



YMCA CAMP BENSON

SPRING FAMILY CAMP PLANNING GUIDE

WELCOME TO CAMP BENSON!

Dear Family Campers,

Thank you for choosing to spend your weekend with us here at YMCA Camp Benson. Our goal is to provide every family with the best possible modern camping experience. Tucked in amongst the rolling hills of northwestern Illinois, YMCA Camp Benson, is the perfect setting for families to connect with one another and the natural world around them. YMCA Camp Benson offers top-notch accommodations, excellent food service and programs that the whole family can enjoy.

It is our hope that guide helps you and your family prepare for your amazing weekend and gives you a better idea of what to expect from us at Camp Benson.

Sincerely,
Eli Rolli, Camp Director



ABOUT CAMP BENSON

Our 113-acre property located in Mount Carroll, Illinois, 10 miles east of the Mississippi River, is the ideal location for YMCA Camp Benson. The meandering Wakarusa River that winds through camp is perfect for kayaking, tubing and river play. Acres of beautiful deciduous forest offer the picture-perfect setting for outdoor living skills and earth education. Rock climbing and archery are much more enjoyable when done outside in the fresh air. Our state-of-the-art high ropes course and zip line were designed to challenge both campers and adults, all while boosting their confidence.

Our YMCA affiliation means we include the Y's four core values in every aspect of our programming, demonstrating the importance of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Our experienced staff and programming promote family bonding, positive self-esteem, healthy living and encourage individuality and independence.

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FACILITIES

Cabins: YMCA Camp Benson has 14 cabins, 7 in each village, that were all built within the last five years. Each cabin is equipped with a heating/air-conditioning unit, making them comfortable year round. Every cabin contains 15 beds. **There are no restrooms in the cabins.**

Bath Houses: Both villages at camp have their own newly remodeled bath house complete with individual showers.

Dining Hall (aka Four Points Lodge): All of our camp meals are served here. If the weather is nice we may have the screened in porch open as a dining area. Restrooms are also located in this building.



YMCA CAMP BENSON POLICIES

1. **Alcohol and tobacco products are PROHIBITED.** YMCA Camp Benson is a “smoke-free environment” and further prohibits the use of alcohol, illegal drugs or substances, and other types of tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes and vaporizers. As a Family Camp family, you agree NOT to bring any alcoholic beverages, narcotics or any unlawful drugs or substances on to camp property. **SMOKING IS PROHIBITED ON CAMP PROPER.** Smoking will be allowed in the parking lot as long as it is free of other guests.
2. **All vehicles must park in the Parking Lot.** Vehicles are not permitted to drive to the cabins to unload or park. YMCA Camp Benson will make wheelbarrows and carts available to help transport your luggage to the cabins.
3. **Campfire safety.** Designated campfire pits are the ONLY locations where camp fires may be built. Constant adult supervision is required at ALL times while a camp fire is going.
4. **Children must be supervised at all times.** Due to the hilly and forested nature of camp, children must be supervised at all times. Please do not let children wonder around camp unsupervised, as this can be dangerous. YMCA Camp Benson and its staff are not responsible for personal injury to guests.
5. **Keep It PG.** YMCA Camp Benson is dedicated to being an environment where families grow closer together and where children can develop into responsible young adults. Please refrain from swearing and indecent behaviors.
6. **Minor health services are provided by YMCA Camp Benson Staff.**
 - We will have First Aid and CPR certified staff on property at all times.
 - If emergency medical help is needed, dial 9-1-1.
 - Emergency transportation must be available at all times and provided by a member of your group.
7. **Firearms, ammunition and other weapons are NOT permitted at YMCA Camp Benson.**
8. **No Pets.** Guest pets and animals are NOT permitted on the grounds of Camp Benson.

YMCA Camp Benson reserves the right to dismiss anyone from camp who does not comply with these policies.

GROUP RESPONSIBILITY

Adult Supervision and Responsibilities: Parents and guardians are a vital part of Family Camp programming and your assistance is greatly appreciated! Having responsible adults and providing supervision are the family's responsibility. As stated in the Camp Policies section, children are at no time to be left unsupervised by an adult. This is for your family's safety.

We ask that adults be prepared to assist with the following during their stay:

- Supervision and behavior management during activities.
- Supervise participants in their cabins and at meals.
- Coordination of cabin clean-up.
- Following safety policies and procedures.
- Supervise free-time activities.
- Notify camp staff of any facility issues

Clean-Up & Check-Out: As your stay draws to a close, we ask that you help us maintain a clean camp facility. Please plan time into your schedule on the final day to have your family help clean the cabins and outdoor areas that your group used.

