Additional Packing List..... | 19             |
| <b>Policies</b> .....                                | <b>20-21</b>   |
| Attendance.....                                      | 20             |
| Illegal Substances, Alcohol, and Tobacco.....        | 20             |
| Inappropriate Behavior.....                          | 20             |
| Refunds.....   | 20             |
| Respect for Property.....                            | 21             |
| Weapons Policy.....                                  | 21             |
| Dismissal Procedures.....                            | 21             |
| Staff Hiring Policies and Procedures.....            | 21             |
| <b>Health Care at Camp Mishawaka</b> .....           | <b>22-23</b>   |
| Staff.....   | 22             |
| Health Form.....                                     | 22             |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Special Considerations.....                   | 22        |
| Medication.....                               | 22        |
| Communication with Parents and Guardians..... | 23        |
| Health Care Charges.....                      | 23        |
| Personal Health Needs.....                    | 23        |
| <b>Transportation.....</b>                    | <b>24</b> |
| Traveling by Plane.....                       | 24        |
| Shipping Luggage Early.....                   | 24        |
| What to Expect on Travel Days.....            | 24        |
| Airline Regulations.....                      | 25        |
| Travel by Camp Bus.....                       | 25        |
| Driving to Mishawaka.....                     | 26        |
| Driving Directions.....                       | 26        |
| Area Accommodations.....                      | 26        |
| <b>Camp Mishawaka Administration.....</b>     | <b>27</b> |
| <b>Fee Information.....</b>                   | <b>29</b> |

# Camp Mishawaka

Camp Mishawaka is a Brother/Sister camp that is structured to allow time for kids to find their best selves. While some activities, special programs and traditions are all-camp experiences, the Boys Camp and Girls Camp maintain their own unique identities and traditions.

The cabin group of 5 to 7 campers is the core of camp life, and each cabin counselor is charged with the duty of monitoring the health and activities of each camper. The camps' cabins are separated on the property by Boys Camp and Girls Camp. Most activities are done separately by camps. Other activities are combined to take advantage of a unique staff ability. The two camps also collaborate on the Big Show at the end of each four-week session.

Both camps share the dining hall, though table seating is separate. The two camps gather at times during the week in the evening for games and activities. Sundays include an all-camp BBQ and a special all-camp activity such as sailing races, tennis matches, and a variety of other activities.

Mishawaka maintains a distinction by structuring a program that values the growth and achievement that can occur in separate environments.

## Camp Mishawaka Core Values

- **Respect - respecting one another, our environment and community**
- **Resourcefulness - fostering the innate talents within each of us**
- **Childhood - creating a community that puts the developmental needs of kids first**
- **Joy - finding happiness and fun in all our endeavors and in our environment**
- **Growth - recognizing that learning is a life-long process that requires empathy**
- **Inclusion - protecting equal access and opportunity for all**
- **Example - modeling reliable, ethical, responsible and thoughtful behavior**

Guided by these values, Camp Mishawaka is committed to being an inclusive, welcoming, and safe place for all. This includes providing access to a camp experience for those with limited resources via financial assistance. Camp Mishawaka is dedicated to providing equal access regardless of race, color, national origin, citizenship, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, disability, marital status, or any other category protected by the law.

We are further guided by our commitment to nourish each child and staff member as we respect the rights and dignity of all individuals, just as we honor the Camp community.

## Camp Goals and Outcomes

As an organization we are focused on youth development, and contributing to the improvement of the physical, social and emotional well-being of all campers. We do this by:

- Providing developmentally appropriate activities and opportunities for each camper.
- Working to ensure that each camper has a secure connection with at least one other camper and one staff mentor.

- Partnering with parents in the process to ensure the best possible outcomes for the child
- We will have succeeded if a camper gains physical, emotional and social tools that serve them beyond the Camp experience and throughout their lives.

## **Expectations for Participation**

Camp Mishawaka serves a wide range of age groups and camper abilities. That said, there are some basic expectations for successful participation. Campers of all ages must conduct themselves in accordance with the values and policies of Camp Mishawaka and not engage in any behavior that threatens the community or any individual.

This includes:

- Ability to follow instructions related to all matters of safety.
- Ability to accept redirection if behavior is not acceptable.
- Ability to regulate emotions in line with developmentally appropriate expectations.
- Practice of treating all campers and staff with respect.

All campers must also, with reasonable accommodations, be able to independently maintain their own personal hygiene (i.e. showering, teeth brushing, use of the restroom, etc.) and be able access buildings and facilities throughout a multi-acre campus over varying terrain.

## **Gender Inclusion**

We provide safe, affirming spaces for all campers and staff, including those that identify as LGBTQ+. It is important for us to support all in our community regardless of their sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender identity. We rely on our trained staff to support age appropriate conversations and guide discussions should they arise. We also recognize that our community includes gender identities that do not fit neatly into binary (girl/boy) gender categories, and we strive to create inclusive spaces for all campers and staff.

Please note that camper/participant families will not be notified of a camper or staff member's gender identity (or transition) or sexual orientation. If an individual comes out and/or chooses to be their authentic self at camp, this means they feel safe enough to share a personal part of themselves. An individual will not be outed without their permission to other participants, staff, or their own family.

## **Separation from the Program**

In the event of behavior or actions that threaten a camper's continued participation, the parent will be notified. In some instances this may involve a behavior contract, or plan of improvement to ensure that the behavior does not continue. Depending on the type of behavior, or severity of the action, this may result in immediate dismissal.

In the event of dismissal, you will be contacted, and your child will be sent home at your expense. Depending on the circumstances, a prorated refund minus the nonrefundable deposit and administrative fees will be issued, or no refund.

## Age Groups within each Camp

The Boys Camp is divided into three age groups. **Belding** 8-11, **Mulford** 12-13, and **Gould** 14-15 year-olds. Campers who are 16 and have completed 10th grade are eligible to apply to become a Counselor-in-Training (CIT). See more about this program under the Administration and Staff section.

The Girls Camp is divided into two age groups; **Parkside** 8-12, and **Valley** 13-15 year-olds. Like the Boys Camp, those who are 16 and have completed 10th grade are eligible to be selected as CITs.

## Daily Routines

Campers are expected to clean their cabins and make their beds each day. A walk-through inspection is conducted, and campers are able to earn awards for keeping a clean area. Campers also set tables as part of a service committee rotation.

Throughout the daily schedule there is time allowed for transition between activities and before meals. This supervised down time, especially before and immediately after meals, is designed to give campers time to catch their breath. This is a popular time for a game of ping-pong, tetherball, foursquare, or chess. It is our goal to keep campers occupied and engaged, without over-programming them.

## Sessions

Mishawaka offers two, four, six and eight week sessions. The summer is divided into two four-week halves. The first two-week session is the first two weeks of the first half. The second two-week session is during the first two weeks of the second half.

The two-week sessions are designed to be an introduction to traditional residential summer camping, and as such, is best for first-time campers or campers under 12. Historically, Mishawaka sessions have been based on the rhythms of a four-week time period. Most of the extended tripping opportunities are available only to those who stay four weeks or longer. We have found that a stay of four weeks provides for much deeper friendships, skill development and growth experiences.

Each session runs very much like the next, and parents and guardians should let their family and school schedule dictate which session a child attends. The local weather is often a question when choosing a session, though recent patterns have not shown a discernible difference between the sessions.

