

Welcome to the Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center Integrated Education School Programs

Welcome!

We have put together this School Programs Information Packet to help answer any questions that you might have about the School Programs at the Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center. Although most people refer to these programs simply as “the School Programs at the Sherman Lake YMCA,” the true name of the program is “Integrated Education.”

Integrated Education is a true partnership between the schools and the Sherman Lake YMCA. Together, we are integrating the best of the YMCA Character Development Programs with the current school curriculum. Each school district has been invited to view the Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center as their very own \$25 million outdoor center. Through a series of planning meetings with YMCA staff and school teachers and curriculum directors, we have created a unique opportunity for schools to enhance academic performance through experiential learning.

Every school that has registered for an experience at Sherman Lake has determined the program that is best for their students. For example, all Vicksburg 6th graders will participate in a program specifically designed to build healthy relationships and improve success-building skills. This was chosen to kick-off the school year and ease the transitions that students often face in Middle School. Every school that attends the Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center is given the same opportunity to create a program that integrates perfectly into their school curriculum and objectives while reinforcing strong character development.

The Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center integrates elements of character development into every aspect of the camping experience. Our programs are designed to reinforce the four principles of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility. This is accomplished in a variety of ways -- from the way each student lives in the cabins, to the meals we serve, to the school lessons we teach, and in the recreation activities we play. The focus of everything we do has elements of these four principles. By focusing so strongly on how everyone treats one another and themselves, students discover an easy way to build the self-esteem skills needed to be a success in all they seek to accomplish.

We welcome your participation and active involvement at the Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center. We look forward to creating a strong partnership that serves many generations of school children. Please take the time to read this information packet. If you have any questions or concerns, please call me directly at 269-731-3037. We invite you to learn more about all of the opportunities available at the Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center. Together, we build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities. We are looking forward to seeing you and the students at camp!

Sincerely,

Heather Allbee, Integrated Education Director

Please keep this information handy for future reference throughout the school program.

Questions??? Call 269-731-3000**Camp Facilities**

Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center is a new 300-acre facility located in Augusta only 20 minutes from both Battle Creek and Kalamazoo. This fully accessible facility was designed to serve all populations and features two age-appropriate villages each with its own overnight cabins, pavilion, washhouse, and activity area. Our facilities include:

- A large recreation center with a full size gym, pool, and fitness center;
- Six ropes courses and adventure elements for rock-climbing and team-building located both indoors and outdoors;
- A spectacular dining hall that includes two dining areas, indoor and outdoor fireplaces, art studio and kiln room, photography lab, nature center, camp store, and generous deck space for activities;
- A large multipurpose court for tennis, basketball, volleyball; 10 acres of playing field for a variety of sports, including soccer, kickball, softball and field games; and two sand volleyball courts;
- A large amphitheater for skits, songs, and special events;
- One mile of shore line on Sherman Lake with beach access for swimming, rowing, canoeing, sailing, fishing, and kayaking; and,
- Miles of accessible and wilderness trails for science, nature studies, hiking and adventure.

Camp Location

Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center
6225 North 39th Street
Augusta, MI 49012

From Kalamazoo and Richland:

Go east on M-43 to Richland. At the stoplight, continue straight through the light on M-89 to 38th Street. Turn right (south) on 38th Street. 38th Street becomes 39th Street. The camp entrance is about one mile south of M-89 on 39th Street.

From Battle Creek:

Go west on M-89 to 38th Street. Turn left (south) on 38th Street. 38th Street becomes 39th Street. The camp entrance is about one mile south of M-89 on 39th Street.

From Portage and Highway I-94:

Go east on Highway I-94. Exit #85 at 35th Street north. Follow 35th Street north until G Avenue. Turn right (east) on G Avenue. Turn left on 39th Street. The camp entrance is located on 39th Street.

Program Philosophy

The Sherman Lake YMCA builds strong kids, strong families, and strong communities. We take a holistic approach to building capacity in people by nurturing the Spirit, educating the Mind, and promoting a healthy Body. The focus of the school programs is to enhance four principles of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility. By focusing on these character concepts, a student learns greater self-esteem and self-reliance while increasing one's emotional intelligence. Each school district works hand-in-hand with the Sherman Lake YMCA staff to develop a curriculum that provides an experiential component to the current classroom curriculum. Through active participation, each student can achieve a greater understanding of the concepts presented by their teacher, while enhancing three

essential elements: Character development for the spirit (Honesty, Caring, Respect, Responsibility), Education for the mind, and Recreation for the body.