- Families are expected to sweep their cabins and check under all the bunks for personal items and trash.
- Before checking out of a cabin all lights should be shut off, windows and doors should be closed, and the heater/air-conditioning unit should be turned off.
- Trash bags should be closed and left by the cabin mailbox so they can be collected by our maintenance staff.
- All fires must be put out before you depart.
- Please report any damages or maintenance issues to the Camp Director before leaving.
- If you get home and realize that you have left something behind, please call us at 815-244-8722 or email our Camp Director at eli@ymcacampbenson.org. We will make it a priority to find the item and return it to you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Physical Address

16355 Scenic Palisades Rd.
Mount Carroll, IL 61053

Phone Number

815-244-8722

Fax Number

815-244-8723

YMCA Camp Benson Professional Staff

Eli Rolli | Camp Director | eli@ymcacampbenson.org

For Emergencies

Dial 9-1-1



WHAT TO PACK

Clothing

Please bring old, durable clothing that can get dirty. Closed toed shoes are required for all camp activities. We will run most activities even if it is raining so please pack accordingly. Weather can be quite cool in October here at camp, so pack some warm clothes. It is recommended that all personal items be marked. Camp Benson is not responsible for damaged or lost personal items.

Bedding and Toiletries

Sleeping Bag

Extra sheet or lightweight covering

Toothbrush and toothpaste

Pillow and pillow case

Towels and washcloths (2)

Personal toiletry items

Other

Water Bottle

Insect Repellant

Flashlight and Batteries

Sunscreen

CHECK-IN

Check-in time is on Friday, May 12 from 6 – 9:30 pm

- Upon arrival at Camp Benson, please proceed to the check-in station in the Dining Hall (aka the Four Points Lodge).
- Payment will be required at the time of check-in. The cost is \$25 per family member. We will accept checks, cash and credit cards. The deposit will be deducted from your total bill.
- At check-in families will also be required to sign a liability waiver.

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP BENSON

YMCA Camp Benson
16355 Scenic Palisades Rd.
Mount Carroll, IL 61053

From Sterling, IL: Follow IL-40 North to Mount Carroll. Turn west onto US-52 and follow for .5 miles. Turn right onto South Mill Rd. and follow for 1 mile. Then turn left onto W. Benton Street, which turns into Scenic Palisades Rd. The entrance to camp located 1 mile down the road on the right hand side.

From Chicago: Take I-88 West until you reach the exit for I-39 N/US-51 N to Rockford. Follow I-39 N/US-51 N for 7 miles and take Exit 104 toward I-64 W. Follow I-64 W for 36 miles through the towns of Oregon and Mt. Morris. Then you will turn onto US-52 W which will lead you into Mount Carroll. Turn right onto South Mill Rd. and follow for 1 mile. Then turn left onto W. Benton Street, which turns into Scenic Palisades Rd. The entrance to camp located 1 mile down the road on the right hand side.

FAMILY CAMP SCHEDULE

Friday, May 12

6:00 pm – 9:30 pm Families arrive and check-in at Dining Hall.

7:00-9:00 Climbing Wall and Sports in the Pavilion

9:00-10:30 pm Dining Hall and Sports Pavilion open (*Snack provided*)

Saturday, May 13

8:15 am Welcome and Breakfast (*Pancakes, Sausage, Cereal and Fruit*)

9:00-11:30 am Activity Period #1

- Zip Line, Climbing Wall, Twilight Zone, and Archery

12:00 pm Lunch (*Grilled Cheese, Tomato Soup, and Salad Bar*)

1:00-2:00 pm Rest Hour

2:00- 5:00 pm Activity Period #2

- Zip Line, Climbing Wall, Twilight Zone, and Archery

5:30 pm Dinner (*Chicken Fingers, Potatoes, Vegetable, and Salad Bar*)

7:30-8:00 pm Campfire @ Main Campfire (*S'mores*)

9:00-9:30 pm Night Hike

8:45-10:30 pm Sports Pavilion and Dining Hall Open

Sunday, May 14

8:15 am Mother's Day Breakfast (*Eggs, Bacon, Breakfast Bar*)

9:00 – 11:00 am Activity Period #3

- Low Ropes, Candle Making, Fall Nature Hike, Flying Squirrel

11:00 am Pack up and Departure

Schedule is subject to change and is weather dependent

Dining Hall open until 10:30 pm for Wi-Fi, snacks and board games.