## Traditions and Awards

Mishawaka for Boys was founded in 1910 and the Girls Camp was started in 1963. Both camps have a rich history of traditions that guide daily activities and give Mishawaka its unique character.



One of the oldest of these is the tradition of the teams. Every summer, each camp is divided into two teams. A balanced, fun competition weaves throughout activities in the summer. Over the years it has proven to be a wonderful way to instill spirit, provide the framework for healthy competition and encourage teamwork. The teams are led by the CITs, and the competition culminates in a swim and track meet at the end of each half.

At the final campfire on the night before each session ends, campers are presented with a plaque that details their advancements and achievements. Awards can range from Honor Cabin for keeping a clean cabin to swimming levels passed.

When applicable, campers are awarded certification cards from national organizations such as the Red Cross.

# Daily Program and Schedule

The Program for each camp strives to maintain a balance between the comfort and assurance that routine can foster and the fun and excitement that spontaneity brings to each day. Campers choose their own activities and may wish to concentrate their efforts in two or three areas or sample a wide variety.

## **Boys Camp**

- 8:00 Reveille
- 8:30 Breakfast
- 9:15 Cabin Clean-up
- 9:45 AM Activity Period 1
- 10:45 AM Activity Period 2
- 11:45 Free-Swim Period
- 12:30 Sign-up for PM activities
- 1:00 Lunch
- 1:45 Rest Period
- 2:30 PM Activity Period 1
- 3:45 Snack
- 4:05 PM Activity Period 2
- 5:20 Free-Swim Period (store T & Th)
- 6:30 Dinner
- 7:45 Evening Activity
- 9:15 Lights Out Belding
- 9:30 Lights Out Mulford
- 9:45 Lights Out Gould



## **Girls Camp**

- 8:00 Raising Bell
- 8:15 Flag Raising
- 8:30 Breakfast
- 9:15 Cabin Clean Up
- 9:45 AM Activity Period 1
- 10:55 AM Activity Period 2
- 12:15 Morning Meeting,  
Sign-up for PM activities,  
Singing
- 1:00 Lunch
- 1:30 Rest Period
- 2:30 PM Activity Period 1
- 3:45 Snack
- 4:05 PM Activity Period 2
- 5:15 Free Swim (Store M & W)
- 6:30 Dinner
- 7:30 Evening Activity
- 9:15 Lights Out Parkside
- 9:45 Lights Out Valley



# **Activities Offered**

Camp Mishawaka offers a wide variety of land and water activities. Many of them are instruction-based, with a progressive level of advancement. A number of activities are centered on fun and enjoyment, though the opportunity for learning from these activities is always present.

The list below is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all that Camp Mishawaka offers in a summer. Rather, it is a list of the core activities. From time to time we are able to complement this list when we have a staff member with a particular interest or skill.

|                                       |                              |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Swimming                              | Kayaking                     |
| Swim Instruction (American Red Cross) | Newspaper                    |
| Sailing (US Sailing)                  | Baseball                     |
| Canoeing                              | Basketball                   |
| Tennis                                | Fishing                      |
| Soccer                                | Snorkeling                   |
| Archery                               | Camp Craft Skills            |
| Air Riflery                           | High Ropes Course            |
| Horseback Riding                      | Climbing Tower               |
| Drama                                 | Overnight Camping            |
| Water-skiing                          | Extended Wilderness Tripping |
| Tubing                                | Tumbling                     |
| Mountain Biking                       | Physical Fitness             |
| Arts and Crafts– wide variety         | Backpacking                  |
| Pottery                               | Sauna                        |
| Nature Study                          |                              |
| Boating                               |                              |

If it is your desire that your camper concentrate on a particular skill or activity, we encourage you to note this on the Parent Questionnaire. Because so many of the waterfront activities require a basic proficiency in swimming, every new camper is tested on swimming skills during the opening orientation, and each camper is placed in the appropriate class.

If there are specific activities you do not want your child to participate in, please contact the Camp office in writing with a list of any activities you do not want your child to participate in.

# **Program Eligibility**

Activities are generally open to campers of all ages and abilities. Extended off-camp trips are for campers 12 years of age or older. Certain activities that require specialized skills, including those that require proficiency in swimming and safe practices around the water, may be limited to campers who have passed the level IV in Red Cross swimming. Camp Mishawaka reserves the right to limit campers from activities who are not able to safely participate.

# **Tripping and Camping at Camp Mishawaka**

Camp Mishawaka has a long history of incorporating wilderness tripping as a part of its overall program. Situated at the gateway of some of the most beautiful and pristine wilderness areas in the Northern Lakes country, we are able to provide canoeing, hiking, and other experiences that are truly remarkable. In addition to passing along basic wilderness skills, these trips, by design, give campers an opportunity to work as a team toward shared goals, challenge themselves in new ways, and discover new strengths.

Many of these opportunities are part of our regular Camp programming, day trips and shorter canoe trips, and are included in the Camp fee. Some of the longer trips, which involve specialized transportation, services, permits or fees will generate additional charges. Trips are designed to be age and skill appropriate, and the extended trips are available to campers 12 and above. In general, the longer trips (3 days +) are available as part of a four-week session. See below for full descriptions.

As Camp approaches a Trip Permission Form will be available in your CampIntouch account, and parents will have an opportunity to indicate which trips their campers have permission for. This is not a pre-sign-up for the trip. In the first few days of Camp, campers will be given an opportunity to indicate their preferences in order of choice, and the trips are put together based upon interest, age, qualifications, and permit availability.

## **Trips available to all campers**

A variety of options for day and overnight trips are available as part of the regular camp program. From camp craft classes in camp, to day-long canoeing or kayaking day trips on Pokegama Lake, campers have the opportunity to learn about the woods and waters around them. Overnight camping trips to our private island on the Lake and nearby State and National Park Campsites offer a wide variety of opportunities to all campers.

## **Extended Wilderness Trips Advisory**

Extended canoeing or backpacking trips for campers 12 years of age or older are offered through the Camp program. These primarily take place in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, the Superior Hiking Trail and Isle Royale.

In addition to age requirements, other eligibility requirements are considered. These include: ability to follow directions, to participate as a team member, and the physical ability to safely participate in and meet expected physical requirements.

In many cases the group will be hours and miles from emergency medical assistance. Camp Mishawaka endeavors to minimize risk by providing trained, competent staff to lead these trips and also assess the camper's fitness to successfully complete one of these trips. See below for a more detailed description of each trip. These can be physically demanding trips, and it is the camper's responsibility to work with our staff to maintain the level of fitness needed to take part and complete the trip.

If a participant is unable to continue due to illness or injury, family emergency, behavioral problems or other events, in most cases the group will return to Camp early. You will be notified if this occurs. If Camp is able to continue the trip for the rest of the group by substituting a staff member for the one who would accompany any departing campers, we will do so.

## Trips available for 2, 4, 6 & 8 week campers 12 yrs. and older

**Cabin Group Overnights and Day Trips** - A variety of options for day and overnight trips are available as part of the regular camp program. From campcraft classes in camp, to day-long canoeing or kayaking day trips on Pokegama Lake, campers have the opportunity to learn about the woods and waters around them. Overnight camping trips to our private Island on the Lake, and nearby State and National Park Campsites offer a wide variety of opportunities to all campers.