Schedules – *These may easily be adjusted to accommodate the wishes of the school district.*

Sample Schedule – Arrival Day

9:30 a.m.	Buses Arrive, Check-In Procedures
10:00 – 12:00	Community Commitment Check, Swim Tests
12:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:30 – 3:30	Activity Period
3:30 – 5:30	Activity Period
5:30	Dinner
6:30	Cabin time with counselor and Prep for Evening Activity
7:00	Evening Activity
8:30	Campfire/Reflections/Games/Swimming at Pool
9:30	Quiet story time with counselors

Sample Schedule – Regular Days

8:30	Breakfast
9:00	Cabin clean-up and Prep for the Day
9:30	Words of Wisdom (WOW) Time
10:00 – 12:00	Activity Period
12:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:30 - 3:30	Activity Period
3:30 - 5:30	Activity Period
5:30	Dinner
6:30	Cabin time with Counselor and Prep for Evening Activity
7:00	Evening Activity
8:30	Campfire/Reflections
9:30	Quiet story time with counselors

Sample Schedule – Last Day

7:30	Final cabin clean-up and Luggage pick-up
8:30	Breakfast
9:15	Words of Wisdom (WOW) Time
10:00-11:00	Pool Party
11:00	Final farewell and buses depart for school
12:15 p.m.	Lunch (optional depending on the school's choice)

What To Bring

Campers at the Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center sleep in heated cabins. Each cabin has double-deck bunk beds and mattresses. Campers must provide their own pillow and sleeping bag. Sturdy, comfortable clothes are encouraged. Laundry service is not provided except for emergencies. A checklist is included for your convenience.

Clothing and Equipment List

The following is a list of clothing and equipment your student may need for the school experience at the Sherman Lake Outdoor Center. If you have any questions about the items listed, please give us a call. This is a suggested guideline for **one week** at camp, *and all items listed are not required*. **PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAME ON ALL ITEMS AND ADJUST THE LIST ACCORDING TO THE LENGTH OF YOUR SCHOOL'S STAY.**

Suggested Clothing and Equipment (The older the better.)

- sleeping bag
- small pillow
- pajamas
- towels and wash cloths
- socks
- underwear
- 2 pair tennis shoes (old)
- warm clothing – lots of things to layer if the weather changes
- swimming suit and towel
- T-shirts
- sweater, sweat shirt
- jacket (for cool nights)
- raincoat or poncho and rain hat
- flashlight
- toilet articles (toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, shampoo, comb, brush, etc.)
- insect repellent
- suntan lotion (protection of 15 or better)
- water bottle
- plastic (garbage) bag for dirty/wet laundry
- backpack
- pencils and notebook – optional
- camera (disposable kind) – optional
- book – optional
- Seasonal Winter Clothes (coat, boots, mittens, hat, wool socks, long underwear)

*****PLEASE DO NOT BRING*****

Please do not bring to camp any *fireworks, tobacco products, illegal drugs, knives, or guns*. **Being in possession of any of these items could result in the child's immediate dismissal from camp.** If it comes to the attention of the staff that any of these items are in the possession of the camper, the camper may be asked to unpack their bags in front of a staff

member. *Food, candy, gum, soda, junk food, toys, radios, walkman, CD players, pagers, cellular phones, laptop computers, curling irons/blow dryers, or video games,* are discouraged and may be taken away for safekeeping while the child is at camp.

Instructions for Marking and Packing Equipment

1. The Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center requires no special uniform for campers. We urge campers to dress for comfort at camp in the type of clothes they would wear for play at home. Please review the suggested “Clothing and Equipment List” provided in this information packet to guide you as you prepare for camp.
2. Mark each article to be taken to camp, including the clothing worn to camp, with full name. The best method is to sew or iron on nametags. Use indelible ink to mark all items.
3. Inventory – mark every article taken to camp and indicate the quantities on the Clothing and Equipment List as a guide.
4. Tape the inventory list inside the trunk or suitcase lid for camper’s use when re-packing at the end of camp.
5. Tag or mark baggage clearly with camper’s name. If the trunk is to be locked, bring two sets of keys to camp, one set for the camper and the duplicate set (well marked) to be checked at the end of camp.
6. Your child’s counselor will assist in the proper care of belongings as much as possible, although the campers have the primary responsibility for taking care of items.
7. The camp will not be responsible for loss of articles. Campers are encouraged not to bring valuable items to camp.
8. Regardless of how careful we try to be, it is inevitable that some clothing and articles will be misplaced. Proper identifying marks will greatly assist us in returning the articles to their proper owners. Lost and found will be promptly displayed for campers to look through prior to departing, and we try to send unclaimed items back to the school with teachers. All items left at camp will be held for two weeks. Any unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