**Length:** 1 day / 1 night      **Recommended Ages:** All

**Skills Learned:** canoeing, campfire building, basic camp craft skills

**Mississippi River Canoeing** - Five miles from Mishawaka, Lake Pokegama joins the Mississippi river and campers can canoe from the entry point right back to Camp. This is a great way to try out canoeing and camping, without the portaging and certain challenges of a Boundary Waters trip. Campers will experience one full day of canoeing and camp for two nights at state parks and reserved campsites.

**Length:** 1-3 days      **Recommended Ages:** All

**Skills Learned:** canoeing, campfire building, basic camp craft skills

**Guided Launch Fishing Trip on Lake Winnibigoshish** - Campers make the trip to nearby Lake Winnie, one of the greatest fisheries in N. Minnesota in pursuit of Walleye, Perch and Northern Pike. We engage the services of a professionally guided launch for this adventure.

**Length:** 1 day      **Recommended Ages:** 12 and up (11 year-olds if space permits)

**Skills Learned:** Bait hooks, remove fish from hooks and clean and cook their catch.

**Whitewater Rafting the St. Louis River** - A full day adventure on the St. Louis River. We contract with Minnesota Whitewater Rafting, a local rafting company. Campers, grouped with Mishawaka staff and professional guides take on 6 rapids from class I to III.

**Length:** 1 day      **Required age:** 12 and up

**Skills Learned:** Paddling and Pure Fun

**Lake Superior Sailing Day Trip** - A full day of sailing on the largest freshwater lake in the world! Campers will have an opportunity to learn how to navigate large bodies of water and will have hands-on-experience utilizing teamwork to hoist and trim sails and steer the boat. Our charter captain Joe Freeman is a seasoned educator and is passionate in supporting young people to discover their love of sailing.

**Length:** 1 day      **Required age:** 12 and up

**Skills Learned:** Sailing, Navigation, Teamwork, Water Safety

## Trips available for 4, 6 & 8 week Campers 12 yrs and older

**Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness** - One million acres of wilderness in the Superior National Forest. This world-renowned canoeing wilderness is located just two hours north of Mishawaka. Campers will canoe from one lake to the next, portaging their canoes and packs across a "portage" trail. Five to seven campers will join two tripping counselors and enjoy paddling, portaging, swimming, and fishing. Generally available for 4-week campers.

**Option #1:** 3-4 days. Perfect for 12 and 13 year-old campers as an introductory experience for canoeing, camping, or both. Campers will experience two full days of canoeing and short portages.

**Option #2:** 5-6 days. Great opportunity for a 2<sup>nd</sup>, longer Boundary Waters trip for older campers or campers with extended tripping experience. Similar to an introductory canoe trip but with longer days and more challenging portages and routes.

**Skills Learned:** map reading, canoeing, portaging, campfire building, and other camp craft and wilderness skills

**Superior Hiking Trail Backpacking/Hiking Trip** - Located on the north shore of Lake Superior, this trail is a 310 mile hiking path that stretches from Duluth to the Canadian border. With most of its trail within a mile the Lake campers encounter many incredible views of Lake Superior. The trails are well-maintained with campsites available every few miles. This trip is an excellent introduction to hiking, as well as a first camping trip.

**Length:** 3-5 days      **Recommended ages:** 12 and up

**Skills Learned:** map reading, hiking, campfire building, and camp craft skills

**Isle Royale National Park Backpacking/Hiking Trip** - Located in the northwest of Lake Superior, Isle Royale is the largest natural island in Lake Superior. 20 miles removed from the closest port, Isle Royale offers breathtaking views of Lake Superior and a pristine hiking experience for campers. After a three-hour ferry ride to the Island from Grand Portage, Minnesota, campers hike for five days and four nights in a loop on the island's western end. Along the way campers may see moose, fox, and other animals native to the island. This is an excellent hiking trip for older campers and intermediate to experienced hikers.

**Length:** 6 days      **Recommended ages:** 13 and up

**Skills Learned:** map reading, hiking, campfire building, camp craft skills and ecology.

**Apostle Islands Sailing Trip** - A multi-night sailing trip among the Apostle Islands on Lake Superior on a 30+ ft sailing yacht skippered by a professional captain. Not only do campers get to enjoy the natural beauty of their surroundings, but they will be trained and responsible for all aspects of sailing (and living on) the yacht - under the supervision of the captain and camp staff.

**Length:** 3-4 days      **Recommended ages:** reserved for CIT groups or 15-16 year old campers

**Skills Learned:** Rigging/de-rigging, skippering, sail trim, yacht maintenance, yacht living, map reading

**North Shore Multi-Sport Trip** - Spend four days exploring some of the most spectacular scenery and iconic destinations that Duluth and the North Shore have to offer! Campers will take to the legendary waters of Lake Superior by sea kayak, hit the rugged trails of Duluth on mountain bikes, and test their skills on the dramatic rock faces of two beautiful North Shore formations. Each night, we'll make camp at coveted sites inside Tettegouche and Jay Cooke State Parks — two of Minnesota's most beloved outdoor destinations. All activities are led by expert guides from the University of Minnesota Duluth and Duluth Parks and Recreation, alongside our own Camp Mishawaka trip leaders, so campers will be in great hands every step of the way.

**Length:** 4 days      **Recommended ages:** 12 and up

**Skills Learned:** mountain biking, sea kayaking, rock climbing and belaying

**Lake Superior Kayak of Apostle Islands National Lake Shore** - This kayak-camping tour with professional guides provides the group with opportunities to venture beyond the inner-ring of the Apostle Islands. Island Hopping by kayak is the ultimate way to explore.

**Length:** 4 days      **Recommended Age:** reserved for CIT groups of 15-16 year old campers

**Skills Learned:** Kayak and camping skills, teamwork and individual efforts

**Voyageurs National Park Fishing Trip** - An extended fishing experience in breathtaking Voyageurs National Park. This 2-3 day fishing trip is perfect for campers who are eager to tackle Minnesota's iconic waters and reel in some truly impressive catches. Campers will learn how to process and prepare their catch for a delicious shore lunch. Includes canoeing and guided fishing in state-of-the-art boats and top-of-the-line fishing equipment.

**Length:** 2-3 days      **Required age:** 13 and up

**Skills Learned:** Fishing techniques, and cleaning and cooking fish

*From time to time, other tripping opportunities arise. You will be contacted for permission if these trips involve additional charges.*

# **Being Away From Home**

Prior to coming to Mishawaka it is quite natural for your child to be a bit apprehensive. Even veteran campers are not immune from this phenomenon. Homesickness studies have shown that a few simple steps in preparation can help make the camp experience successful.

Here are a few suggestions to help your camper prepare for the Mishawaka experience.

- Start preparing your child for the idea of being away from home. Find out about your child's expectations and what he or she is looking forward to or has reservations about.
- Involve your child in the packing and preparation process. It is comforting for children to know what they have when they arrive at camp and where to find it in their bags.
- Stress the positive aspects of the camp experience. It is only natural that parents also have a bit of anxiety around the separation, and children will pick up on your concerns.
- In communicating with your campers, it is important not to convey that they are missing spectacular events at home. It is helpful to reassure them that you miss them and love them while at the same time focusing on their time at camp. Ask questions about their favorite activity, their friends or counselor, even the food. Write as often as you are able, and encourage them to do the same.
- Allow time for your child to adjust to the new surroundings. The first letter home is often written that first evening or full day and may sound hesitant about the Mishawaka experience. Mail moves slowly from the Northwoods, and most often by the time this first letter arrives home, campers are fully involved and active.
- Remind your child that missing home is a natural feeling and not to worry if they are homesick.