Registration and Health Information Form

At the end of this School Information Packet is a Registration and Health Information Form that is required of every person who attends the school programs at the Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center. This form must be returned to your child’s teacher two weeks prior to the school’s camp dates. The school district is responsible for returning these forms to the Sherman Lake YMCA prior to arrival at camp. Please contact your child’s teacher for the exact due date. This information is essential in providing a safe camping experience for your child. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Sherman Lake YMCA staff at 269-731-3000.

PLEASE NOTE: ALL STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND ADMINISTRATORS THAT WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SHERMAN LAKE PROGRAMS MUST COMPLETE AND SIGN THE REGISTRATION AND HEALTH INFORMATION FORM.

Your camper's school is responsible for medication distribution, but the following are some safety guidelines regarding medications:

1. Label all medications with child's name, brand of medication, amount of dosage, when to give.
2. Please send all prescribed medication that may be needed.
3. Please send insect repellent.
4. Please send sun block lotion (SPF 15 or more).
5. You may send over the counter medications that are needed, but please make sure they are clearly marked. Camp may provide such medications on an emergency basis, but please send them if your child is especially susceptible to frequent aches and pains. Please indicate on the health form if it is permissible for us to give these medications. Over the counter medications include acetaminophen, ibuprofen, Band-Aids, or calamine lotion.
6. Send only essential vitamins.
7. The day your child comes to camp they may have a little anxiety about their upcoming camp experience. Some physical symptoms may be a result of these feelings. We suggest that you talk to your camper about what they are experiencing. Any earache? Sore throat? Headache? Stomach ache? Our staff will check to see if any physical complaints warrant concern.
8. Camp counselors may keep inhalers or Epi-pens for younger campers so they are not misplaced or lost.
9. Complete "Permission to Dispense Medication" section of the camper information form if your child will be taking medication at camp. Please comply with the school's standards for medication distribution because the schools are responsible for distributing the medication at camp.

Transportation of Medication

Medication must be in its original container with the child's name, the type and name of the medication, and the dosage clearly marked. We recommend asking your pharmacist to issue the medication in two separate containers. One container should have the medication that your child will need at camp. The other container should have the remaining medication for use at home.

For safety reasons, students shall give all medication to their teacher prior to arriving at camp. These medications include vitamins, cough drops, and other medications that some people may not consider to be a big deal. However, we just cannot risk the medications getting lost, getting into other campers' hands, or being taken at the wrong dosage. Please fill out the permission to dispense medication form and send only the medication needed for your child's time at camp. If you have safety or medication concerns, please feel free to call the Integrated Education Director at 269-731-3000.

Behavior Response Policy

Prior to attending camp, the students will meet the Sherman Lake YMCA staff at their school and receive a complete orientation of what to expect at camp. Upon arrival, each student is placed in a cabin group and will be given the task of helping develop their community. Our counselors are well-trained in preventative methods to enhance a child's behavior. Each student in the community will present their ideas on what behavior is expected to create a safe and successful environment to learn. The counselor takes careful notes on the agreed upon community strategy and each student signs his/her name in agreement of the guidelines for behavior. Our YMCA Camp works hard to create an environment for everyone to succeed within the boundaries of safety and our four principles of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility. When that set boundary is broken, it is essential to provide some form of understanding and consequence. Our counselors follow these procedures:

1. Planning and Preventative
 - A. Counselor establishes clear boundaries and works with campers to establish behavior expectations.
 - B. Campers agree to boundaries.
 - C. Counselors and all staff must continually communicate and heavily praise camper behavior within boundaries (a.k.a. "the path"). Keep the focus on positive behavior of the group.
2. Questioning (What is the camper reality?) and refocus.
 - A. Counselor looks at his/her behavior first.
(Were the boundaries clear? Did my actions escalate or encourage negative response? Can I isolate the behavior from how I may feel about the person?)
 - B. Camper looks at his/her behavior.
Can camper identify boundaries in their own words? Camper must state behavior on "the path." We plan for this to take time to achieve full understanding from the student. If a camper has high needs, another staff member may be involved to work one-to-one so that the group may continue their activity.
3. Three strikes and you are out...

If there is an issue that can not be resolved by the camper or the counselor, appropriate action is taken.

 - A. Strike 1 – Verbal warning and positive redirection.
 - B. Strike 2 – Parents or School will be notified and child will be given last warning
 - C. Strike 3 – Child will be removed from camp.
 - **2 Strike Bullying Policy:**
Strike 1 – When a child chooses to threaten, intimidate, ostracize, or ridicule another child, they will be warned 1 time and camp director will talk with the teachers and call the parents, the child will talk to the parents.
Strike 2 – Child will be removed from camp. Camp Director phones the parents.
4. Teacher and/or Family Involvement with YMCA Staff
 - A. Teachers/Parents are notified of entire behavior sequence and action taken by staff. Staff and teachers/parents discuss and agree to appropriate course of action. Parent may speak to camper by phone.

- B. All staff and camper agree to follow set course of action. (Please note: Camper may not return to original group unless the group agrees to invite camper back into community.) If negative behavior continues, parents are called to pick up camper.

If you see a camper who is not in your group display unacceptable behavior, act. All staff and teachers must reinforce behavior on the path and bring the camper to their counselor.

Please note: Any action that jeopardizes the safety of the camp or any participants will result in immediate dismissal.

Internet Communication Policy

We strive for effective and positive communication with our campers and their parents. As such we have policies that protect your child and our counselor's safety. While the internet is an amazing tool to help us communicate, we realize the inherent dangers involved with children and the internet. Your child's safety remains our #1 priority. As such we have instructed our counselors not to share their email addresses with our campers. If your camper would like to email our counselors, we ask that this be done in an open forum. As the parent we would ask that you would communicate by email with us at logistics@ymcasl.org. We will then forward your child's email on to their counselor. The counselor would then respond through our email address. We urge you to see our staff as positive role models in your child's life. We want to be able to facilitate healthy exchanges of ideas and information through this most valuable tool. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Health Concerns

Along with our four character principles of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility, the health and safety of all our participants are the primary concerns in all camp activities. Staff is trained in Red Cross First Aid and CPR. All campers have routine health checks on opening day.

During the week, counselors and other staff watch for signs of fatigue, improper eating, etc. that may indicate illness. If a staff member or camper expresses a health concern, that person is escorted to the Program Directors. The Program Directors will determine if the illness merits contacting parents or emergency services to come immediately for the child. Should a child have a communicable disease, other program parents will be notified. Please notify us if a communicable disease occurs shortly after returning from camp. Please communicate any health concerns that you may have with our Program Directors. Safety is our #1 priority.

Birthdays

Should your child have a birthday while at Camp, please let us know so we can celebrate it with him/her! Contact the Sherman Lake YMCA at 269-731-3000.

Sherman Lake YMCA Programs

Everyone loves camp! We have all types of opportunities for kids and families to experience the Sherman lake YMCA. Brochures about our summer programs will be sent home with your child every Spring. Each year in June, we have a big open house that everyone is invited to attend. This is an excellent opportunity to view the new facilities, meet the staff, and play with your families in the newest YMCA Outdoor Center built from scratch in over 50 years. Your school can arrange an open house for families wishing to see the camp. In addition, the Sherman Lake YMCA Staff will be providing orientations at your

school for students and families prior to attending camp. We are available to serve you and answer your questions. Call anytime at 269-731-3000.

Parent Involvement

Camp is a great time for a student to grow and develop skills of independence and self-reliance. Sometimes, parents are more concerned about a child being away from home. Children are very perceptive and will take on these fears. At the Sherman Lake YMCA, we understand your concerns and are available to help. If you have concerns, please call 269-731-3000. Through years of experience, we have developed a variety of ways to ease these transitions and build a child's confidence. And, we even have a few ways to help make it easier on parents too!

In the event of a rare emergence, we will always contact you immediately. Please rest assured that we will be caring for your child like our own. If an emergency arises in your family and your need to contact your child, please call Heather Allbee or Tim Simpson. Usually, we are directly involved with the students, so please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible. In the evening, you may call 269-731-3037 or 269-731-3007.

Questions???

The staffs are here to answer your questions. Call us at 731-3000. School camp is a very special experience for every camper. We are here to support you and provide the best experience possible for your child. Please do not ever hesitate to call us. We appreciate your active involvement at the Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center. Together, we build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities.

Sherman Lake YMCA
Outdoor Center

Integrated Education
School Program



School Partnership

Information Packet

-Residential Group-