## **Homesickness**

Recent studies have shown that all campers experience homesickness in one form or another. Our staff has been trained to recognize the symptoms of homesickness and given skills to ease the transition to camp life. Most often, these symptoms present themselves at mealtime and bedtime, and are quite natural.

Should homesickness persist or become a barrier from taking part in activities, you will be contacted by the Camp Director to discuss possible tactics to relieve the problem. A huge part of the mission of Camp Mishawaka is working with children to develop these coping skills that will serve them well the rest of their lives. The American Camp Association also has some advice for parents of campers [here](https://www.acacamps.org/article/camping-magazine/helping-homesick-camper).

<https://www.acacamps.org/article/camping-magazine/helping-homesick-camper>

Please feel free to contact the camp office directly if you have a particular question or concern.

# General Information

## **Opening and Closing Days**

Most campers who come from outside Minnesota fly to the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport (MSP), meet our Camp Staff and Camper Group there, and continue to camp via chartered coach. Campers are met at their gate of arrival by a Camp Mishawaka staff member (or at Customs for our international campers). On departure days, our staff will check campers in and accompany children to the departure gate and will remain there until the plane takes off. Please refer to the Transportation section for complete information regarding airline travel.

**All campers should arrive on the Session Start Date and depart on Session End Date** Those parents who elect to drive to Mishawaka should plan on dropping their camper off between **2 PM and 5 PM** on the opening day of the session. Parents or Guardians should stop at the camp office to check in and receive cabin assignments and further instructions.

There is a campfire ceremony at the end of each session, and parents are welcome to join us for this. Please email or call the office to let us know if you plan on attending. Phone: 218-326-5011. Pick up at camp on the last day of the session is between **8am and 10am (subject to change based on bus schedule)**.

## **Clothing and Bedding (See also the packing list on page 16 & 17)**

Camper laundry is sent out once a week. Campers should bring enough clothes to last the week. **It is important that all items of clothing be labeled with your camper's name to help prevent lost items.**

Minnesota enjoys a wide variety of weather conditions in the summer. On an ideal day, campers start the day with a sweatshirt or light jacket, wear shorts and a t-shirt throughout the day, and put the sweatshirt back on in the evening. Average temperatures range from lows in the 50s to highs in the 90s. It is important that campers come with good rainwear in the event of inclement weather.

Campers are very active, and this is often very hard on clothes. We do not recommend that campers bring fine clothing or items that require special cleaning. Though there is no formal uniform or dress code, please do not pack clothing with inappropriate or offensive language or slogans. Camp Mishawaka reserves the right to ask campers to change clothing that is offensive or overly revealing.

Please refrain from over-packing. Shelf space is often limited. The suggested packing list is designed to give campers all the clothing they need for the time at camp. Please do not pack items not included on this list. We suggest that campers bring no more than two duffle bags or suitcases to camp. There is no need to purchase a trunk or footlocker.

Campers often choose to bring one nice outfit for the final banquet at the end of each four-week half.

Bedding can be provided to each camper. It includes sheets, pillow and case, and three wool blankets. Campers sleep on a twin sized mattress, and if they choose, may bring their own bedding. Please make sure all bedding is clearly marked with the camper's name.

**Campers should bring a sleeping bag for extended camping trips.** *Sleeping bags are not used in the cabins.*

## Communication with Camp

Camp Mishawaka values input and feedback from parents, and it is used to improve the program each year. We welcome phone calls to the Camp Director if you have a particular concern or question. Parents can fill out a Camper Information/Camper Profile in their CampInTouch account prior to the start of the session. This is the best place to note any particular concerns or state any goals. At the conclusion of each session, parents are sent an evaluation form in which they are asked to rate a variety of areas of the program, as well as give any comments.

## Communication from Mishawaka

At the start of each session, parents will receive an introductory email from their child's counselor and an eLetter from their camper. We send a detailed camper report at the end of each two-week period. We will also send general email updates throughout the summer as well as add pictures to the photo gallery in your CampInTouch/Campanion account. Because our focus is on the campers during the summer months, we are often unable to respond to emails in a timely manner. If you have an immediate concern, we prefer that you call us.

## Housing

Housing is determined by age and grade. Campers who wish to bunk with a particular individual are welcome to note this preference via their online CampInTouch account. It is important that these requests arrive at the camp office prior to the start of each session. These requests will be taken into consideration when forming cabin groups. **We are not able to guarantee cabin placement.**

Cabins are grouped together in clusters, and friends can have as much interaction as they wish. The camp experience is designed to broaden an individual's horizon, and we recommend that friends from home do not live together.

Housing at Mishawaka is comfortable, but rustic. Boys Camp campers live in cabins, (most of which do not have electricity). The youngest Boys Camp campers (Belding) live in a large lodge with a central fireplace room and four connected "cabins." Each cabin group in the lodge has lights and electricity. The Boys Camp shares central bathroom facilities. Older Boys Camp campers (Mulford and Gould) live in cabins without electricity and share central bathroom facilities.

The youngest Girls Camp campers, Parkside (8-12), live in cabins that house two cabin groups. Bathroom and shower facilities are located in the cabin. Older Valley campers (13-15) live in cabins without electricity. They share a central bath and shower house.

## Lost and Found

Campers should mark all belongings with camper's full name, including all towels and bedding. We will retain all found items for one month after each session. If you discover an item missing, please contact the Camp Office with a detailed description of the item.

## Parent Visitation

Parents are welcome to visit during the summer. Please phone the camp office to arrange a visit. It is recommended that these visits be brief and limited to one time during the child's stay. If the timing works, parents are welcome to join us for a meal. Due to space considerations, we are not able to accommodate parents for the final banquet on the last evening of each session. Parents, relatives or family friends are not allowed to take campers out of camp at any time during the session, unless an early departure has been

arranged with the Director.

## Mail, Packages and Communicating with your camper

**Snail Mail (USPS):** Every camper has their own mailbox at camp. Receiving mail from home is a highlight for campers, and we encourage friends and family to write early and often. Please be aware that mail can move slowly to and from the Northwoods. If you will not be at your home address, please provide your camper the address where you can be reached. **We suggest including pre-addressed and stamped envelopes for your camper.**

### Packages:

- Try to limit your camper to **ONE package** for a 2-week stay. Consult the packing list so you don't need to continue to send packages throughout their stay.
- **Any food or candy sent to the campers will be discarded or offered to the camp community during special days and events.**
- Please do not send large items that can create a problem when it comes time to pack to go home. If you have questions about a particular item you would like to send, please contact the camp office.
- Refer to the contact information at the front of this book. **If you wish to send something via UPS or FedEx, use our street address instead of the P.O. Box address—both are listed in the front of this book.**

**CampStamps/Email** - Parents can use their **CampInTouch/Campanion App** account to send emails to their camper and set up guest accounts for others to do so as well.

- **Emails from Your Camper:** Print a “stack of e-letters” to pack in your camper's suitcase and send with your camper. While at camp, your camper can then hand-write their letters and they will be scanned and delivered to your CampInTouch/Campanion account. If your camper needs more eLetter blanks after they arrive at camp, please email our office to request additional eLetter blanks and designate who they should be sent to (example: Please print 3 eLetter blanks for Charlie Green (camper) to send to Richard Green (guest on account)).
- **To Your Camper:** CampStamps can be purchased in your account to SEND an eLetter to your camper through the CampInTouch/Campanion system (can be from parent or any guests a parent adds in the CampInTouch account).

Campers are required to write home during their stay with an initial eLetter and additional eLetters on Sundays.

**Telephone and Cell Phone:** Campers do not have access to telephones, and Camp Mishawaka does not allow phone communication between parents and campers unless there is a family emergency or other special situation. Cell phones are not allowed to be used by campers during their stay at Mishawaka. If your camper arrives with a cell phone, they will turn it into the office for the time they are at camp, and it will be returned prior to departure, fully charged for their trip home.

### Meals

Our kitchen prepares meals to be served family style, and our menus are reviewed to ensure that they exceed recommended daily allowances. A salad bar option is available at lunch and dinner. Campers who have special dietary needs or follow a vegetarian or vegan diet must specify this on their health form to ensure proper attention.

### Birthdays

If your child is celebrating a birthday during the camp season, we mark the day with a special cake for the table at lunch. If you need a package “held back” until their day, contact the office.

### **Spending Money/Travel Money**

Parents or Guardians make deposits to a camper's spending account to cover incidental expenses while at Camp, including sundry items, extended trips, and clothing purchases. This process can be completed online via the CampInTouch/Campanion account. There is no need to send cash with your camper for Camp purchases. If you choose to fund the account by check or cash sent with your camper, please place it in a marked envelope with an explanation of what it is for. We ask that all campers flying to and from camp have \$25 in cash for their return flight. Please **note your intentions for any cash which comes with your camper**. We will collect, document, and store cash and valuables for your camper and return to them on departure day.

### **Change-Over**

Campers who attend either a Six Week or Eight Week Session take part in special change-over activities. Changeover begins on Friday and ends on Sunday when the new campers arrive. Special activities on change-over often include going to town for a movie, a pizza and ice cream treat, and other special in-camp activities. There is an additional charge of \$~30.00 for the activities chosen.

### **Vespers**

Each Sunday both camps hold a non-denominational Vespers Service. Often the focus of this time of reflection is the value of friendship or the beauty of nature. Cabin groups sometimes take turns putting on the service. A variety of faiths are represented at Camp Mishawaka, and we value this diversity of beliefs.

## Packing List

This list is meant to be a suggested packing list and provide for an adequate supply of clothing between laundry days. Laundry is sent out once a week. Please do not over-pack or bring items that might not be appropriate for the camp environment. **Please be sure to mark all items clearly with the camper's full name.** (See also the Clothing and Bedding section earlier in this handbook.)

### CLOTHING

|                         |                                   |   |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 2 long pants or jeans   | 8-10 underwear                    | 1 jacket or windbreaker                                   |
| 1 sweatpants            | 2 pajamas/sleepwear               | 1 laundry bag*  |
| 3-4 shorts              | 1 set rainwear or poncho          | 1 pair hard-soled boots/shoes if planning on riding       |
| 2 sweatshirts*          | 1 pair of sandals                 | 1 set of nicer clothes for the dance and/or final banquet |
| 8-10 t-shirts (casual)* | 1 pair of swim shoes              |   |
| 2 pairs athletic shoes  | 3 lightweight, fast-drying towels |   |
| 8-10 pairs socks        | 2 swimsuits                       |   |

### TOILETRIES

|                        |              |                               |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| toothbrush/toothpaste* | shower soap* | Sunscreen                     |
| shampoo*               | SPF lip balm | other as needed by individual |

### BEDDING

Camp provides bedding and linens at no additional charge. If you prefer to provide your own bedding and linens, we suggest the following: 3 warm blankets (twin), 2 sets of sheets (twin), 2 pillow cases, 1 pillow.

**If a camper is 12 or older and plans to go on a trip, please pack a lightweight, camping [sleeping bag](#).**

### OTHER SUGGESTED ITEMS

|                           |                             |   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| flashlight*               | eLetter blanks, stationery* | <b>Returning campers should bring their Mishawaka plaques back to camp each summer!</b> |
| camera                    | book(s)                     |   |
| ball glove                | bathrobe/slippers           |   |
| bug repellent (30% DEET)* |                             |   |
| hat*                      |                             |   |

\* Items which can be purchased at camp through the camp store.

### Personal Program Items

Camp Mishawaka maintains a full inventory of program supplies for all activities. If campers choose to do so, they may bring their own equipment for certain activities. These may include: baseball glove, tennis racquet, guitar or musical instrument. Please call the camp office to check on other items. Certain items may be stored by the camp for use when the camper is involved in the particular activity.

### What Not to Bring

Campers are not allowed to have any electronic device that has a screen that can display videos or games. The Mishawaka experience is greatly enhanced by this lack of "screen time," and the realization that life can be enjoyed without being digitally connected is an important lesson we feel strongly about. If you would like your camper to have a phone for the trip to and from camp, they can turn it in once they arrive at camp, and we will return it for the trip home. If campers travel with iPods or tablets, they can also be turned in upon arrival.

Campers should not bring weapons (guns), animals, and any drugs not included in their health form. Tobacco products of any kind, vapes, vaping products, and alcohol are also prohibited. A camper found with a banned item may be immediately dismissed from camp.

Campers are also not allowed to have food or candy in cabins as they can quickly attract insects and rodents.

## Wilderness Trip Campers - Additional Packing List

Campers who may be taking an extended Wilderness trip will need a few additional items to help ensure a safe and comfortable trip. Please, do not hesitate to reach out to the camp office if you have any questions about trip clothing or equipment.

- Worn-in mid-weight, mid-ankle height, hiking boot. Does not need to be waterproof, but ok if it is. If you buy new shoes, be sure to have your camper wear them around a bit before camp - hiking in brand new boots is not recommended.
- Campsite shoe - old sneakers or water shoes that cover the toes and have ankle straps
- Rain Suit - should be waterproof, look for taped seams, protected zippers and garments labeled “waterproof”
- Packable Sleeping Bag - should be “synthetic fill” and not real down fill, and should be rated to 20-30 F. We do have bags at Camp for those who do not bring their own.
- Inflatable sleeping pad - We have foam sleeping pads for those who do not bring their own sleeping pad
- Clothing made of synthetic, quick-dry materials, or wool.
  - NO COTTON PLEASE!
  - 2 quick-dry t-shirts
  - 1 long sleeve quick-dry shirt
  - Fleece Jacket
  - 1 pair quick dry shorts
  - 1 pair quick dry pants (zip-off legs optional)
  - Long underwear top and bottom
  - 3 pairs wool or synthetic wool socks
- Bandana - can buy one at camp
- Sunglasses - optional, but highly recommended
- Brimmed hat for shade (best), or baseball cap - can buy at camp
- Headlamp

**\* Campers who suffer from severe allergic reactions, and who have epi-pens, should bring their epi-pens to camp. 2-3 epi-pens are requested for campers doing a wilderness trip. We would also pack-out an additional 2-3. Five are recommended by the Wilderness First Aid course.**

# Policies

## **Attendance**

The camper application forms an agreement between Camp Mishawaka, Inc and the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) of the camper who is enrolled, in accordance with the Parent Handbook and Policies of the application. This agreement has been accepted by both parties in the state of Minnesota and is governed by Minnesota law. The parties consent to the jurisdiction of the Minnesota courts should any legal action ensue.

It is expected that the camper will remain in the Mishawaka program during the entire session. Written notification is required if your camper must leave during the session.

Campers are expected to arrive in good health and able to participate in the program. Please phone the camp if you have a special concern or if your child becomes ill just prior to the start of the session. Camp Mishawaka reserves the right not to admit campers who arrive ill or who have been exposed to communicable diseases.

## **Illegal Substances, Alcohol, and Tobacco**

In accordance with the policies of Camp Mishawaka and the laws of Minnesota, Camp Mishawaka prohibits the possession, use and/or distribution of illegal substances, alcohol, and tobacco products. If your child is found in possession of or using an illegal substance or alcohol, you will be contacted and he or she will be sent home immediately at your expense without refund.

It is illegal in the state of Minnesota for anyone under the age of 18 to use tobacco or tobacco products. If your child is found in possession of tobacco, it will be confiscated and disposed of, and you will be contacted. Campers who violate the tobacco policy are also subject to immediate dismissal without refund.

## **Inappropriate Behavior**

Camp Mishawaka seeks to maintain an environment free from discrimination, violence, intimidation and harassment based on gender, creed, color, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation. Language, behavior and attitudes that intimidate or debilitate campers or staff members are not tolerated.

Camp Mishawaka does not tolerate emotional or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse of one person by another. This behavior may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. If necessary, you will be notified, and your child will be sent home at your expense without refund.

Inappropriate sexual behavior is not allowed at Camp Mishawaka and may be grounds for dismissal. All counseling and support staff have been informed and have agreed to comply with the Camp Mishawaka sexual harassment policy.

Emotional or psychological behavior which affects a child's ability to participate in the program or that significantly disrupts the program may constitute grounds for dismissal. If necessary, you will be contacted, and your child will be sent home at your expense. Depending on the circumstances, a prorated refund minus the nonrefundable deposit and administrative fees will be issued, or no refund.

## **Refunds**

A deposit of \$500-\$1000, which is applied toward tuition, is due upon registration. The deposit is fully refundable until January 15. Cancellation after January 15, 2026, will result in forfeiture of the deposit. A cancellation after April 15 will result in forfeiture of the full tuition.

**Respect for Property**

Participants must respect the personal property of others as well as the facilities and grounds of Camp Mishawaka. The willful destruction and/or reckless disregard for property will not be tolerated. Destruction or intentional abuse of property, including graffiti, may be grounds for immediate dismissal and reimbursement made to Camp Mishawaka. Stealing or shoplifting is also grounds for dismissal.

**Weapons Policy**

The use, possession, or carrying of any kind of firearm or weapon on the property of Camp Mishawaka is strictly forbidden. Camp Mishawaka retains the right to determine what constitutes a weapon, especially when evaluating potential danger. This also includes fireworks or any other explosive or pyrotechnic device.

**Dismissal procedures**

In the event a camper engages in behavior that threatens the well-being of the Camp Mishawaka community, the health and safety of any individual, or engages in intentional damage to property, they are subject to dismissal. If circumstances dictate, a camper will be asked to leave the program immediately.

In such instances, no refund will be issued, and parents/guardians are responsible for all costs associated with travel to return the camper to parent/guardian at the first opportunity.

**Staff Hiring Policies and Procedures**

Camp Mishawaka prides itself on its selection, training, and retention of qualified men and women who serve as counselors and support personnel. From year to year, approximately two-thirds of our staff returns. In recent years almost half were former Mishawaka campers, and the group averaged over 6 years of Mishawaka counseling experience.

In addition to young men and women who serve as cabin counselors, Camp Mishawaka has made it a priority to hire experienced professionals, teachers and college professors whose schedule allows them to serve in the summer. Each year we have a number of married staff that adds a great deal of life experience to the staff.

A selective hiring process seeks to hire qualified individuals who have experience and interest in working with children. All staff attend a week-long staff training prior to the start of regular sessions. In addition to reviewing safety policies and procedures, the staff is trained in skills to promote effective youth development.

# Health Care

An important goal at Camp Mishawaka is to provide a safe and healthy experience for each camper. Our healthcare plan is designed to complement your child's growth and development needs as well as provide care for routine illness or injury. Use the health form to describe your child's physical and emotional needs.

## **Health Care Staff**

Julie Purdum, RN, PHN serves as the Health Care Director for Camp Mishawaka. In addition, we also employ an RN, LPN and/or graduate nurse who works under Julie to meet the daily healthcare needs of campers and staff.

Camp Mishawaka maintains a professional relationship with the Grand Itasca Clinic in Grand Rapids should the need arise for a physician visit. We also maintain relationships with local dentists and orthodontists should their services become necessary.

## **Health Form**

We will use information on the health form to educate our staff on campers' health needs. We will also share information with our food service staff to ensure we are meeting all special dietary needs.

## **Special Considerations**

- Camp Mishawaka expects that children with chronic health concerns are capable self-managers.
- Please complete the additional form included with the health form if your child has asthma or severe allergies.
- The health form should be completed online via your CampInTouch account prior to the start of the camp session
- Please complete all applicable parts of the form.
- **A physical examination is not required.** If you feel like we may be assisted by physician instructions, we encourage you to provide this information.
- Please notify us of any changes in health or contact information after the form has been sent.
- Campers taking medication for emotional or mental health should have a history of taking this same medication and same dosage prior to coming to camp.
- If your child takes medications for ADHD, please consult with your physician before changing the schedule or dosage for their time at Mishawaka.
- Please contact the camp office to discuss any special considerations or concerns.
- Camp Mishawaka maintains an inventory of over-the-counter medications and remedies. These are distributed according to our standing order protocol received from the Grand Itasca Clinic. There is no need to send these types of items unless there is a unique situation.
- Campers are not allowed to keep supplies of any medications, and all such items will be held in the Health Care Center.

## **Medications while at Camp**

All daily medications, prescription and over-the-counter, vitamins and supplements, should be listed on your camper's health form in the family's CampInTouch/Campanion account with clear dosing instructions. One to two months prior to the session start date, your child's doctor will need to send a new prescription for all of these daily medications, (including OTC) for 30-60 days (depending on length of camp session) to:

**Thrifty White Pharmacy Store 728  
1105 S Pokegama Ave, Grand Rapids, MN 55744.  
Phone: (218) 326-9431.**

Medications are distributed by our nursing staff throughout the day around meals or at bedtime based on each camper's medication schedule.

### **Communications with Parents regarding Healthcare**

We will make an effort to contact you by phone if your child has a need for out-of-camp healthcare. Please be sure that we know where to reach you during your child's stay. We will also make an effort to contact parents if a child spends a night in the Health Center for any reason. We generally do not contact parents if a child is seen in the Health Center for routine needs

### **Health Care Charges**

There is generally no additional cost for healthcare your camper receives at the Camp Health Center. If your child is seen by a physician, the provider of that healthcare will bill you. **The Grand Itasca Clinic is able to bill your insurance provider directly only if you provide all billing information on the health form. We ask that you attach a copy (front and back) of your insurance card on the Parent Authorization Form available in your CampInTouch account.**

If your camper is prescribed any medication by a physician while at camp, we will bill you directly through your CampInTouch account for this charge. Local pharmacies require payment for prescriptions, and we can provide you all relevant information that allows you to submit this charge to your insurance provider.

### **Personal Health Needs**

We spend a great deal of time training our staff to pay attention to the routine health needs of campers. Personal hygiene practices like regular bathing and tooth brushing are monitored daily. Please take the opportunity to discuss the importance of these daily routines prior to coming to camp.

As noted in the packing list, we suggest that campers bring an **insect repellent** with 30% active ingredient DEET. Studies have shown that this is a safe level and offers the greatest protection against mosquitoes and ticks. Please also consider sending your child with a **sunscreen** with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or more. Both sunscreen and insect repellent will be available from the camp store.



# Transportation

## **General Guidelines**

Successful travel to and from Mishawaka is key to an overall positive camp experience. To that end, we strive to ensure proper coordination of your child's transportation needs. Whether your camper will be flying to camp or you will be driving them to Mishawaka, it is important that we are aware of your plans at least two weeks prior to the start of the session.

Complete the Travel Arrangements Form in your online CampInTouch account. Let us know of any changes to your traveling plans.

In the event of a last minute change or emergency that affects a camper's travel arrangements, please contact the camp office at 218-326-5001, or phone or message the travel coordinator at 218-259-4853.

Prior to the start of your child's particular session we will mail a bulletin with information we have in regard to your travel arrangements. Please review this information and notify us of any changes.

## **Traveling by Plane**

### **Making flight reservations**

Camp Mishawaka uses the services of the *Travel One Agency* of Minneapolis. Travel One has many years of experience working with summer camps and their particular travel needs. Travel One negotiates special "camp fares" with Delta Airlines, and these non-published fares are often deeply discounted from fares available to the general public. In addition to offering competitive fares, Travel One assists Camp Mishawaka in making special arrangements with the airline and the airport officials that help ensure the safe and orderly transportation of those campers who fly. Their number is 800-245-1111.

We strongly urge you to use the services of Travel One when making arrangements. The benefits of their experience and service cannot be overstated when it comes to being at the airport on arrival or departure day. If for some reason you elect not to utilize this service, please consult the camp office prior to booking.

### **Shipping luggage early with Ship Camps**

Help your child travel stress-free to camp and skip the hassle of carrying, checking, and claiming baggage. We have partnered with Ship Camps to provide a hassle-free travel-day for you and your camper. Shipping to camp allows campers to send their luggage, trunks, boxes, and sporting equipment straight to their cabin before they arrive at Camp.

<https://www.shipcamps.com/camp-mishawaka>

If you elect to send your camper's luggage with your camper on the plane, you will be mailed a packet of information confirming travel arrangements. Included in this will be brightly colored luggage tags that should be affixed to any checked luggage. This ensures that we easily recognize and recover all camper baggage.

### **What to Expect on Travel Days**

Campers are met at their gate by Mishawaka staff members and escorted to our gathering area. The group then proceeds to Camp Mishawaka by chartered bus, about a 3-hour drive. These are modern coaches with bathrooms and are capable of showing a movie during the trip. Using Ship Camps, campers will arrive at Camp to find their belongings already at their cabin.

Every effort is made to be waiting at the gate of arrival as the flight pulls in. However, if there are delays or many simultaneous arrivals, our staff may be delayed. If flying as an Unaccompanied Minor, the flight attendant

will wait with the camper until our staff arrives. If not flying as an Unaccompanied Minor, instruct your camper to wait at the gate until a Mishawaka staff member arrives.

On departure days, campers are escorted to the gate by a Mishawaka staff member who waits with the camper until the plane departs.

- If your camper does not arrive on his/her scheduled flight, you are contacted immediately.
- As time permits, we encourage children to phone parents upon arrival in Minneapolis, provided they have a cell phone for travel.
- If there are last minute changes in the flight schedule, please phone the camp office. They will be able to reach the staff at the airport to inform them of these changes.
- We will not be able to individually confirm all arrivals to parents. We will contact you if there are any irregularities. No news is good news.

### **Airline Regulations for Unaccompanied Minors**

Most airlines require children under the age of 15 to fly as an **Unaccompanied Minor (UM)**. The airline charges a fee for this service, and following the suggestions below, you can greatly enhance not only the service, but assist us in our efforts on travel days. Please confirm these policies with your airline.

- Purchase a “round-trip” service, unless you are picking your camper up at the end of the session. Have the ticket agent so note this on the form.
- For the person meeting at MSP airport write: **“Steve Purdum, 21599 Mishawaka Rd, Grand Rapids, MN 55744; phone: 218-259-4853.”** Our staff will have identification that distinguishes them as Mishawaka staff and a representative of Steve Purdum.
- Up to four children may travel on the same UM form. If you would like to share this fee with other camp families who may share a flight with your camper, contact the camp office prior to the departure day, and we can provide you with the names of other campers.
- Fill out the form for both legs of the trip. Make sure that whoever will meet the child upon return is named on the return form (legal name from a photo ID and their cell phone number).
- Due to increased security measures, we suggest that you limit the number of carry-on items your camper brings. Please make sure that all items packed in the carry-on are allowed. We will make every effort to ensure the same is done on the return leg of the trip.
- Airlines are strictly enforcing baggage fees and weight limits of 40-50 lbs per piece and number of checked bags. We are strongly recommending using Ship Camps. Reserve your camper’s bags with Ship Camps at <https://www.shipcamps.com/camp-mishawaka>

### **Travel by Camp Bus**

Campers and families may elect to meet the Mishawaka group at the airport on arrival and departure days. We have a staging area at the MSP Lindbergh Terminal - Terminal 1. Please watch for an email with meeting instructions or call the camp office to find out where the group will be meeting, and what time the bus will depart or arrive.

On the way to camp, buses generally leave the airport between 11 am and 1 pm. Buses arrive at the airport on the trip back from camp at approximately the same time. You will need to park and come into the airport with your camper and his or her luggage.

The bus or van will be supervised by Camp Mishawaka staff. Campers must follow all safety rules during transportation to and from Camp, including wearing safety restraints and remaining in their seat while the vehicle is in motion and follow all instructions given by the staff.

This service is included in Camp tuition, though no discounts are made in cases of pick up or drop off.

## Driving to Mishawaka

Those who elect to drive to Mishawaka should plan on dropping their camper off between 2pm and 5pm on the opening day of the session. The pickup window on the last day of the session is 8am-10am. Parents or guardians should stop at the camp office to check in and receive further instructions.

## Driving Directions

Camp Mishawaka is located approximately 5 miles south of the town of Grand Rapids, Minnesota, just off US Hwy 169 South.

**Our locatable address is:  
21525 Mishawaka Rd, Grand Rapids, MN 55744**

- From Minneapolis: Take Interstate 94 West out of Minneapolis to Hwy 101 N. at Rogers, MN. Follow Hwy 101 N until it merges with US HWY 169 N at Elk River, MN. Stay on Hwy 169 until you approach the town of Grand Rapids. Just after crossing the causeway bridge over Lake Pokegama, look for the sign for Mishawaka Road. Turn left onto Mishawaka Road, and the entrance to the camp is 1/2 mile from the corner.
- From Duluth, MN: Take US Hwy 2 from Duluth to the town of Grand Rapids. Turn left onto US HWY 169 S (Pokegama Avenue) and stay on this road through the town of Grand Rapids. Prior to crossing the causeway bridge over Lake Pokegama, look for the Mishawaka Road sign. Take a right onto the Mishawaka Road. The entrance to the camp is 1/2 mile from the corner.

\* As the final road construction projects have not been determined at the time of printing, parents are encouraged to check with the Minnesota Department of Transportation at their website to get updates on any delays or detours. Visit them at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/>

## Area Accommodations

If you plan on spending time in the Grand Rapids area in conjunction with your child's arrival or departure, we suggest you contact the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce for the most up-to-date listing of area accommodations and attractions. You may visit them on the web at [www.grandmn.com](http://www.grandmn.com). **It is not uncommon for hotels to be sold out for weekends far in advance. If you are planning on spending the night as a part of your child's arrival or departure, we suggest you investigate lodging possibilities early. These are just a few of the area Hotels/Resorts. All are just a short drive from the camp.**

Here is a sampling of places to stay:

Timberlake Lodge Hotel  
144 SE 17th Street  
866-800-2200  
[www.timberlakelodgehotel.com](http://www.timberlakelodgehotel.com)

IM Hotel by Timberlake  
218-327-1108  
1702 S Pokegama Ave

Best Western Plus  
218-301-0345  
2309 SW 1st Ave

Ruttgers' Sugar Lake Lodge  
800-450-4555  
[www.sugarlakelodge.com](http://www.sugarlakelodge.com)

AmericInn  
[Phone: \(218\) 212-1842](tel:(218)212-1842)  
1812 Pokegama Avenue S

Country Inn and Suites  
2601 S Hwy 169  
[Phone: \(218\) 327-4960](tel:(218)327-4960)

# **Camp Mishawaka Administration**

## **Executive Director, Steve Purdum**

Steve came to Camp Mishawaka as a nine year-old boy, and they couldn't get rid of him. He served as a counselor and waterfront director at Mishawaka before assuming the reins in 1990. A graduate of Lawrence University, Steve was previously an instructor and counselor at the Culver Academies. His wife, **Julie Purdum, RN** acts as the Health and Safety director. Their daughter, Shelby, is a former camper and camp counselor and now works in Minneapolis after graduating from Connecticut College. Their son, Harrison, is studying physical therapy and plans to spend part of his summer as a counselor at Mishawaka.

## **Director of Operations, Peter Myers**

Peter is a longtime Mishawaka camper (11 years) and staff member (11 years) and returned to Camp Mishawaka to serve as a Director of Operations after a distinguished career in independent education. Over the course of his career he has served as a humanities instructor, dean of academics, curriculum director and most recently as the interim Head of Upper School at Santa Catalina School, a boarding and day school in Monterey, CA. He and his wife, Susanna, have two young sons, Owen and James.

## **Girls Camp Co-Director, Mary Jane Curran**

Mary Jane is a graduate of the University of Minnesota and has had a long career as a teacher. 2026 marks her 31th year at Camp Mishawaka, and 29th as the Girls Camp Director. She currently is retired from teaching and is living in Minneapolis. She enjoys traveling and spending time with her family in the winter months. Her sons, Murphy and Kevin, are Mishawaka alumni.

## **Girls Camp Co-Director, Angela Fitzpatrick**

Angela first joined the Mishawaka staff as a cabin counselor in 2013 and has been part of camp in a variety of roles ever since. An experienced educator, she serves as a Student Support Specialist and Behavior Interventionist and holds both a degree in Elementary Education and a master's in Education in Instructional Design and Technology. With a diverse background that includes work as an emergency dispatcher, years in education, and life as a mother of two, Angela brings insight, warmth, and a passion for social-emotional learning and resilience. She strives to foster a community where girls feel supported, inspired, and empowered to be their best selves—at camp and beyond. Angela and her husband, Mark, have been part of the Mishawaka community for many years and now return each summer with their son, Leo, and newborn daughter, Ellie—both future campers!

## **Boys Camp Director, Sean Barrett**

Sean first joined the Mishawaka staff as a cabin counselor for our youngest campers in 1992 and has returned in many roles over the years, including Trip Director, Program Director, and Boys Camp Director. A lifelong educator and coach, he teaches physical education in Independence, MO, and has led student programs and athletics for more than 25 years. He brings a wealth of experience, a deep love for Mishawaka, and a commitment to creating a safe, healthy, and happy environment where boys can grow, thrive, and have fun. Sean and his wife, Vanessa, have one daughter, Allie, who is a former camper and who has also served as a part of the Mishawaka Staff.

## **Office Manager, Cheryl Schrom**

Cheryl has been working in the Camp Office since 2016. She lives in the woods near Grand Rapids with her husband Rob and many pets. She has been a part-time pottery instructor during the summer. She has three adult children, including Marly, a former staff member at Mishawaka.

## **Counseling Staff**

Camp Mishawaka is very proud of its counseling staff. In recent years the group has averaged over 6 years of experience at Mishawaka. Many are former Mishawaka campers.

In addition to enthusiastic college students, Mishawaka attracts and retains a number of mature veteran staff who are teachers, college professors or retired professionals. This valuable mix of energy and experience is just one of the factors that set Mishawaka apart.



# Fee Information

Tuition is payable in four installments beginning January 15, with the full balance due April 15. This fee includes room and board, use of equipment, instruction, basic supplies for crafts, local overnight camping trips, Mishawaka awards, and plaques. Tuition payments may be made by check, eCheck, or credit card. Camp Mishawaka reserves the right to refuse admission to any camper whose balance is not paid in full at the time of the selected session.

## **Camper's Spending Account**

A deposit should be made to offset charges against this account. Spending account deposits can be made via your CampInTouch account at [mishawaka.campintouch.com](http://mishawaka.campintouch.com). The money in the spending account can be used by campers at the camp store for purchases of clothing, postage, water bottles, flashlights and other sundry items. While there is no need for campers to have cash while at camp, we ask that all campers who are flying travel with \$25 cash for each flight. It will be held at the Office during their session. At the end of the session you will receive either an invoice or a refund. A round figure of \$75 per week is suggested for the camper's account.

Other fees (approximate) which your camper may incur and will be added to their CampInTouch spending account: (These costs may vary depending on situation.)

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Baggage Fee               | \$35-\$120 (based on airline rates)                             |
| Changeover Activities     | \$25  |
| Chaperone Fee             | \$20-\$30 (varies)  |
| CIT Night Out             | \$25  |
| Horseback Riding          | \$120/Two Weeks or \$20 trail ride                              |
| Extended Wilderness Trips | Varies (pricing included on trip permission form)               |
| Shipping                  | Varies (items left behind or needing special care sending home) |
| Special Transportation    | Varies (campers needing special arrangements)                   |
| Travel Cash               | \$25-\$50   |
| Unaccompanied Minor Fee   | Varies  |

